



Catholic Education Coronavirus Taskforce Newsletter

April 30, 2020

Message from Father
Matthew Guckin Director of
Catholic Mission and Identity

The Good Shephard

Dear Parents,

I remember visiting my grandmother as a child. It wasn't far from where I'm assigned now at Saint Francis De Sales Parish in Philadelphia. Anyway, I remember spending an overnight with her (now, as an adult, I realize that it probably gave my parents a little break).

At night I got out of bed and went down into the kitchen to "steal" one of her chocolate chip cookies (which she forbade me to do). On the way back up to my room I stubbed my toe just outside her bedroom and screamed so loud that she came running out to me. When I told her what I was doing she said, "See, that was God punishing you for stealing the cookies!"

Our image of God is vital in the spiritual life. For some of us, God is like Santa Claus in that we simply present him a list of what we want. For others, God is like an accountant who keeps a ledger on each of us and shows us the final tally on Judgment Day. For still others, God is like a guru who sits alone on a mountain top, doling out wisdom to anyone who dares to approach him.

For my grandmother, to some extent, God was like a policeman who exists to make sure that we keep the law.

The Gospel this weekend, however, paints an altogether different image for us. Specifically, we're given an image of God that *He* wants us to have – The Good Shepherd!

It may be difficult for us to see God as a "Good Shepherd" in these days of COVID-19. Friends and relatives are getting sick, perhaps even dying. Many have lost their jobs. The news stations seem to report on little else. Yet, this image of Jesus as our Good Shepherd remains.

It remains....and it reminds. It reminds us that he is, indeed, good and will bring good out of this. It reminds us that he is with us, guiding us through this crisis.

My grandmother went to her eternal reward in 1972. And when she passed she did not encounter a policeman, or an accountant, or Santa Claus. Instead, she saw Jesus the Good Shepherd, face to face.

May we never forget what our God is truly like. And who he truly is!

God bless you!
Father Matt Guckin
Director of Catholic Mission & Identity

From the Office of the
Secretary of Elementary
Education

Our Elementary Schools: Communities in Action

Earth Day

April 22, 2020 marked the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day. Today, Earth Day is recognized in over 190 countries and is celebrated by 1 billion people throughout the world! Every action counts to promote clean living and a safe environment for people and our wildlife. Many of our Catholic Elementary Schools participated this year through activities and online learning lessons.



For the past 10 years, the students at **St. Joseph/St. Robert School** have organized an annual Earth Day Recycling Challenge on the school campus. Given the status of the current global pandemic, the students' recognition of Earth Day 2020 has gone virtual this year. Since they can't all be together at school to celebrate this important movement, school families celebrated Earth Day safely at their homes and in their communities this past weekend.



Queen of Angels Regional Catholic School celebrated Earth Day with many of their teachers assigning fun projects. For instance, 5th grade teacher, Mrs. Galbreath, sent a flip grid assignment out for her students to make a bird feeder. Students could use any materials available. Cereal, twine, yarn, toilet paper rolls etc. were used. Students made and shared short videos of their work and hung the feeders outside. Other grades were just as innovative.



While talking about Earth Day, **Holy Innocents** kindergarten students learned about new life. Some did a project making butterflies while others created posters sharing what they could do to save the Earth.



Saints Colman-John Neumann School PreK3 students celebrated Earth Day by planting seeds, going on nature walks and learning to recycle. They all hope for more sunshine so we can keep learning about our Earth.



Virtual Field Trips



While students may not be sending in permission slips and boarding buses for field trips, many have traveled much further than our local area. The second grade from **Mother Teresa Regional Catholic School** took a virtual field trip to the Wyoming State Museum. They learned about how animals adapt to winter weather and they even got to see artifacts. Students were able to see animal skulls, examine how big the animal's bodies were and even see the size of their footprints. Some animals they learned about were wolves, bears, owls, snapping turtles, and beavers. Did you know not all brown bears are brown? Well, now the students certainly do.

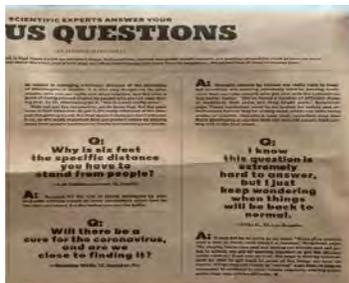
Happy 456th Birthday William Shakespeare

Ms. Cavallaro, seventh grade teacher at **St. Pio School**, wanted to share with a little bit of fun in ELA. Ms. Cavallaro has such a true love and enthusiasm for literature that she easily passes on to her students. The students have been learning and studying Shakespeare as part of their poetry ELA standards. They have been reciting quotes and monologues and sonnets all virtually.

In her recent ELA project entitled, "Cards for the Bard", students wrote sonnets in iambic pentameter to model true Shakespearean fashion, and they designed cards for William Shakespeare. The students had a virtual birthday party for Shakespeare, who was born on April 23, 1564.



Future Dr. Fauci?



6th grader, Madeline White, from **Queen of Angels Regional Catholic School** participated in a *New York Times* discussion event regarding the Coronavirus. She also had her question printed in the *New York Times Kids* section this Sunday. If you are looking for something interesting to do, Click "watch now" and Madeline can be found at minute 8 of the attached video.

<https://timesevents.nytimes.com/kids0421>

Staying Connected

The 4th grade of **Holy Cross** participated in a Wacky Dress Down Day. They also had Earth Day activities and Throwback Thursday and Flashback Friday with teachers' old photos being posted giving families the chance to guess is pictured on Facebook.



Reading Olympics



Gabriel Scarborough, from **St. Michael, Levittown**, read the entire list of books on the Reading Olympic Book List. He kept right on reading even after the competition was canceled. His mother said he would have finished reading every book by the competition date had it not been for the stay at home order. He was slowed down a bit because he had to wait for some books to arrive by mail. Congratulations to Gabriel and all the students out there who read the books for Reading Olympics.

Are You Missing School?



If you are missing school, you are not alone. This brother and sister pair don't want to admit to their **Queen of Angels** teachers how much they are missing school, yet mom reports they are dressed in their school uniforms every day. JD insists it is because the spring uniform is so very comfortable. Let's tell Flynn and O'Hara and they may use it as a marketing tool!

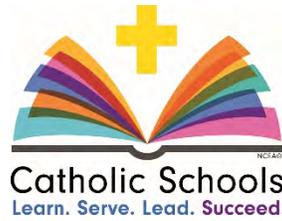
NDS Helpers



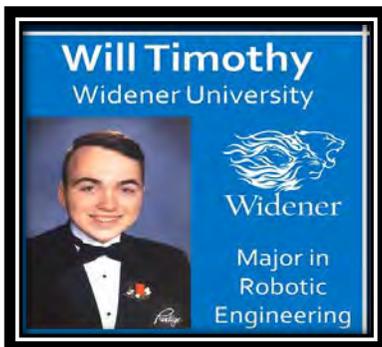
St. Christopher School held a Food Drive last week for the NDS Food Pantry. The 4th grade sponsored the project by making posters. It was a real life example of the Beatitudes which they learn about in Religion class. 4th grade teachers managed the project with the help of their colleagues.



From the Office of the
Superintendent of Secondary
Schools



Each year, the *Senior Class* is the heartbeat of each school. Underclassmen look up to them; teachers and administrators count on them to model school values, to lead and to guide the school each year. The Class of 2020 has been dealt a particularly difficult challenge, one like no other class. Yet, in each school, the Class of 2020 has created messages, videos, and prayer services for their classmates. The Class of 2020 has been given a challenge and has risen to meet this challenge. Their school leaders are so proud of them! Their teachers are so proud of them! We are so proud of them! Each High School community has come together to salute their seniors, the Class of 2020



Archbishop Carroll is spotlighting each Senior through their Social media page. They also created a video tribute honoring the Seniors of Archbishop Carroll Theatre Society. Their spring musical, *Once Upon a Mattress*, would have debuted on April 24, 2020.

<https://www.facebook.com/ArchbishopCarrollHS/videos/545125999770950/>

Members of the **Archbishop Ryan** Parent Association gathered donations from several parent and athletic groups to provide senior signs for each of our 237 seniors. Several members our faculty, staff, and of administration arrived at school to deliver signs to each household.





The faculty at **Archbishop Wood** read *Oh, the Places You'll Go* by Dr. Seuss to the Class of 2020. Teachers placed thoughtful messages for the Seniors as part of the video: <https://youtu.be/7HQqT6DXdGw>

Bishop McDevitt hosts a weekly online group meeting through Zoom titled "**Linking Lancers**". The first meeting started today and will be a recurring meeting each week for the "Class of 2020" to come together and hang out. These meetings are centered on fun activities, sharing memories and spiritual discussions.



Bishop Shanahan has inaugurated a video series for their Seniors. The administration sent a video message on April 3 and then a video was made with faculty remarks and sent on April 17th. On April 24th, a video was sent with faculty high school senior photographs. Shanahan's administration and faculty want the Class of 2020 to know that they are not alone. They are supported and all are all praying for them.

Cardinal O'Hara has been highlighting seniors as May 1st, National Decision Day, is quickly approaching. Social media posts contain the picture of each senior and his/her future plans for college, trade school, the military or employment. In addition, O'Hara has launched an initiative that celebrates the four years that the Senior Class has been part of the O'Hara Community through social posts featuring Wayback Wednesday, Throwback Thursday and Flashback Friday.



Conwell Egan Catholic High School has posted a video on social media from the CEC Faculty, Staff, and Coaches to the CEC students with special messages for the Class of 2020. CEC has also been gathering short video clips of seniors announcing who they are and where they'll be headed next fall. This video compilation will be released next Monday, May 4, on social media. Beginning later this week, CEC will begin highlighting a senior student-athlete on social media each day.

The Salesian gentleman from **Father Judge** High School of the Class of 2020 remind their school daily: "It is in patience that we shall possess our souls - St Francis de Sales". This picture was taken earlier this school year.



J.W. Hallahan is showing their support to the Class of 2020 with #HallahanStrong signs. The signs feature a heart word cloud that highlights the words used most often in alumnae notes of support to the Class of 2020. Seniors will also receive the notes of support. The school is featuring Soaring Seniors on Hallahan social media highlighting students' college decisions and favorite Hallahan experiences.

This past Tuesday, 26 members of the **Lansdale Catholic** faculty, staff and administration traveled around the surrounding communities to personally deliver Class of 2020 lawn signs to 175 soon-to-be graduates. The teachers felt a range of emotions at each house they visited, including pride, loss, joy, sadness, and love. Nothing will make up for the fact that these young adults are missing out on important milestones in these uncertain times, but at the very least, the faculty, staff and administration hope they know how cherished they are.



Little Flower is celebrating the Senior Class on the night that would have been their prom by hosting a Senior Hangout at 7 PM on Zoom. After a survey of the Senior Class, and Google Meets with the senior SGA members, the Class of 2020 decided this is the format they wanted to use in order to spend some time together as a class. Using a DJ, the LF Student Council has created a dance that they will teach to the seniors that night, and, of course, the gathering will end with everyone singing their beloved Alma Mater.

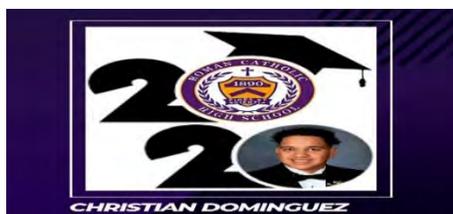
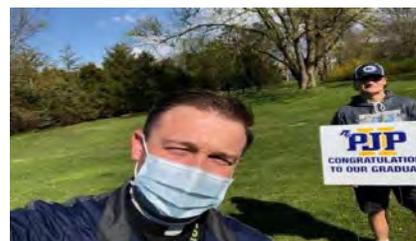


Monsignor Bonner & Archbishop Prendergast's administration is planning very special Senior memories page with a Senior virtual celebration, a gratitude day, and virtual senior scrapbook.



Neumann Goretti is organizing a special delivery to all Senior households. The package contains a Senior t-shirt and a large sign celebrating the Class of 2020. These signs, which will be displayed in front windows, are a part of a proud tradition in Philadelphia, especially South Philadelphia, of decorating windows of the neighborhoods!

Pope John Paul II High School administration, faculty and staff were in full force to make special deliveries to each of the homes of the Class of 2020. Interim President Bill Carroll and Father Kean, Principal, were among 35 PJP faculty and staff who set out across Montgomery County to celebrate the 183 students in PJP's senior class.



Roman Catholic has posted a specialized graduation portrait of each Senior for families. The faculty has been working on a digital "sticky note bulletin board" accompanying the Class of 2020's panoramic photo.

For **St. Hubert's** Senior Class Bambies, the faculty and administration have been posting videos highlighting the Class of 2020 which are being shown on social media. The faculty and staff are also planning a surprise performance for the Seniors.



West Catholic Prep is honoring their seniors by giving them two items within the next two weeks - *WCP* Class of 2020 beach towels and yard signs.

Additional Resources from
the Counseling Support Sub-
Committee

New Resources from CORA Services

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- **Community Resources:** Need help accessing basic needs? Our case managers can help!
- **Early Childhood:** Concerns regarding the development of your 3-5 year old? Have a question about how to support your child as they transition to Kindergarten? Let our Early Education specialists assist you!

Additional Questions? caring@coraservices.org

RESOURCE LINE HOURS:

Monday-Friday: 9AM - 1PM

Wednesday Extended Hours: 3PM - 7PM



Q&A

What is the Family Resource Line?
To meet needs that have arisen during the COVID-19 crisis, CORA Services has created a special resource line to serve families in our community.

Who will I be speaking with?
Parents and other care takers will have direct access to CORA's counselors, social workers & educators.

What is the cost for the resource line?
CORA is offering these services FREE!

Do I need to be a current CORA client to call in?
NO-This is open to all members of the community.

What topics can I discuss?
CORA staff is here for you! Call us to discuss any of your needs, academic help, parent consult, access to resources, etc. We'll assist you or connect you with someone who can.

How do I connect?
Call: 215-342-7660
Email: caring@coraservices.org