



Saint Joseph Catholic School in Maumee Ohio



August 10, 2020

Dear School Families,

We are so excited for the start of the school year! Not being able to see the students in our school has been challenging for us, for the teachers, and naturally, for you! We have been on a roller coaster, and it seems like every time things are beginning to calm down, we receive new information that alters our plan. Be assured, we are still committed to being in school for 5 days a week, and doing it safely for the sake of our children, teachers and families.

We are very aware that some are uneasy at this time. With the climate in our world, it is hard not to be. We are also aware that the Lucas County Department of Health has recommended that all schools in the county start the year virtually. However, with the support of the Diocese of Toledo (please see attached letter) and the backing of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, we have opted to stay with our original plan of coming back to school 5 days a week.

On July 14, the Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention listed the following reasons why students should return to school:

- Very few cases have been shown in school-age children
- The flu is 5-10 times more deadly than the Covid virus which has a 1 in a million chance of killing a school-aged child
- 7 million children receive mental health services from their school
- Child abuse and sexual abuse is lessened due to mandatory reporting from schools
- Suicide rates and drug overdoses among students are lower when students are in school
- For some students, school is the place where they receive the nutrition they need and the socialization that's healthy for them

He concluded that the risks associated with not going back to school are "far greater" than the risk of Covid-19.

In addition, we would add that our children need the Christian community present in a Catholic School. This is how our Lord created us to live – in support of one another, loving one another through challenging times, and caring for one another.

Therefore, we are going back to school 5 days a week with protocols and procedures that have been outlined to you (please see attached). With the backing of the medical community, we believe these to be solid ways to keep our school community safe. Naturally, we will be evaluating our procedures and examining how our school functions daily.

If something occurs that is not according to plan, we will make the decision that is best for our students and families. In fact, we have prepared for the scenario of having to do distance-learning for a period of time if that is necessary. We have learned from what happened at the end of last school year, and are much more prepared if such a thing would occur.

Guided by the Holy Spirit, St. Joseph Catholic School and Preparatory provides a supportive learning environment to promote academic excellence and formation of moral character. Teachers and parents model and share Christ's teachings to assist students to best utilize their God-given talents in their learning and service to God, family, and community.

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Ultimately, you as parents are the primary educators of your child and have the right to choose how your child is educated. We do not believe we have the right to decide for you. We are grateful for your patience with us as we are doing everything in our power to keep up with daily changes and challenges.

Above all, our Lord does not want us to fear. In fact, "do not be afraid" is the most often used phrase in the Bible. However, we do need to be cautious, and that is exactly what we are doing. Please don't hesitate to reach out to Mr. Nichols with any questions or concerns. Thanks for entrusting your child(ren) to us! We take that role very seriously, and cherish every minute of it! Let's pray for each other during this upcoming school year!

In Christ,

Rev. Eric Schild
Pastor

Mr. David Nichols
Principal

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