



DIOCESE *of* LACROSSE
OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

17 June 2020
Year of St. Joseph

My dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

Greetings of peace as we enter the summer season.

I really enjoy the summer months and always had a great time when I was out of school and doing “summer stuff.” It seems so strange that those memories have endured over the years, nevertheless, so much remains clear and vivid in my mind.

I begin by saying “thank you” to all of you who, as parents of our school-aged children spent some serious time these past months truly working with your children and helping them in academic and developmental areas. Your precious time was certainly not lost as they learned from you and experienced with you the joy and perfect responsibility of parenting—being the first educators of your children in all of the important areas of life.

Now, I am taking the opportunity to let you know that our wonderful Catholic Schools are preparing to partner up with you once again as I announce the news that our Catholic schools will be opening for our Fall schedule according to our regular schedule and policies, in conjunction with State and local policies as they affect us. The COVID pandemic has hit us all very hard and has almost recreated society and social constructs in some serious new ways. We, Catholic school educators, are taking all of this “new information” very seriously and are planning for its impact on our schools and the lives of our children. We are all looking to the new academic year as one of challenging growth and direction. Thus, it will require the best from all of us.

As you should well know by now, I am an avid supporter of Catholic education and see its greatest articulation for the future in Catholic schools. The fullness of teaching a personal relationship with Jesus Christ is our first and most successful lesson in the Catholic school. You may send your sons or daughters to so many different schools—good schools—in the area encompassed by our Diocese. None of them, however, will create and sustain an environment where your children will first learn the life of grace that is the truth of Jesus’ gift to them as it is offered in our Catholic schools. That, my dear parents, is the first tenet of Catholic school policy.

As we look forward to challenging the hearts and souls of your children—to claim them for Christ; we look forward to the exciting varieties of appropriate vistas of thought, verbal and physical expression, expansive brain games and emotional achievement, the very best in Catholic learning, the fullness of faith and reason.

Finally, dear brothers and sisters—mothers and fathers—this future will be offered to your children by our administrators, teachers, and professional staffs, all of whom share enthusiasm for the education of your children. You may rest assured that your children will return to our schools—the large and the small—with our promise to offer them what you want for them, an extension of your willingness to prepare them for the world ahead of them with a solid education, positive value, and purposeful virtue supported by the advantage of the Catholic Tradition.

Be assured of my support for you as parents and my prayers for you as families—domestic churches—where Jesus dwells and the Truth is taught. God be with you.

Sincerely, in Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, the Holy Family, I am

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "+ William Patrick Callahan". The signature is written in a cursive style with a small cross at the beginning.

+ William Patrick Callahan
Bishop of La Crosse