



## PITTSBURGH CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

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Dear Catholic School Family,

As we continue this journey through COVID-19 and the winter holidays, I am writing to wish you all a very blessed Thanksgiving. I know many of us are celebrating differently this year because we are committed to keeping our families and the most vulnerable safe. It is in that spirit that I repeat my plea to follow the safety protocols at home that will help keep our school communities safe. I particularly urge you to consider the teachers, principals, and staff as you take these precautions. Please follow the quarantine protocols if you are traveling. If you are celebrating at home, please take the every precaution set forth by our health agencies. There are many opinions about this virus, but the fact is it spreads regardless of the opinion people have about it. The other fact is that it takes a different toll on different people. It may not show itself at all in one person but be devastating to another.

What we see in the data from the first 3 months of school is that safety protocols work if we are vigilant and consistent. There are many viewpoints on keeping our schools in-person or going virtual, which is the reason that we have both options in place. If you are committed to the 5-day a week in-person option, your vigilance on safety is essential. Please keep children home if they are in any way symptomatic. **Our teachers have demonstrated great commitment and fortitude, but they must see that your actions support their efforts! Please review the safety protocols on your school website.**

Please also note that this continued situation puts great stress on our teachers, administrators, staff and families. With that understanding, the Catholic Schools Office is recommending that all schools begin the Christmas break after school on December 18. This will give staff a full two weeks free of instructional responsibilities. The days missed will be made up later in the year, most likely at the end of the year.

In closing, I wish you all a most blessed Thanksgiving as we reflect with gratitude that we are God's people. When faced with all forms of hardship, we can rejoice that our Lord, Jesus is with us every step of the way!

God bless,  
Michelle

