



**MARCH 15, 2020**

Dear St. Joseph Community:

St. Joseph continues to monitor the respiratory illness caused by Coronavirus (COVID-19) in close coordination with the Will County Health Department and the Diocese of Joliet. In alignment with our Catholic mission, all actions being taken and planned are for the health, safety, and well-being of the St. Joseph community in the context of our responsibility to deliver a high-quality educational experience to our students.

Based on current guidelines from local public health departments, which recommend the cancellation of public gatherings involving 250 or more people, Bishop Richard E. Pates, Apostolic Administrator of the Diocese of Joliet, mandated the closing of schools operated by the diocese.

The decision to temporarily close our schools, **beginning Monday, March 16<sup>th</sup>**, applies to all Catholic schools, Religious Education, and Youth Ministry programs that are operated by the Diocese of Joliet until further notice.

**While there are no suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19 at St. Joseph, our campus beginning Monday, March 16<sup>th</sup> until further notice.**

**On Monday, March 16<sup>th</sup> from 1:30-3pm, parents and/or students must come to St. Joseph to retrieve books, iPads, and supplies necessary for remote learning. We will be sending home iPads with all students K-4<sup>th</sup> grade on Monday.** Teachers and staff will be present for this distribution as well as to answer any questions you may have.

**REMOTE LEARNING WILL BEGIN ON TUESDAY, MARCH 17<sup>TH</sup>.**

This is a complex and challenging situation requiring thoughtful analysis and careful deliberation. Many of our teachers were working all day today in preparation for home learning. They will be here tomorrow to make final preparations.

**A. Contingency Planning and Decision-Making**

The administrative staff of St. Joseph, with the input of faculty and staff, has developed a plan for remote learning while our sites are closed.

**B. Site Access**

Due to the potential risk and the multiple chances of some type of cross-over contact with someone who may be diagnosed with the virus, St. Joseph will be closed to students and families after March 16<sup>th</sup>.

### **C. Communication**

- a. Website**-There will be a page dedicated to this effort on the St. Joseph website with announcements from the St. Joseph Administration. The link to this page is **[www.stjoeschool.com](http://www.stjoeschool.com)**. Any time an update to this link has been made an email to the SJS families from Schoolmessenger will be sent out.
- b. Teacher Communication**
  - i.** All teachers within our school will be sending, via email, a communique explaining how they will conduct their specific education process remotely. The SJS faculty will use methods of communication and educational delivery that are familiar with both the student and/or parents.
  - ii.** All SJS faculty members will have online “teacher hours” from 10:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Monday – Friday. During this time frame, teachers will be available for questions and/or clarifications and will be expected to respond to these questions with immediacy based on order of emails received. In the event an email is sent to a SJS faculty member outside these stated office hours, the faculty member will be expected to respond within a twenty-four-hour period.

### **D. Remote Learning Expectations**

- a. Remote learning begins on Tuesday, March 17<sup>th</sup>**
- b. Instructions and Deadlines**-Instructions/directions and deadlines will be very specific. Faculty members will state very clearly their expectations of when work is due. For example: *“This assignment is due and must be submitted back to me by Wednesday at 9pm.”* It is important for students to meet assigned deadlines and know that students will be penalized for late assignments. It will be the student’s responsibility to meet all deadlines in regard to the submission of work. If the student experiences internet problems or confusion on the completion of the assignment, the students in grades 5<sup>th</sup>- 8<sup>th</sup> must communicate with the teacher through Google Classroom or the parent must email the teacher. Assignments for students in grades K-4<sup>th</sup> grade will be reviewed by the homeroom teacher.

### **E. Extracurricular Activities**

All extracurricular activities including practices, games, and performances will be cancelled during the temporary closure. With the exception of the pre-arranged meeting with school staff to retrieve school materials in advance of our remote learning program, we would ask students to please not come to the SJS campus or outside facilities during this temporary closure.

### **F. Reporting Confirmed Cases**

If someone in your family is diagnosed with COVID-19, please contact our school during this temporary closure to report the diagnosis.

For more information on COVID-19 in general, please visit the Centers for Disease Control at [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov).

Thank you for your care and concern for each other and our St. Joseph community as we navigate these uncharted waters together and pray for all affected.

Many Blessings,

Lynne Scheffler  
St. Joseph Catholic School