



May 21, 2020

Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord

Dear Friends,

It's been six weeks since our first "Open Letter to Friends and Supporters," which described the early effects of COVID-19 closure on the school and school community. Since this time, our nation has seen COVID-19 cases rise, crest, and begin to abate. School families have grappled with logistical challenges and financial worries. The school has been challenged to return maximum value to students and families in remote ways. And sadly, Bishop da Cunha and the Central Board of the Fall River Diocese announced the permanent closure of St. Margaret Primary School, which has been affiliated with JPPI/SFXP since 2017.

Despite the difficulties of these past months, I am proud of the dedication and perseverance of students, parents, and teachers who have made the best of this unexpected long-term closure. They have responded remarkably. We have received many, many messages of thanks and support due to the intense efforts of teachers and students. It is fair to say that the strength of our school has shined during this dark time.

As we turn the page from the current school year to the next, even in late May, clarity as to public health conditions and our mode of learning is elusive. Below, I provide you a 'status report' of current adjustments and plans.

Learning Each Day

Early on, we established virtual school days that provide daily class meetings, solid structure, and clear expectations -- things Catholic schools do well. Due to daily student-teacher contact, we have maintained human connections, provided stability, and allowed for continued new learning.

Looking ahead to 2020-2021, regardless of public health circumstances, we are committed to providing students a thorough, first-rate education. Currently, administrators and teachers are developing three instructional modes so that the

program will be thoughtful, preparatory, and meaningful under a variety of public health guidelines.

- Full-time in-person (our preference!)
- Hybrid in-person and remote on-line (small groups in-person and on-line remote)
- Full-time remote on-line (improved over the current mode)

Both the hybrid model and the fully remote model are being designed from the 'ground up.' Teachers will dedicate summer professional development time to re-designing curriculum, instruction, and assessment for each mode. Whatever the case in September or throughout 2020-2021, the program will toggle quickly and effectively to the most meaningful and appropriate mode.

Additionally, current circumstances have not hampered progress in implementing the school's strategic plan. For example, we have hired a full-time Special Education Director/Teacher, and curricular improvements such as new Pre-AP courses are ready to go.

Mission and Community

The school's sacramental life, faith life, and community life has continued well, albeit virtually. We did not 'hit pause' on our mission and identity. For example, Holy Mass for students, staff members, and families was live-streamed this morning (Ascension Thursday) from JPPI's *Our Lady of Fatima* Chapel. While remote, virtual activities are no substitute for our usual robust, in-person community life. In the absence of in-person interactions, the strong bonds shared amongst students, families, teachers, staff members, and administrators have come forward in high relief. These relationships are rooted in our mission and care for students entrusted to us.

We know that school life beyond academics -- faith life, community events, athletics, performing arts, school spirit -- is the "x" factor that makes the JPPI/SFXP experience. Looking ahead, we will create time and space for these critical aspects of school life even in a hybrid learning model. Whether remotely or in-person, the JPPI & SFXP culture and caring relationships will flourish.

Financial Effects

2019-2020 Impact

Gratefully, only a small number of families were unable to meet their 2019-2020 tuition obligations. For these families, we have delayed payments until they are back at work. By and large, tuition collection in the current year is complete.

Our two critical sources of fundraising revenue, the Annual Fund and Auction, have been significantly affected by COVID-19 financial concerns. The "OddBall 2020

Auction" will run online. Event sponsors have honored their commitment, and while we believe the online format will succeed, it is also realistic to expect only a fraction of the expected \$100,000+ net proceeds. Before COVID-19 closure, Annual Fund giving was tracking ahead of previous years. Since this time, few gifts have been received. As a result, we are not likely to reach the \$100,000 goal that has helped offset 2019-2020 program expenses.

2020-2021 Impact

Of more significant long-term concern are the economic reversals experienced by faithful school families and their resulting uncertainty in registering for Catholic school next year. Our commitment is that no student be forced to leave JPPI & SFXP due to the fallout of COVID-19. As a result, the school launched the *Keeping the Faith* Fund to provide emergency assistance to current and accepted students severely affected by COVID-19 economic hardship. The Fund is separate from regular financial aid and will award up to 75% tuition credit to affected families. Read more:

<https://www.sjp2hs.org/keeping-the-faith-fund/>.

Even with the assistance that the *Keeping the Faith* Fund provides families, we project a decrease of new fifth and ninth grade student enrollment. However, we are able to absorb this decrease in our staffing and budget plans.

Back to Basics

The school enjoys a strong reputation in the community and fierce loyalty from families. We are faithful to our mission and responsible with our finances. We know that "God provides." This is what matters, and this is what will keep our school vital. Please contact me with your comments or questions. If there is anything we can do for you or yours, let me know directly.

Best regards,



Christopher Keavy
President