



OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

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We ought always to thank God for you, brothers and sisters, and rightly so, because your faith is growing more and more, and the love all of you have for one another is increasing. - 2 Thessalonians 1:3

Dear Teachers,

I know none of you are teachers for the glory. You didn't choose the mission of Catholic education for the lifestyle and you are certainly not here for the money. You are here because you *believe* in what Catholic schools do and how we do it. You know that the centuries-old formula that adds faith, love, and ingenuity, multiplied by hard work, will always equal success. You are the beginning, and center of that equation, and as we celebrate **Teacher Appreciation Week** it is appropriate to shout our thanks from the rooftops. I regret this letter must suffice...

Perhaps the hallmark of being a Catholic school teacher is that you are asked to do more with less. There is no endless supply of materials, no billion-dollar budget, usually there's no air conditioning! But you show up and you do it every day, whatever *it* may be, and you do it better than anybody else. Who would have ever thought you would be called upon to do what you are doing now? The Church's first responders!

Since the beginning of the COVID-19 crisis, teachers are no longer merely important. You have leapfrogged over critical, irreplaceable and essential straight to **heroic**. In seemingly a matter of hours, how you do your job was completely redefined at the exact time your personal lives were turned upside down. And just like doctors, nurses and first responders, you *had* to show up. There was no time to gather yourself, no personal time to "get a grip" on the situation. You were told what the new normal needed to be, you took the next indicated steps and you showed up for your students with a smile. And that's where you earned your cape.

By being there throughout the coronavirus saga, your presence in their homes is a connection to normalcy for your students. The sound of your voice, is more than merely familiar, it is *healing*. We know that children are very much aware of what's happening in the world around them. They have known since day one that COVID-19 is a terrible threat that is killing people –sometimes people they love. And while this virus is scaring *you* and killing people many of *you* love, there you are. Smiling. Teaching. I'm telling you now, when your students tell their children of the hardships wrought by the great pandemic of 2020, there will be silver linings to their stories, bright spots in the gloom. Among those glimmers will be you – showing up every day. How much you really love them, don't you?

However long ago it was, each of you had an epiphany. Whether it was at lunch, on the bus or watching cartoons, each of you decided you would someday be teacher. You figured you would teach English or science, maybe drive a Volvo, perhaps go all the way and have a closet full of tweed? Who knew this simple, humble, noble career would someday call upon you to be a hero? It did, and you are. I can never thank you, but God will.

Sincerely,

Mr. Michael J. Deegan
Superintendent of Schools
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