



Mater Dei Catholic School

2018 National Blue Ribbon School

The President's Pen

March 27, 2020

Dear Parents, Faculty, and Staff,

Good afternoon! As we come to the end of our second full week of adjusting to a new normal, I wanted to reach out to you to extend my thanks to you and to the teachers for the amazing work you continue to accomplish each and every day. When Governor Wolf closed our schools on March 12th, we had no idea what was in store for us. As I think back to that day, it was a surreal moment just trying to comprehend the unprecedented announcement while thinking ahead at the same time. What would this mean for our Mater Dei family? As always, I am in awe, as I reflect on all that has been accomplished over the last two weeks.

Parents, you are my heroes! Many of you are trying to work from home; others are headed out to work, and many in our community work in the healthcare field, selflessly giving to others. All the while, you are finding time to support your children as they continue learning in a new, but challenging way. I am so grateful to the countless parents who somehow find time to encourage their children to participate in Crazy Sock Day, Hearts for Healthcare, Family and Friends, and Crazy Hat Day/Dress Your Pet for School Day. You are sending us fantastic pictures of your beautiful children in their new learning environment, as well as photos of them participating in our community events. These photos have been posted on the Mater Dei website and Facebook as a way for us to stay connected with the Mater Dei Community. Many parents have reached out to Miss Waltrich, your children's teachers, and to me to express your sincere gratitude for all that Mater Dei is doing to provide a quality Catholic education in the midst of these very uncertain and trying times. I am sincerely grateful to you for your genuine support and appreciation for Mater Dei Catholic School.

Faculty and staff, in the past two weeks you have accomplished more than I could have hoped for under the best of conditions. Since our first after-school meeting on Thursday, March 12, you have worked tirelessly to navigate the uncharted waters of eLearning. For the past two weeks, you have put in countless hours preparing your lessons, exploring new technology, engaging the students, corresponding with parents, attending staff meetings via Zoom, collaborating with colleagues, and in some cases caring for your own children. I am extremely grateful to you, our faculty, and to Miss Waltrich for your amazing dedication to and love for the children of Mater Dei!

As a school community, we will continue to evaluate, update, and make changes to the eLearning Program as we move forward into week three. I would just like to remind you to feel free to contact our teachers if you have any questions or need any clarifications. It has come to my attention that some parents are discussing their concerns on a parent Facebook page for a particular grade/s. I ask you to please contact your child's teacher/s. They are more than willing to help you and your children. Facebook will not be

able to solve the issues, nor will it be able to make any adjustments in planning. I respectfully ask you to use the proper channels to handle any questions you may have regarding the academic program of Mater Dei Catholic School. As I have shared in each communication, please feel free to contact Miss Waltrich or me if we can be of assistance.

I have received several questions regarding the schedule for the rest of the year. We will continue to follow the directives provided to us by Governor Wolf. Once we are able to return to school, we will work to re-schedule as many school events as possible. The Mater Dei stage will open again! We might be taking our seats to enjoy FROZEN in July, but the show will go on!!!! I attended an eighth grade Zoom class this week and I promised the eighth grade that we will have Graduation and we will plan for as many of the Graduation festivities as possible, once we find out when school will re-open! As time goes on, we will consider all the other events and activities listed on the calendar.

Adventures Await Mater Dei Summer Camp 2020

Our camp directors continue to plan for Mater Dei's first five-week summer camp experience! Plans are underway to travel to exciting places around the world. We invite you to visit the MD website for information. Sign-up today! All registration fees will be deferred until we return to school! We are very excited about this program and we look forward to going on this adventure together with your children!

Thank you for your commitment to Mater Dei Catholic School. I miss the smiling faces of your beautiful children! I am praying for them and for you each and every day! I look forward to the day when we open the doors of our beloved Mater Dei. May God bless you today and always!

Most sincerely,

Miss Diane E. McCaughan
President