March 11, 2020

Dear Principals and Pastors,

This has been an unprecedented time for all of us. I know there has been uncertainty and anxiety these past few weeks. I thank you for your continued leadership and faith.

Today Governor Inslee announced the prohibition of large gatherings. This was followed by the King County Executive’s order to cease small events. Shortly after, Seattle Public Schools announced it is closing all schools for two weeks.

After numerous consultations with public health, CDC, local government officials and the Archbishop, we have decided that our Catholic schools will follow the lead of the local public school districts. If a local public school district closes, then the Catholic schools within that district’s boundaries will also close.

As of this afternoon, the Seattle Public School District announced a two-week closure. Therefore, Catholic schools in this district will close starting Monday, March 16, through March 30. This closure includes any planned school events such as fundraisers, community events, and field trips. During this time, school buildings will not be open to children, parents, or community members.

We did not make this decision lightly. We recognize the hardship this places on families; at the same time, we must protect the common good. Our government leaders urge us to take these steps to slow the spread of this global pandemic. Our Catholic faith compels us to consider and protect those most vulnerable in our society.

In the meantime, all other Catholic schools will remain open and should follow the lead of their local public school districts. This is a complex and evolving situation. We will monitor the unfolding events and provide you with daily updates.
I encourage you as principals to continue to work on your individual school plans for closure. We believe other school districts will close over the next few weeks and we want everyone to be as prepared as possible.

Please feel free to share this communication with your communities, along with your own school plan or guidance. We ask that everyone pray as we continue to navigate the days ahead.

You remain in my prayers of gratitude.

Kristin Dixon
Superintendent of Catholic Schools