

THE DIOCESE OF KALAMAZOO

Office of the Bishop

January 31, 2021

Dear Catholic School Educators and Staff Members,

Every year I write you a letter thanking you for your service to the students in our Catholic schools. And while every year the expression of thanks I offer is whole-hearted, *this* year I wish to multiply that gratitude ten-fold. Thank you for showing up every day for our students. Thank you for being always ready and willing to adapt and try something new. Thank you for always considering the whole person of our students: mind, body and spirit. Your commitment to continuing to provide quality education, whether in person or virtually, has an immeasurable impact on our precious students. Thank you!

This year's *Catholic Schools' Week* theme, "*Catholic Schools: Faith. Excellence. Service*", reminds us that we are always striving to do our best to grow in the three pillars of our Catholic education. This annual week-long celebration also offers us the opportunity to take a moment to recognize what it is that you, the administrators, teachers and staff persons facilitating Catholic education in the Diocese of Kalamazoo, strive to nurture in our children each and every day. Even in the midst of so much uncertainty, you give of yourselves every day to prepare the future leaders of our Church and society.

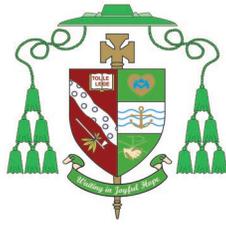
During his Angelus prayer on January 17, 2021, Pope Francis said: "*The design that God has for each one of us is always a design of love. And the greatest joy for every believer is to respond to that call, offering one's entire being to the service of God and our brothers and sisters.*" Your response to the challenges of the current situation, working hard to bring a sense of normalcy to students during this chaotic and confusing time in our history and serve our students and schools to the best of your ability, is a shining example of this response to your call as Catholic educators.

You have gone above and beyond your call of duty, staying late to help clean and sanitize classrooms, adapting lesson plans and simultaneously teaching students in the classroom and at home. I am proud to point to our Catholic Schools' Staff as examples of how to generously serve the needs of our children as whole-persons—mind, body and spirit.

Thanking you for all that you do, assuring you of my prayers for you and your families, and humbly asking for your prayers for me and for our Diocese, I remain

Faithfully yours in Christ,

+ Paul J. Bradley



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Most Rev. Paul J. Bradley
Bishop of Kalamazoo