



Diocese of Youngstown

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

Dear Members of Saint Barbara Parish and School,

For 155 years Saint Barbara School has instilled in students excellence directed to the growth of the whole person – mind, body and spirit. Saint Barbara School like the Church is not only a building or an institution, but it is the people. As the people of God, we work together to bring the Kingdom of God to Earth and rise up the next generation to do the same.

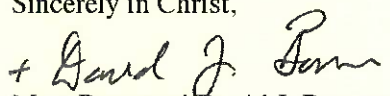
After careful study and prayerful discernment and in consultation with your pastor the Very Reverend Canon Maciej Mankowski, along with the Office of Catholic School of the Diocese of Youngstown, I have given permission to their request to close Saint Barbara School for the 2022-2023 school year. As communicated earlier in the Spring the plan was for both Saint Barbara and Saint Mary Schools to be open in the 2022-2023 school year, with one being closed the following year to support the parish reorganization. The decision to close the school now is a result of the overall demographic changes of the city, the school personnel changes that have occurred over the last years, along with only 61 students in grades K-8 and 9 students for pre-school registered for the 2022-2023 school year.

I know that as you read this letter you are sad for what you will be losing. But as the Catholic Community of Massillon we need to be proactive rather than reactive. Therefore, we need to create a solid and financially viable Catholic school by using the Saint Mary School building. Using one building will achieve a strong Catholic school presence in the City of Massillon. The aim of this combined effort is to provide high quality Catholic education that protects and fosters the importance of Catholic identity.

As the Catholic Church in Massillon we need to keep our focus on the needs of our students. This is our primary concern. Catholic education still matters. Catholic education has always been the heart of the of the Catholic Mission. Catholic education and the students, who are the product of it, have been called the greatest work of the Church.

I know that change is difficult. Nonetheless this is a positive change, indeed a necessary change. We always need to leave some old ways behind in order to improve and grow. Our lives are a series of small and not so small dying and risings. As a community we celebrate our successes and achievements. We share grief and downfalls. Let us unite together in solidarity, and even challenge each other to become better reflections that together “all may be one.”

Sincerely in Christ,


Most Reverend David J. Bonnar
Bishop of Youngstown