



December 15, 2023

Dear Saint Martin of Tours Parish and Family of the Most Holy Eucharist,

In October of this year, the Saint Martin of Tours Parish community commenced on an evaluation process to examine the future viability of the school. After an extensive look at the parish and school finances, giving trends and discussions with parishioners, it was determined that we can no longer afford to subsidize the school at the current rate due to the depletion of our reserves. **The Parish Pastoral Council and Finance Council have therefore I recommend to close Saint Martin of Tours School following the 2023-2024 school year. I agree with this recommendation. A letter with this recommendation was sent to the Office of the Archbishop and it has been accepted.**

This decision is not an easy one nor is it what anyone had wanted, but it is necessary to keep Saint Martin of Tours Church open and operating. By taking this action now, our hope is that we will be able to rebuild a firm financial foundation for the parish for years to come, as well as provide school families and faculty members time to discern their next step.

The decision to close Saint Martin's School naturally comes with many emotions such as anger, sadness, fear, and anxiety. However, there is hope. While we will be losing a valued Catholic school in the Family of the Most Holy Eucharist, there is an opportunity to strengthen the Catholic schools around us both in size and financial stability. Hopefully, this will allow for greater educational capacity to broaden opportunities in the arts, sciences, and extracurriculars. Currently, in our Family's other four schools — Our Lady of Lourdes, Saint Aloysius Gonzaga, Saint Antoninus, and Saint Catharine of Siena — we have plenty of room to welcome all Saint Martin of Tours students.

Since announcing Saint Martin's entrance into the evaluation process, there have been questions at other parishes about the viability of their schools. While finances can always change based on giving trends, at the time of the writing of this letter each of the other four schools in the Family of the Most Holy Eucharist has a firm financial footing and each has room for growth.

As school families navigate this difficult transition, we want to help parents make the best possible decision for their children. We are gathering information from all local Catholic grade schools to help parents choose the appropriate educational opportunity for their sons and daughters. Some of the information includes: school start and end times, do they offer free and reduced hot lunches, class offerings, extracurricular clubs, organizations, and sports... etc.

Reverend Matthew J. Robben, Pastor of the Family of the Most Holy Eucharist:
Our Lady of Lourdes, Saint Aloysius Gonzaga, Saint Antoninus,
Saint Catharine of Siena, and Saint Martin of Tours Parishes
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This information will be shared with parents as soon as possible after the New Year. Plans are also being developed to assist our wonderful faculty and staff in finding employment. With the potential growth at our Family schools, we will need valuable and experienced teachers. Teachers at Saint Martin's will be given the opportunity to apply for open positions within the Family prior to the position being posted.

The closure of Saint Martin's School will not be easy for our parish community. In the past, the closure of a school has been equated with a spiritual death as it is a change in identity. Since the school will no longer be the principal driver of mission and evangelization, the parish must find a new missionary identity through the enhancement of current ministries and by seeking out new and powerful ways to spread the Gospel. This process can be slow and painful at times, but our hope is in the Resurrection! When one aspect of ourselves passes away, new doors open. Yes, let us grieve, but let us also celebrate all we have accomplished and will continue to accomplish in Jesus's name. We have much to be thankful for. Therefore, over the next six months, with your help and participation, we will honor and celebrate the history and legacy of Saint Martin of Tours School.

Finally, as we move through this difficult transition, please pray for our school families, faculty, and staff as we begin this journey. May Saint Martin of Tours lead us, guide us, and pray for us! Be assured of my continued prayers!

God's blessings and peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rev. Matthew J. Robben".

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