



OFFICE FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS
DIOCESE OF GREENSBURG

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Dear Parents and Guardians,

As we continue to develop plans for a safe return to our schools this fall, I am certain you are well aware that COVID-19 is not the only issue impacting the health and safety of our community. Although the coronavirus is a pandemic of global proportions, racial injustice evidenced so tragically in the death of Mr. George Floyd has caused all of us, including children and young adults, to experience intense sadness and confusion.

I am writing to you today, as Superintendent of our Catholic schools, to assure you that work has begun to decisively end racial discrimination in our faith community through awareness, prayer and dialogue.

This three-pronged approach begins with awareness. Bishop Malesic is using every tool at his disposal to address the issue of racism: He speaks directly to the faithful in *The Catholic Accent* newspaper, which will arrive in 41,000 homes next week, along with his social media and web page viewed by more than 40,000 people each week. He expressed to me that he is in a great amount of personal pain about the events surrounding Mr. George Floyd and will continue to speak publically about racial injustice. I direct you to this recent homily which is posted at <https://www.facebook.com/diocesefgreensburg/videos/1893664627442893/>

Listen to Bishop Malesic's words. Pray for respect for all human life, for an end to racism in all of our communities, including our school communities, and for an end to injustice. This fall, prayer will continue to be the cornerstone of spiritual formation for our children. But moving forward, we will be intensely engaging our students in prayer about respect for all lives. We have to believe that the prayers we pray are impacting this world, starting with our own hearts and our own souls.

Finally, regarding dialogue, we are truly blessed to be able to enter into meaningful communication rooted in our faith. Our religion curriculum is the primary vehicle through which mutual respect is developed because within it are the Words of God that guide us in how we are expected to live our lives. It is impossible to obey God's Word and disrespect others. To help students better understand the teachings of our faith, we will continually identify resources that update and emphasize the importance of inclusion and acceptance.

Thank for your attention to this important issue.

May God bless you always,

Maureen G. Marsteller, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Catholic Schools