



St. Columba Church

www.saintcolumbachurch.org

342 Iron Street
Bloomsburg, PA 17815-1824
Phone: 570-784-0801

April 18, 2024

Dear Saint Columba Parish Families,

Over the past several years, our school has faced a challenging financial and enrollment situation. With the decline in enrollment and limited financial resources, after significant consideration, consultation with stakeholders, and prayer, we have no choice but to announce that Saint Columba Catholic School will permanently close at the end of the current school year. We know this is difficult news to hear, but the reality is that, as a parish, we can no longer afford to operate a Catholic school. Incredible generosity has been seen over the years by many in our parish and community, and we are exceedingly grateful to all those who have supported our school. However, as costs rise and enrollment decreases, we find ourselves in an unsustainable situation. Continuing to operate the school could place the parish in significant financial jeopardy.

In the coming weeks, the school administration, along with the Diocesan Office of Catholic Education, will assist our families choosing to continue their Catholic education transition to Saint Joseph in Danville or Our Lady of Lourdes, and also work with our school faculty and staff in securing new employment. Additionally, a final Mass for our school community, with Bishop Senior, will be on Wednesday, May 29 at 10 a.m. This Mass will give all of us an opportunity to come together as one Catholic family, to share our joys, sorrows and hopes at the conclusion of the school year.

Thank you to all the hard-working members of our school and parish leadership, faculty and staff, who have poured their hearts and souls into the mission of Saint Columba Catholic School. You have been a great source of encouragement throughout these years, and demonstrated the virtues we want our students to imitate. We also deeply thank our school families, who have labored tirelessly to support Saint Columba. Thank you for your good example and faithful care.

Finally, thank you to our students who have been such eager participants in the beautiful life of our school. Your enthusiasm, joy and growth in learning and in the faith have been marvelous to witness. We will miss you in our school, but welcome you into our parish religious education program.

We know this is heartbreaking news. Our hearts are also breaking. Remember, in times of hardship and grief, God's grace is abundant. It is our prayer that, as a community, we will come together in these final weeks of Saint Columba Catholic School to celebrate all the good accomplished inside these walls over the past 70 years.

May God bless you and our community.

In Christ,

Reverend Richard Mowery
Pastor, Saint Columba Church

Mr. Daniel Breen
Secretary of Catholic Education
Diocese of Harrisburg