

Date: May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2020

Dear TFS parents and faculty/staff:

Good evening all! I hope you are looking forward to a great Memorial Day weekend! Please below for some updates and announcements for the school community.

### **8<sup>th</sup> Grade Baccalaureate and Commencement**

Yesterday we celebrated our 8<sup>th</sup> graders with a live-streamed Baccalaureate Mass and a “commencement ceremony” afterwards! If you were not able to join the event “live”, you can access the recorded events [here](#). To further recognize our 8<sup>th</sup> graders and their success, we held a “Clap Out” parade in the rain yesterday. It was a great sight having all of our teachers out on the covered walkway as the 8<sup>th</sup> grade families brought their graduates parading by in their cars to say goodbye!

Our 8<sup>th</sup> graders have had a great year and it was nice to take some time to celebrate all that they have accomplished. Even though untraditional this year, it was special and we know they are well prepared for all their future successes ahead.

### **End of the school year information**

We will have times set aside for materials to be returned and for us to give to you any materials your children need to take home. These “material exchanges” will take place on the following days with more details and specifics to be provided next week.

#### **Materials exchange**

**May 27<sup>th</sup>**

- **8<sup>th</sup> grade ONLY**
- Drop off/pick up 1-3pm. Schedule by alphabetical order of last name sent today to 8<sup>th</sup> grade families.

**June 1<sup>st</sup>**

- K/1<sup>st</sup> grade drop off/pick up 9-11:00am
- 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> grade drop off/pick up 1-3pm

**June 2<sup>nd</sup>**

4/5<sup>th</sup> grade drop off/pick up 1-3pm

**June 3<sup>rd</sup>**

6/7<sup>th</sup> grade drop off/pick up 1-3pm

On the June 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> dates, we will try to coordinate sibling pickup so families don't need to make multiple trips. Please communicate with your students' homeroom teachers which pickup works best for your family. We ask that you choose only one day/time.

I do know a number of people want to be able to say goodbye and allow their children to end the school year in a personal way with their teachers. We have considered car parades, and other options as well, but we remain uncertain if the logistics will work out. We certainly will have the teachers at the material exchanges, so please bring your children with you, if you are able, to provide the opportunity for a word or wave with their teachers.

### Scheduled “Special Days”

The last week of school we will have several events scheduled to end the year in a special way.

- **June 2<sup>nd</sup>**  
**Read-In Day** – We encourage students to read between 9:00am and 12:00pm. Send pics to us at [photos@stfrancisraleigh.org](mailto:photos@stfrancisraleigh.org)
- **June 3<sup>rd</sup>**  
**Step-up Day** – Find out what next year will be like from the teachers your student will have next year! We will send out a final Zoom schedule next week!
- **June 4<sup>th</sup>**  
**Virtual Field Day** – We encourage students to get outside and “be physical” between 9:00am and 12:00pm. Send pics to us at [photos@stfrancisraleigh.org](mailto:photos@stfrancisraleigh.org)
- **June 5<sup>th</sup>**  
**Virtual Praise Music** – our traditional end of the year streamed live at 9:00am from Church. Details to follow

### Summer Resource Information

Given our current situation, we have chosen to handle our summer packets differently this year. Since the last trimester was delivered online we have decided to make the summer packet a “Summer Resource” to provide a review of more in-depth material. Teachers in each grade will make the summer resource for their current students and we will distribute (virtually) them in June. These resources will be provided solely for review.

### Diocesan Baccalaureate Liturgy of the Word

Bishop Luis will recognize the graduates of our Catholic schools with a **special Baccalaureate Service of the Word Friday, May 22 at 10am** This service will take place at Holy Name of Jesus Cathedral and be **live streamed via the diocesan website**.

One graduating 8<sup>th</sup> grader, our own Sophie Ingle, will represent all those graduating from diocesan middle schools, and a representative each from Cardinal Gibbons High School, John Paul II High School and St. Thomas More Academy will participate in the liturgy.

Please tune into the live stream Friday, May 22, and pray with Bishop Luis in recognition of the achievements of the Class of 2020, and for God’s continued guidance and safekeeping of them as they move forward into the future.

Finally, I have been getting some emails and questions about the start of the next school year, especially since we have moved into “Phase 2” as per Governor Cooper yesterday. I have met weekly with the Catholic Schools Office and the local Catholic School principals, follow what local school systems and universities are announcing, and receive input from the Diocese and Parish, as well as track what national and state health officials are saying toward steps of a “reopening” plan.

While nothing has been firmly decided yet, there has been some guidance from authorities. We continue to make plans, as best we can, on that information, and will be prepared in August for what we are allowed to do for the continuing excellent education of your children.

I know you need to make personal and financial considerations and decisions for the future. Please be assured that all information is shared widely, completely, and in the most timely manner possible with all of you. Our parents and guardians are our partners in their student’s education, and their children’s first

teachers, and we don't take that partnership lightly or for granted. We will continue to be transparent in our communications regarding our considerations, and in our plans for the future to all stakeholders.

Thank you again for your continued patience, prayers and support of The Franciscan School!

With much appreciation,

Michael Watson  
Principal at The Franciscan