

Dear Parents,

Archbishop Robert Carlson has announced **that all schools and religious education programs in the Archdiocese of St. Louis will close beginning Wednesday, March 18<sup>th</sup>.**

Archbishop Carlson made this decision in cooperation with local and state government and health officials. Archbishop Carlson says the health and safety of the people of the archdiocese is a priority and sees this decision as the best path forward to mitigate the spread of the COVID-19 virus in our area.

We continue to work with the Archdiocese of St. Louis and state and local health officials to ensure the safety of children. We are in this together and remind you that your role as parents is the most critical component in the strategy of preventing the spread of this illness.

- If a family member is [symptomatic](#) of the COVID-19 coronavirus, please contact your county health department. Officials operating the hotline will give you information on testing and the need to self-quarantine.
- If you or a close relative plans to travel, you are advised to check the [Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\) link for travel guidelines and the latest updates on areas with confirmed cases of COVID-19](#). If you are traveling to an area where the virus is present or are unsure whether or not it is present at your travel destination, please contact the St. Louis County Department of Health Hotline at (314) 615-2660 for further instruction.
- Be aware of how COVID-19 spreads and what you can do to prevent it. That information is similar to the procedures we use in preventing influenza and can be found [here](#).
- State and health officials have banned gatherings of 50 or more people.

Prayer is of the utmost importance. Please continue to pray the prayer given to us by the USCCB. You can find the prayer posted at [archstl.org/coronavirus](http://archstl.org/coronavirus).

If you have any questions please contact me.

Members of the Archdiocese are meeting this week to discuss First Communion and Confirmation and as soon as details are available we will notify the families.

Deacon Fred