



DIOCESE OF METUCHEN

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OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

March 7, 2019

Dear Parents,

What a great joy it was to begin this Lenten season with your children! I was able to celebrate Ash Wednesday yesterday with the students of St. Joseph School. We began the day with a beautiful liturgy where students from the fifth grade proclaimed the readings in a prayerful, reverent manner and the choir provided our sacred music. What a wonderful way to begin the day and the Lenten season! At the end of Mass, eighth grade students presented me with a beautiful cross that had been made at the school with a 3-D printer; a real one-of-a-kind gift! The students also expressed their condolences and support for my family following my father's passing. I have been very moved by their concern and appreciate all of their prayers.

After Mass, I toured the school, visiting each classroom and learning about all of the students' activities. Among the stories I heard, they shared with me their experiences at the Maker Faire at Bishop Ahr High School and all of their STEM activities. There is no doubt that they enjoyed the experience. The diversity of St. Joseph School is such a beautiful reflection of God's creation, adding to the spirit of joy that permeates the school. It is evident that they are working hard and thriving in a loving, faith-filled atmosphere.

I am grateful to Father McGuffey, Mrs. Johnson, the faculty, and staff for their hospitality today. I am most grateful to you for the faith you have placed in St. Joseph School, recognizing the great gift of a Catholic school education. I hope you have already registered for the 2019-2020 school year! I know that it can be a financial sacrifice to have children in a Catholic school, and I thank you for this sacrifice and all you undertake out of love for your children. I am so grateful to my parents for providing me with a Catholic school education, as it was so important in my formation.

As we are in the midst of our Year of Spiritual Awakening and Renewal in preparation for the consecration of our diocese to Jesus through Our Lady of Guadalupe, may the return of our hearts to the Lord this Lent be a true conversion. May this Lenten season renew our complete dependence on God so that we might strive more perfectly and faithfully to "repent and believe in the Gospel." Know of my love and prayers for you during this Lenten season of grace.

With renewed best wishes, I remain

Yours in Christ,

Most Reverend James F. Checchio, JCD, MBA
Bishop of Metuchen

cc: Reverend James McGuffey
Mrs. Roseann Johnson