



DIOCESE OF ORANGE
DEPARTMENT OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS
13280 CHAPMAN AVENUE, GARDEN GROVE, CA 92840

12 August 2020

Dear Our Lady of Guadalupe Families,

Blessings to you during this most extraordinary time.

We write to you today to share some news regarding the future of Our Lady of Guadalupe School. As we all know, our world has been faced with unexpected obstacles throughout this pandemic. Routines were altered, and constants in our lives suddenly became very uncertain. Many parents lost employment, and those who kept jobs wondered if they were next to be furloughed. Our world has suffered great loss over the past few months—loss of precious lives, loss of jobs, loss of social interaction. While the level of loss is unique to each individual, no one has gone untouched.

As you know, Our Lady of Guadalupe School has been a beacon of hope and faith for over 60 years. However, it has not existed without its share of challenges. Even with the faith-filled leadership of Mrs. Stella Costello, dedicated teachers and staff, committed families, and financial support from the parish and diocese, enrollment has declined by 114 students over the past 10 years. In May, enrollment was 126 students; today, enrollment is 85 students. Due to declining enrollment and the uncertain financial realities of the coming year, we have decided to cease operation of Our Lady of Guadalupe School effective immediately.

We recognize that this immediate closure comes at a difficult time for you, our current families. We were hopeful that the changes in staffing and class structure announced last month would be enough to address the financial deficits, but with a steady decline in enrollment, our plans did not come to fruition. Please know that we will work with you to help you enroll your children at another Catholic school. We are committed to honoring your current financial aid awards at one of our local OC Catholic schools. It is our sincerest hope that we may continue to see your children grow in faith and excel academically for years to come.

While we had planned to launch a dual-language immersion program in grades TK/K this year, the current COVID-19 pandemic has put these plans on hold. With God's grace and the gift of time, the plans will be further defined and developed, so that they can be implemented when the time is right. This is a moment of faith and trust in God's providence each and every day. You will be informed every step of the way as we work to finalize and refine our plans for our new and renewed school program.

We are most grateful to Mrs. Stella Costello who has led the school with grace and hope this past year. Even in the midst of change, she exhibits faith and hope in Our Lord. We also commend the faculty and staff for their love, prayers, and dedication to your children. Throughout the pandemic, they continued to teach with love and faith to ensure that your children received the best possible education through distance learning. Please know that we will do our best to assist our teachers and administrators in finding employment at another Catholic school.

In the next two days you will be contacted by Mr. Ernie Garcia, Director of Business Affairs, to discuss tuition refunds and the option of enrolling your children at one of our OC Catholic schools. Mr. Garcia and his team can answer questions and guide you through this process. Please know that we are here to support you during this time of change.



ROMAN CATHOLIC
DIOCESE of ORANGE

Scripture reminds us that our God is a God of hope who leads us into the future (*Jeremiah 29:11*). We pray that this same divine Hope may companion your family and bring you comfort into the foreseeable future. Thank you for your constant support and love in the mission of Our Lady of Guadalupe School.

Please know that you are in our prayers during this extraordinary time.
In mission,

Erin C.O. Barisano

Erin C.O. Barisano, Ed. D.
Superintendent of Schools
Diocese of Orange

Rev. Edward G. Becker

Reverend Edward G. Becker
Pastor
Our Lady of Guadalupe Church