


PRESS RELEASE

Archdiocese of Los Angeles, Office of Media Relations
3424 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90010 | phone: (213) 637-7215 | fax: (213) 637-6215 | MediaRelations@la-archdiocese.org

CONTACT:

Adrian Alarcon | (213) 637-7216 | amalarcon@la-archdiocese.org
Itzel Magaña | (213) 637- 7491 | imagana@la-archdiocese.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 13, 2020

L.A. ARCHDIOCESE ANNOUNCES DECISION TO CLOSE CATHOLIC SCHOOLS AND MOVE TO REMOTE LEARNING AMID COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Archbishop José H. Gomez and Mr. Paul Escala will be available for media interviews today at 3 p.m.

The Department of Catholic School of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles announced today that Catholic schools in Los Angeles, Ventura and Santa Barbara counties will close and move to remote learning effective Tuesday, March 17 through at least March 31 to limit the spread of COVID-19 (coronavirus). **Archbishop José H. Gomez and Mr. Paul Escala, Senior Director and Superintendent of Catholic Schools for the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, will be available for media interviews today at 3 p.m. at the Archdiocesan Catholic Center at 3424 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90010.**

“Our Catholic schools are an essential element of the Church’s mission here in Los Angeles, and we serve nearly 75,000 students, including large numbers from low-income and immigrant communities,” said Archbishop Gomez. “Since the outbreak of the coronavirus, we have been consulting with government and public health officials and working with our pastors, principals and school administrators to find the best ways to reduce the risk of infection. While we do not have any known cases to date, we believe that temporarily closing our schools and moving to distance-learning will help protect the public health and keep our families and neighbors safe from harm.”

“Closing schools in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles for at least two weeks mid-year is unprecedented,” wrote Mr. Escala in a letter to all Catholic school families in the Archdiocese. “We recognize the significant impact this extended closure will have on our entire community, students, families, and staff. We also acknowledge the burden this will place on our staff and working families. As a community of faith, we must come together and help one another – communicate, share resources, offer support.”

The Department of Catholic School will be working closely with principals to ensure that schools are prepared to maintain learning during the closure by providing resources for online and distance learning.

“Our highest priority during this period is to ensure our schools are prepared to maintain learning during the closure,” said Mr. Escala. “The Department of Catholic Schools of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles will continue to provide support to schools during the closure period, on-site and remotely.”

Attached is the letter from Mr. Escala that was sent to all schools today.

The Archdiocese also announced today [new liturgical accommodations](#) to limit the spread of COVID-19 among the community of faith, including the dispensation from the obligation of attending Sunday Mass through the end of March. The Archdiocese is sharing updates and latest plans on limiting the spread of COVID-19 lacatholics.org/emergency.

#