



+ May 11, 2020  
Monday of the 5<sup>th</sup> Week of Eastertide

Dear Pastors, Priest Administrators, Parochial Vicars, and Principals:

Easter blessings to all! Although these times have been challenging and unusual, we pray that these Easter days have been a source of grace and peace for you.

We write to share important developments regarding our promised plans to review archdiocesan policy in employment matters. We have decided, for the good of our local church, to convene a special task force to study relevant issues, reflect on church teaching, assess the current situation in the archdiocese, and make recommendations detailing a thoughtful, faithful way to move forward.

The task force will receive three charges to both focus and limit its mission:

- 1) Review, study, discuss, and articulate the official teaching and tradition of the Roman Catholic Church as it relates to natural law, the moral life, conscience formation, free will, sin, and human social and sexual development. This formation and education will include official church documents such as papal encyclicals, apostolic constitutions and exhortations, conciliar documents, pastoral and doctrinal statements from bishops, and *The Code of Canon Law*.
- 2) Assess, analyze, and summarize the understanding, convictions, beliefs, and opinions of a variety of archdiocesan stakeholders regarding the Ministerial Covenant and its use in employment decisions. Stakeholders to be surveyed and/or interviewed include parents of students currently in Catholic schools; Catholic school principals, teachers, and staff; priests, and alumni of Catholic high schools. Other dioceses of similar size will also be asked to share their policies, procedures, and employment contracts.
- 3) Recommend to the Archbishop an informed and thoughtful approach to renewing the Ministerial Covenant that values and respects both of the above goals, namely one that embraces and affirms the fullness of church teaching while honoring and appreciating the *sensus fidelium*.

We are pleased that Father Ronald Nuzzi has agreed to chair this task force. Father Nuzzi is well known to our Catholic school principals and pastors as a leader in Catholic school administration and brings with him a wealth of national and international experience. He evinces a great passion for the faith and for Catholic schools, and we trust he will serve this effort well for the good of the Archdiocese of Seattle.

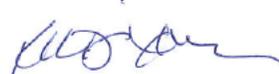
In addition to Father Nuzzi, we plan to appoint ten members to the task force, selected from various groups including principals, teachers, priests, parents of students enrolled in our Catholic schools, and representatives of the Office of Catholic Schools. More information about expectations for participation, time commitment required, and nominations, including self-nominations, will be forthcoming presently.

For your dedication, faith, and commitment to Catholic education, we are truly grateful. Especially during these difficult times, it is a grace and blessing to share in our common vision for a bright future, celebrated in the spirit of Easter, calling upon our Risen Lord to give us the peace that only His light can bring.

In the Heart of Christ,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Paul D. Etienne". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Paul" being the most prominent.

Most Rev. Paul D. Etienne. D.D., S.T.L.  
Archbishop of Seattle

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kristin Dixon". The signature is cursive and somewhat stylized, with the first name "Kristin" being the most prominent.

Kristin Dixon, M.Ed.  
Superintendent of Schools