



## ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA

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OFFICE of the ARCHBISHOP

November 9, 2020

Dear Friends,

As Thanksgiving approaches, I offer you prayerful greetings and warmest wishes, on behalf of Bishop Michael Fitzgerald and myself.

When I returned to Philadelphia to serve as Archbishop, one activity I looked forward to was the opportunity to visit the schools and celebrate the Holy Eucharist with the students and staff. The onset of the COVID virus brought us challenges including slowing down the opportunity to meet our students and teachers. However, even though I have not been in the schools as much as I desired, I have witnessed and frequently hear about the great works being accomplished each day by Catholic educators across the Archdiocese of Philadelphia.

In addition to my personal witness of the efforts taking place in the schools, I have been told of the hard work that our staff does to meet the academic and spiritual needs of the students despite great challenges. Preparing daily to teach in simultaneous virtual and face to face instruction taking place in the Elementary Schools, Secondary Schools and Schools of Special Education demands dedication, hard work and perseverance.

During this season of giving thanks, I would like to thank all of you for your dedication to the Catholic School students across the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. I am grateful for your daily witness and personal effort to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ each day both within your classroom and throughout your school community.

I understand that one of the very best ways to say thank you to a teacher is with the gift of time. I am happy to offer you a day off as a gesture of my appreciation. May this day help to provide time for family and renewal.

I ask that the Pastor and Principal in the Elementary Schools and each Leadership team in the Secondary Schools and Schools of Special Education decide on a day that will provide an extra day of rest during the Thanksgiving holiday. Please enjoy this time and thank you for all you are doing.

Catholic education in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia is truly a gift from God that provides for our students well beyond their years in the classroom. Thank you for embracing that gift and for your dedication and service each day to carrying out the mission in your school.

Sincerely in Christ,

Most Reverend Nelson J. Pérez, D.D.  
Archbishop of Philadelphia