

Dear Parents of St. Gertrude Students,

It is with profound regret that I have found it necessary to make a very difficult decision regarding the future of St. Gertrude School. There has been a steadily declining enrollment in our school with a negative effect on both the quality of the academic program and the financial base. I have sought the advice and assistance of the Catholic Schools Office, our Bishop Stephen Blaire, and that of our parish advisory and finance councils.

We are not able to continue under the present circumstances; but we are also unwilling to choose to close the school permanently. Based on the counsel I have received, I have requested and received from Bishop Stephen Blaire the faculty **to suspend the operation of the school temporarily and engage a national consultants' group to conduct a feasibility study. The purpose of this study will be to determine if it is possible for a Catholic educational program to thrive and succeed here in our parish school site.** Therefore, St. Gertrude School will not be open for the 2006-7 school year.

Our diocesan standards for a quality Catholic educational program include the following:

- ❖ An adequate enrollment which generates sufficient tuition
- ❖ A professionally qualified leader and staff who continually monitor the total school curriculum, assess its strengths and weaknesses, and work toward continual improvement and growth
- ❖ A financial base that ensures adequate funds for staff salaries and benefits, instructional materials and equipment, integrated technology for classrooms and office
- ❖ A physical education program as well as a fully developed safe environment program
- ❖ Wide parental involvement in the support of school program and policies as well as fund-raising, marketing, and recruiting new families
- ❖ The implementation of a five-year strategic action plan in order to merit ongoing accreditation by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges

It is the hope of all who have loved this school and its fine history and of those who want the gift of a Catholic education for the children of south Stockton that the results of the feasibility study will give us the information we need to re-build and re-new the spirit of this school and its history of 57 years.

We have taken much time to study all aspects of this significant decision because of all of the families that it affects, its dedicated staff and volunteers, our many generous donors. We realize that the lateness of the decision is going to create a hardship for you and for this I apologize sincerely. We have moved as steadily as we were able.

It is our hope that many St. Gertrude students will find openings in the other Catholic schools in the city of Stockton or perhaps in Lodi or Manteca. We have informed the principals of those schools of our decision and asked them to open their doors to you as that is possible in their enrollment. Those principals will be in contact with Mrs. Rodriguez as your requests for enrollment are made; you are urged to have all of your accounts complete with St. Gertrude School. Below are the names of the schools, their addresses, phone numbers, and the names of the principals:

St. George School	144 W. 5 th Street	463-1540	Frank Remkiewicz
Annunciation School	1110 N. Lincoln St.	444-4000	Carla Donaldson
St. Luke School	4005 N. Sutter Street	464-0801	Patricia Simon
Presentation School	1635 Ben Holt Dr.	472-2140	Diane Rothschild
St. Anne School	200 S. Pleasant Ave. Lodi	333-7580	Dennis Taricco
St. Anthony School	323 N. Fremont Manteca	823-4513	Mary Lou Hoffman

I ask your prayer for God's blessing on this important decision and the feasibility study. It is our expectation that those conducting the study will be involving school families, the parish, and the neighboring communities so that the most helpful conclusions will be reached. It is our intention to keep everyone informed as that is possible as the study progresses. Once it has been finalized, we will again share that with the parish councils in order to move to the next best place in the future life of St. Gertrude School and Parish.