



## Diocese of Monterey

## Office of the Bishop

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November 5, 2021

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

As Bishop of the Diocese of Monterey, I write to you regarding the ministry of Catholic education, which is an ongoing priority in its importance for our families and children. Supporting thoughtful and informed planning efforts for the Department of Catholic Schools supports all Catholic schools. Sound planning is essential for the vibrant future we desire for our Catholic schools. After witnessing the ways in which our Catholic schools persevered in the face of recent adversity, I am also more convinced than ever that our Catholic schools are stronger together, collaborating effectively for the good of all. Therefore, involving Catholic school leaders and communities in discussions to share their hopes and perspectives ensures a participative and collaborative approach to our planning.

To set the stage for thoughtful and informed planning, a process was initiated in early 2020 to gather and analyze school, parish, and demographic data throughout the Diocese. This initial analysis provided future considerations for further study for the Northern, Central, and Southern clusters of Catholic schools, yet pursuing next steps in planning was postponed as school communities worked to navigate the challenges of Covid-19. It is now a favorable time to continue planning efforts via an introductory *Study for Considerations for Catholic Education in the Salinas Area*.

The services of Catholic School Management have been retained to support this study. Catholic School Management, a division of Christian Brothers Services, is a national consulting firm with vast experience supporting the educational mission of our Church in working with dioceses, parishes, schools, and religious orders. Continued data gathering and analysis is already occurring, and shortly after Thanksgiving, in person interviews with school leadership and initial school community focus groups will occur at Catholic schools in and around Salinas.

There are long traditions of Catholic elementary and secondary education in the Salinas Valley dating back more than a century. While it is acknowledged that over the years there has been frequent conversation in the community regarding possibilities for the futures of Notre Dame High School and Palma School, it is important to understand that this study will recognize the conversations that have been occurring, yet has a broader focus to include an array of considerations surrounding Catholic education in the Salinas area. The results of this initial study will be provided to me in early 2022 and will guide next steps for further communication, study, and planning throughout the Diocese. As Christ's faithful, we are called to promote and to maintain our Catholic schools (*Can. 800 §2*), much in the same way that our Church has the duty and the right of educating through the divine mission of helping all to arrive at the fullness of Christian life (*Can. 800 §2*).

Should you have any specific questions, please direct them to the Department of Catholic Schools at [schools@dioceseofmonterey.org](mailto:schools@dioceseofmonterey.org). I hope that you will join in prayer with me to support our efforts in planning to ensure the vibrancy of our Catholic schools and the ongoing availability of the benefits of a Catholic education to families throughout the Diocese of Monterey.

Sincerely in Christ,

Most Reverend Daniel E. Garcia  
Bishop of Monterey