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Catholic Schools Office announces plans for 2021-2022 school year

SPECIAL TO
THE MESSAGE

Diocese of Evansville Superintendent of Schools Dr. Daryl Hagan has announced plans for the 2021-2022 school year, including details on COVID-19 health and safety guidance.

"I want to begin by thanking our principals, teachers, staff, students and parents for their successful efforts last year in addressing the pandemic," Hagan said. "While protocols are changing and evolving, I am confident that if we continue to work collaboratively we can experience the same level of success as last year."

Hagan announced that Catholic schools will open on-time again for the 2021-2022 school year and provide high quality in-person instruction five days a week. There are 26 Catholic schools across eight of the diocese's 12 counties.

He also provided COVID-19 health and safety guidelines for Catholic schools, which he has shared with pastors of

parishes with schools and school administrations. This information is subject to change as CDC and other expert guidance changes.

The guidelines include:

- Vaccinations are not mandated.
- Masks for students, staff and volunteers are optional. However, students who are transported to and/or from school utilizing school buses will be required to wear a mask by federal guidelines.
- Social distancing protocols will not be required.

The guidelines and other reopening plans comply with the State of Indiana Executive Order 21-17.

Hagan strongly encouraged families to continue following recommended preventive measures to reduce the spread of germs and stay healthy. He stressed that daily health screenings completed at home before sending students to school and routine handwashing are important habits to continue in the new school year.

Diocesan administrators, teachers honored for milestone years of service

SPECIAL TO THE MESSAGE

Teachers, administrators and school pastors from the Diocese of Evansville's 26 Catholic schools will convene again in-person in early August for the annual back-to-school gathering and Mass. Last year's event was held virtually due to COVID-19.

During the kick-off for the 2021-2022 school year, Catholic school administrators and educators with milestone anniversaries in 2021, as well as those retiring, will be recognized.

"I am pleased to acknowledge Catholic educators celebrating milestone anniversaries and/or retirement," said Superintendent of Schools Dr. Daryl Hagan. "Their commitment shown over the last 15 months to the students they served was heroic. Thank you for your commitment to the mission of Catholic education."

Each year, the Catholic Schools Office announces a theme for the upcoming school year. For the 2021-2022 school year, "Catholic Schools: Saints in the Making" will be the common theme among all 26 Catholic schools.

"We look forward to a year of exploring the saints and applying their inspirational stories to how we live," Hagan said.

See related story on page 8.



CNS photo by Guglielmo Mangiapane, Reuters
Pope Francis greets the crowd July 11 as he leads the Angelus from a balcony of Gemelli hospital in Rome, where he continues recovery following scheduled colon surgery.

Hundreds gather outside hospital to greet recovering pope

BY JUNNO AROCHO ESTEVES
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pilgrims and well-wishers gathered at Rome's Gemelli hospital to greet Pope Francis as he made his first public appearance in a week after undergoing intestinal surgery.

Appearing July 11 on the 10th-floor balcony of his suite of rooms at the hospital, the pope was greeted with applause and shouts of "Viva il papa" ("Long live the pope") from the crowd that stood under the scorching midday sun to see him.

"I thank you all," the pope said. "I have felt your closeness and the support of your prayers. Thank you very much."

Pope Francis arrived at Gemelli hospital July 4 to undergo "a scheduled surgical intervention for a symptomatic diverticular stenosis of the colon," the Vatican said. The pope has recovered steadily from his surgery and resumed working from the hospital.

Among the well-wishers outside the hospital was Liliana Valina who, like Pope Francis, is a native of Argentina living in Rome.

Draped in the Argentine flag

after the country's July 10 win against Brazil in the Copa America soccer championship, Valina told Catholic News Service that she was there "because I care for this pope very much and not just because he's from Argentina like me."

"I think he tells Jesus' message in a clear way, even on things that are uncomfortable for some," she said. "I came here hoping that he recovers soon, that he be healthy."

When asked what she would tell her fellow countryman if she could speak directly to him, Valina said: "Never feel alone because you have God and you have many people who love you and are with you."

Marlene Barbosa, a native of Peru living in Rome, also was outside the hospital with her husband, Maximo Lopez, as well as her mother, Susanna Morante, who traveled from Washington, D.C., to be with her family and have a chance to see the pope.

"We wanted to see him and receive his blessing because we are Catholic, we are believers and through prayer, we have been close to the pope in these days in which his health has been delicate," Barbosa told CNS.

"We are with him, we are always praying for him so that he will recover completely," she said. "We love him, all of Peru loves him and the whole world loves him."

In his address, the pope reflected on the Sunday Gospel reading from

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First gathering of parish liaisons

On May 6, Diocese of Evansville parish liaisons and the Committee for Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities met for the first time at the Diocese of Evansville Catholic Center. Mary Kaye Falcony, assistant director for the Office of Catechesis, tells *The Message* that the meeting began with prayer, light refreshments and time for informal introductions. Committee members served as discussion leaders at their tables. Falcony said it was helpful to get to know the liaisons, listening to what led them to this ministry and what excited them about their role. See related column, *A Place for All*, on page 4.



The Message photo by Mary Kaye Falcony, Office of Catechesis Assistant Director