



February 27, 2019

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I have been blessed throughout my life, starting with two wonderful parents. Besides the gift of life, they saw to it that I was formed in the Christian faith, beginning with the new life of baptism. They also insisted that I receive a Catholic education.

Things were easier in those days, thanks mainly to the selflessness of religious sisters and the almost universal choice that other Catholic parents made for Catholic education. Today, Catholic parents have a more conscientious choice, and a sometimes a more difficult choice because of the expense. Although Catholic schools are still widely available in the Diocese of Joliet, fewer parents make the choice for those schools, and parishes find it more difficult to support those schools financially.

That is why I assembled the Schools Task Force over a year ago. I am grateful for the efforts of the Task Force members and for their conclusions. I am committed to Catholic education, recognizing that the path forward will not be an easy one.

Parents are the primary educators of their children and will always have the responsibility for choosing what they believe is the best means for educating their children. As the chief pastor of the Diocese of Joliet, I remain convinced that education in Catholic schools is a good choice and invite Catholic parents to share that conviction.

The report which the Schools Task Force submitted to me is now posted on our diocesan website. Before adopting it, I will seek input from our School Board, Finance Council, Pastoral Council and Presbyteral (Priests) Council in the next few months. After hearing from them, I will make a final determination about how we, as a diocese, will proceed. Please, keep this consultation in your prayers so that, ultimately, we can do the Lord's will and serve our families and their children in the best possible way through our schools.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "R. Daniel Conlon". To the left of the signature is a small blue cross.

Most Reverend R. Daniel Conlon  
Bishop of Joliet