

Dear St. Hilary School Parents and Guardians,

There has been a tremendous amount of information reported through the media regarding COVID-19, also known as Coronavirus. Concern over this virus can make children and families anxious. While we don't know where and to what extent the disease may spread here in our community, we do know it is contagious and the severity of illness can vary from individual to individual. There are steps we can all take to prevent the spread of this virus.

**At this time, there are no confirmed cases of coronavirus in Ohio.** However, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommend that schools actively plan and be prepared for possible scenarios. We would like to make you aware of the steps we are taking, and the steps you can take to assist us, to better prepare St. Hilary School students, faculty, staff, and families for the potential community transmission of the coronavirus (COVID-19).

Our custodial staff treats our building by regularly disinfecting surfaces. We will continue this practice, as we are told that disinfecting surfaces is an effective preventative approach not only for COVID-19 but for influenza, the common cold and other illnesses. We will continue to track absence rates, and we will continue to review and model basic hygiene and healthy lifestyle practices with our students. Additionally, on Friday, March 6, we will be disinfecting the entire school again while the students are not in the building.

Soap and hand towel supplies are checked frequently by the maintenance staff. Hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes are available in all classrooms, offices and community areas. Additionally, health promotion materials are posted throughout St. Hilary School. Please remember:

- Practice good hygiene.
- Hand washing is the best preventative for the spread of germs. Students and staff should be washing hands frequently, especially before and after meal and including snack time.
- Avoid touching your face, cover your nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing and practice good overall health habits, including sleeping, eating and drinking water appropriately.
- Avoid sharing drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, dishes, towels or other items. Wash these items thoroughly with soap and water after use.
- Remain at home when ill. Seek medical attention if your symptoms don't improve.
- The CDC also recommends making sure you've received this season's flu vaccine; it won't prevent coronavirus, but it will reduce the risk of contracting regular influenza, which means fewer people will need medical care at the same time as any coronavirus patients.

As with any illness, please notify St. Hilary School if your child is unable to attend school due to illness. In addition to our fever-free student policy, faculty and staff have been directed to remain home at least until they are fever-free without medication for 24 hours, longer if symptoms have not subsided. It always a good idea to have a plan for the care of your child at home in the event he or she is ill and you need to go to work.

Anyone who exhibits symptoms should seek immediate medical attention. Click [here](#) for information on symptoms, prevention and treatment from the CDC.

In accordance with CDC guidelines, if a student, faculty or staff member travels to an area identified as a “community spread of coronavirus,” they may not return to school until it is safe to do so as determined by CDC guidelines. These guidelines continue to evolve and can be accessed at [www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html).

You may also find the following websites helpful for general information on COVID-19:  
[Center for Disease Control](#)  
[Summit County Health Department](#)

While this is a serious public health situation, the CDC continues to believe the immediate risk to the general public remains low at this time. Yet, in today’s connected world, outbreaks of diseases are always of concern. We are in close, ongoing contact with the Diocese of Cleveland and the Summit County Health Department. We will follow their recommendations and guidance, and we do have a plan in place in the event we would need to close the school. In the event of a pandemic, St. Hilary School will work in conjunction with the appropriate local agencies to activate our Emergency Response Plan. At this time, we have not been instructed to do anything further than to take standard infectious disease precautions.

Our ultimate goal is to protect the health and safety of our students, staff and community, reduce the number of illnesses and limit school disruption. If you have any questions, please contact the school office.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Woodman  
Principal