



THE DIOCESE OF COLUMBUS

To: Catholic School Families of the Diocese of Columbus
From: Adam J. Dufault, Ed.D., Superintendent of Catholic Schools
Date: August 28, 2026
Subject: Support for the Spirit of Hope Fund

Dear Catholic School Families,

Recently, communities across the Diocese of Columbus, especially in Perry, Muskingum, and Licking Counties, have been deeply affected by severe storms and terrible flooding. While the waters have receded, many families are now facing the difficult work of cleaning up, rebuilding, and beginning again. Some have lost nearly everything. Our neighbors need our help, and as Catholic families, we have an opportunity to respond with the compassion of Christ.

For this reason, I am asking every Catholic school in the Diocese of Columbus to both pray for the families and communities affected by these storms and to organize and carry out a fundraiser for the Diocese's **Spirit of Hope Disaster Response Fund** (<https://columbuscatholic.org/disaster-response/>). Each school may determine a support activity that is appropriate for its community and complete the effort in the coming weeks. The goal is not simply to raise money, but to give our students and families a tangible opportunity to practice the Christian call to love our neighbor and respond generously when others are suffering.

This request is particularly fitting in light of Bishop Fernandes' recent pastoral letter, *Catholic Education: An Act of Hope*. Bishop Fernandes reminds us that Catholic education is not merely the transmission of information; it is the formation of the whole person and an education in how to live in the world in light of our faith. He describes Catholic education as "an act of hope" and calls our schools to be communities where faith, culture, and life truly come together.

Our response to this disaster is one meaningful way to put that vision into practice. We teach our children what Christian hope looks like when we help those who are hurting. We teach them that the suffering of our neighbors matters to us and that the gifts God has given us are meant to be shared. One hundred percent of the money raised for the Spirit of Hope Disaster Response Fund will support long-term recovery efforts through parishes and Catholic organizations serving families in the affected communities.

Thank you for helping our Catholic school communities live the Gospel in a concrete way. In a time of hardship, let us turn toward our neighbors and show them that they are not alone.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Adam J. Dufault, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Catholic Schools