



March 5, 2018

My dear brother priest:

Office of the Bishop

As you probably know, in consultation with the Presbyteral Council and the parish school communities, the diocese began to collect a per student fee from those attending our schools to pay for a series of new initiatives centering on academic excellence, marketing and development.

In tandem with this conversation, the Council undertook a discussion of how parishes without schools should participate in supporting the ministry to Catholic elementary education. After a series of Council meetings and a set of deanery consultations, the Council passed and I am implementing a policy which requires that parishes without schools provide three quarters of one percent of their annual ordinary income to assist the ministry of Catholic education.

The deanery discussions noted that many parishes have already undertaken support on this level through aid to their own students in Catholic schools or scholarship assistance given to other schools. The deanery feedback also stressed that parishes without schools should have several options in determining how they will carry out this responsibility.

For this reason, the Council passed and I am implementing a policy with three options:

- 1) parish can give the three quarters of one percent in aid to their own children who attend a Catholic elementary school;
- 2) they can give that amount to a specific school which is especially in need;
- 3) they can contribute to the Bishop Flores Scholarships which the diocese distributes to students in need.

If a parish wishes to raise these funds through a direct appeal to their parishioners, the Stewardship Office can offer assistance to carry out a program similar to the "Sharing Our Blessings" program which has helped South Bay Parishes to raise scholarship funds for their students.

I am deeply grateful to our pastors with schools for their continuing work on behalf of Catholic schools, especially in implementing the new head tax. And for this reason I think it is especially fair to request that our parishes without schools undertake this new step in service, equity and collaboration.

With deepest thanks for all you do, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend Robert W. McElroy  
Bishop of San Diego