

April 2017

ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO



OCS PASTORS' UPDATE

FEATURED PASTOR

WELCOME FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT



Rev. Francisco Ortega

Fr. Francisco Ortega was born in Mexico City in 1975, but was raised in Puebla City, Mexico. When he was 14, he began singing in choir, learned the basics in music and learned how to play the guitar.

Later, he became an altar server where he first felt the call to priesthood. He studied at the Seminario Palafoxiano. He was ordained on June 29, 2005.

Fr. Francisco is the current pastor of Sacred Heart Parish in Melrose Park.

Dear Pastors,

We are entering the busiest time of the school year. While numerous events fill the final weeks of classes, this is also a time to celebrate the progress and accomplishments of our Catholic schools. As always, I am grateful for the many ways you support our Catholic schools.

Given that many budget and personnel-related decisions are made this time of year, please be reminded of the following:

- If you have not yet submitted your **school budget**, remember you should do so as soon as possible. The sooner your budget is submitted, the sooner it can be reviewed by the OCS and Finance offices. Please contact your Regional Director or DVO if you need help preparing your budget.
- As per my memo from early April, **teacher contracts** should be offered by May 15 (unless you issue a memo extending the contract offer period). You should not offer any teacher contracts until your budget has been submitted and reviewed.
- If you need to conduct a **reduction in staff** due to budgetary reasons, you should contact your Regional Director. The OCS and HR offices have established a defined process for such circumstances.
- If you have not yet done so, you should complete the **principal evaluation process**. Your Regional Director should provide you with assistance in this evaluation. Remember you must speak with your Regional Director if you are considering making a change in your principal, or taking any other employment-related action.
- If you are **hiring a new principal**, your Regional Director should help you with this process. We are committed to securing the best possible leaders of our schools and want to work in partnership with you. The Principal Hiring Manual should be a primary source of help as you hire your next principal.

In the meantime, we continue to work hard to plan for the 2017/18 school year. You may have seen the recent announcement regarding our theme for the coming school year: **We Are One Body**. Echoing the words of St. Paul, this theme evokes a sense of unity and community, closely complimenting the *Renew My Church* Initiative. Most profoundly, our theme calls us to examine how we are the body of Christ to those who we serve. This theme will be referenced heavily in communications and events in the coming school year.

Happy spring!

Jim Rigg, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Catholic Schools
Archdiocese of Chicago

UPCOMING EVENTS

5/4 - Leadership Day and Crystal Awards

5/7 - NCEA Pastor Appreciation Day

5/8 - Catholic Schools Today Radio Show

5/9 - National Teacher Appreciation Day

5/11 - Heart of the School Awards Celebration

5/15 - Deadline to Notify Intent to Renew Teacher Contract

5/25 - Feast of the Ascension

5/29 - Memorial Day (OCS Closed)

Spotlight on Schools

- [Catholic Schools Today April 2017 radio show](#)
- [Mother McAuley's senior is accepted to 22 colleges](#)
- [St. George School students planted radish seeds with Fr. Ken Fleck](#)
- [St. Paul of the Cross second graders made cards for their sacrament buddies, newly baptized children from their parish](#)
- [Marist High School's junior class packed 108,864 meals during their day of service](#)
- [Grandma and Grandpa Kavanaugh attended St. George School's Grandparent's Day for 21 consecutive years](#)
- [Bridgeport Catholic Academy fourth graders reenact the Stations of the Cross](#)
- [St. Thomas of Villanova second graders learn and perform a French folk dance](#)
- [St. Vincent Ferrer students exchange letters with pupils in Greece](#)

Archdiocesan Elementary School Teacher Contracts for 2017/18

The following information is provided to ensure that the process for the distribution of teacher contracts is being followed at your school. Here is a link to [Dr. Rigg's April 7 Special Broadcast](#) related to teacher contracts for your review.

All returning teachers should be offered a contract by May 15, 2017. Teachers have two calendar weeks to sign and return their contract. Teachers should not be offered contracts until the school's FY18 has been submitted and reviewed. Teachers who are offered a contract for 2017/18 must have documented satisfactory performance during the 2016/17 school year. OCS has created a sample delay of contracts memo that principals may use to notify teachers before May 15, 2017 that the distribution of contracts will be delayed.

It is an expectation that all school principals provide teachers with appropriate supervision, coaching and performance feedback each year. **Each teacher should be given a formal, written evaluation annually.**

There are generally two reasons why a teacher would not be offered a contract for the coming school year: 1) budget related Reduction in Staff (RIS) or 2) a performance-based decision not to renew. Principals are encouraged to work with their Regional Director if the RIS process needs to be initiated. If possible all teacher contracts should be offered by June 1, 2017.

There are two changes to the teacher contracts for 2017/2018: 1) Ability to add an alternative start/end date for contracts. In previous contracts, the start date was August 15 and the end date was June 15. 2) Liquidated Damages clause for teachers who break their contract after signing it.

NCEA National Convention and Expo

During Easter week over 8,300 Catholic leaders and educators gathered in St. Louis, Mo for the annual National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA) Convention and Expo. The NCEA Convention and Expo opened with a sacred and beautiful Mass celebrated by the Archbishop of St. Louis, Most Reverend Robert J. Carlson. Archbishop Carlson proclaimed, "In the midst of all the hopes and challenges of our day, Catholic educators have an opportunity to teach and model what is True about our faith, what is beautiful about having a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, and what is good about living Gospel virtues." His inspirational words paved the way for four enriching days of worship and prayer, breakout sessions on Catholic Identity and Evangelization, shared instructional expertise, and deepening vocational awareness. There was a strong emphasis throughout the convention on engaging parents in the faith formation of their children with increased participation in the sacramental life of the parish. We are excited to announce that the Archdiocese of Chicago has been chosen to host the 2019 NCEA Convention and Expo from April 22-25, 2019. Dr. Thomas Burnford, the President/CEO of NCEA, estimates that nearly 10,000 Catholic leaders and educators will travel to Chicago to participate in this transformative experience.

Office of Catholic Schools