

Dear Holy Ghost School Families,

I am sending you this email to inform you that I have decided that Holy Ghost School will close at the end of the current school year. While it may come as a shock to several of you, it has been a painful decision that was not made suddenly nor without much thought, but as Pastor I know it is a decision I must make. Holy Ghost School has for years been experiencing declining student enrollment. The parish has continuously subsidized the school operations in the hope that enrollment would come back to previous levels. Unfortunately, as we look at the next school year, enrollment stands at 37 students confirmed as returning.

It is because of this declining enrollment that the parish has been forced to expend 51% of the weekend collections to keep the school open. Fewer students means less tuition, and greater pressure on fundraising and subsidy. The additional dollars raised through fundraising and the parish subsidy cannot and would not fix the issue; only a large increase in enrollment will solve the problem. The school has remained open while various attempts to increase enrollment were made, but as you can see in the chart below, they fell short of meaningful results.

I ask that in the coming weeks, we treat one another and the entire community with kindness, compassion and forbearance so that we can all best understand where God is leading us next. If you wish to speak to me about this, I would ask that you schedule an appointment.

Thank you,

Fr. John J. Hornicak, Pastor

A history of school enrollment reveals the following trend for the School Year:

Fiscal year	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17
Preschool	26	30	27	35	13	17
Grades K-8	168	150	128	120	120	101
Total	194	180	155	155	133	118

K-8 classrooms have lost 67 students (40%) over the last 5 years. Preschool has also sustained a significant loss of students. The current enrollment is at a critical level, which is resulting in a disproportionate amount of parish resources being allocated to the school. The parish subsidy, at \$302,000 represents 51% of Sunday collections. Diocesan guidelines limit the subsidy to a maximum of 38% of Sunday collections. School operating costs on a per student basis is the second highest among all schools at \$8,600 per child. This is mainly due to the low enrollment, which creates inefficiency. The diocesan average is \$6,021 per child.

A successful Gala to meet this HGS fiscal year's budget is still needed. Please attend the Gala and have an evening out with family and fellow parishioners.