Holy Family School & Program Center is a beacon of hope, through Excellence in Education, in one of the most depressed areas of the City of Chicago, North Lawndale. For 35 years, Holy Family has nourished the mind, body and spirit of community children who need a chance to excel academically, grow spiritually, and together with their parents, create a brighter future. They are beating the odds, and becoming leaders for tomorrow. Now, families are hard hit again.

The landscape in Chicago and Illinois has been changing rapidly for staff and Board to adjust a strategy to keep our children safe, and educated. First, Chicago closed the Public Schools. Holy Family staff immediately established a plan to keep our children safely in school. This was critical because for many children the only two nutritious meals they receive each day are provided at the school, and the break would alter the chance for long term academic success. Additionally, many parents work long hours, or two jobs. Now, some of our parents have been laid off. Missing school is especially detrimental to our population of students. Our children would end up at home alone, in challenged neighborhoods. In addition, some of our students need extended teaching times because they are behind a grade level when they arrived at the school.

Teachers and staff were willing to do anything to try to keep the school and their programs open for the families we serve. This changed overnight, when the Governor declared the "shelter at home" order for all of Illinois, closing all schools. Staff, teachers and the Board of Directors went into high gear again to establish a new plan. They created a plan to bring more than 100 Chromebooks to students, helping to keep them connected with teachers and faculty, and to continue with classes.

As you can imagine, this is a major undertaking as we help students get set-up and connected to the internet. In addition, we are ensuring every family is connected to resources for food, and other basic needs.

Stepping out in faith, Holy Family is up to the challenge. With the unwavering help of generous donors and dedicated staff, we are making this happen. We are working around the clock, and engaging a creative and strategic mindset to minimize the effects of this crisis, and the impact it is having on the children we love and serve... children on the west side of Chicago.

God is providing for us, every step of the way. Because of your continued faithfulness, the future of Holy Family is strong. We are trusting God together to do miraculous things. Thank you for what you have done, and continue to do, for Holy Family.

To give online visit hfm.org/donate
Better together. Thank you!
A Message From Our Holy Family Leadership

“Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid, for the Lord your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you.

Deuteronomy 31:6

Dear Friends of Holy Family,

We send our prayers for your well being, and extend our heartfelt gratitude to each of you, as we face the unprecedented events of today. Thank you for your outpouring of concern and support. How wonderful to have the promise that God will never leave nor forsake us. The spread of the COVID-19 virus is having a dramatic impact on all of our lives...including our children, parents, teachers and staff, and you, our faithful friends.

The overwhelming nature of this situation is keeping us on the front lines in planning for the health and safety of our families, and reaching out daily to those most in need. We thank you for your generosity, and for your unwavering confidence, as we prayerfully discern how to ensure that every child and family is connected to the resources they need, especially food.

Many of you are asking, how are the children and their families?

Holy Family Ministries is complying with all CDC guidelines and State of Illinois mandates, and as a result, closed all of our programs including Holy Family School, Adventures in Learning and Little Learners Academy at the end of the school day on Monday, March 16th. At this time, all public and private schools in Illinois are closed through Tuesday, April 7th.

We are reaching out to families to be sure they participate in the CPS food box distribution, containing three days of breakfast and lunch for each student, at no charge to the family. Families in our service area are some of the hardest hit economically by the current business shut-down and lack of daytime child care. We are in close touch with our parents, many who have been laid off or given reduced hours of work.

We continue to provide academic opportunities for our children on a remote basis, and mitigate any negative impact on our students caused by these extraordinary circumstances. Students went home with learning packets from their teachers, who are assisting them remotely. Teachers and faculty are working tirelessly to help Holy Family students continue to excel academically, and stay on track for the school year. The Board of Directors created an “immediate need” initiative to purchase 100 Chrome books, to promote online learning at home for children who currently do not have access to a computer.

Continued support at this time means so much for our children and families, as they face great uncertainty ahead, and heightened risk and vulnerability. Thank you for helping us be there for our children. Holy Family is needed now, more than ever, to help close the gap for our community.

If you have questions or need information about a donation that you would like to make, or one you have made recently, please contact Cynthia Schmidt, Chief Development Officer at cschmidt@hfm.org or feel free to call her on cell at 630-306-3157.

Please feel free to contact me at ccollins@hfm.org for any program related questions.

We will be sharing updates as we can in the weeks ahead. We are truly blessed to have your continued prayers, compassion and support. As we "shelter at home", the Psalmist reminds us that we reside in the Shelter of the Most High - HE is our refuge and our strength.

With appreciation,

Cheryl Wells Collins
Chief Executive Officer

Dan Bodovinac
Chair, Board of Directors

John Palmer
Vice Chair, Board of Directors

Holy Family Ministries, 3225 Arnold Lane, Northbrook, IL 60062 / 773-273-6013 / www.holyfamilyministries.org
Reach for the Stars Spring Benefit was recently cancelled for the well-being of our guests and students, and in accordance with the governors stay-at-home order.

Now, the children of Holy Family need your support - today more than ever.

*Tickets, table, auction item, paddle raise?*

Simply make a gift and make a difference!

To give online visit [hfm.org/donate](http://hfm.org/donate) or send your gift to:

Holy Family Ministries Benefit Fund  
3225 Arnold Lane  
Northbrook, IL 60062

**Transferring stock? Contact:**  
Cynthia L. Schmidt CFRE  
Chief Development Officer  
630-306-3157 Cell

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"God comforts us so that we may comfort others, and through Him we share abundantly with those in need."

II Corinthians 1: 4-5

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Stay Healthy and Safe  
And Stay Tuned  
For our *Non Benefit Benefit* video  
Coming to you soon!