



Diocese of St. Thomas in the U.S. Virgin Islands

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Office of The Bishop

January 4, 2022

Dear Partners in Christ,

The COVID-19 crisis has generated unprecedented challenges for our Catholic schools, their students, and parents. The economic recession generated by the crisis has also affected the ability of the schools to maintain their enrollment and thereby financial sustainability.

Our schools are integral to our Catholic faith. They are one of the tools the Church uses to bring Christ's message of salvation to all. An expression of our faith and a gift, both to our children and to the community.

In seeking to find solutions to address the difficulty the schools are experiencing in meeting their financial obligations, the Diocesan Finance Council met and reviewed the school's accounts, and recommended some short-, medium- and long-term solutions.

The short-term recommendations include the launch of a Special Bishop's Appeal to raise funds for the schools and the establishment of a school board. When established the new school board would address the medium- and long-term solutions.

I have confirmed the recommendations put forward by the Finance Council after meeting with the council on Wednesday December 29, 2021.

I am therefore asking for your cooperation with the implementation of the Special Bishop's Appeal on the theme "*Save our Schools.*" This drive to save our schools would be implemented during the period January 23rd to February 6th, 2022. This drive will not affect our Annual Bishop's Appeal which will be launched in March 2022.

You will receive the Bulletin Announcement during the week of January 10, 2022, and announcements and collection of donations would be made on the weekends of January 23rd and 30th and February 6th, 2022. Please note that the last week in January is Catholic Schools Week.

With your financial assistance, we can continue to offer a faith-based quality education to the children entrusted to our care. We need to keep the school doors open during this difficult period. We also ask for your prayerful support for the entire Diocese as we go through this financially challenging period.

May God Bless all our efforts.

Yours sincerely in Christ,

Most Reverend Bishop Jerome Feudjio
Bishop of St. Thomas in the United States Virgin Islands

