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Three Suburban Catholic Elementary Schools to Close

On Thursday, March 15, Cardinal Adam Maida, archbishop of Detroit, accepted recommendations from three suburban parishes to close their elementary schools at the end of the current school year: Our Lady of Loretto in Redford, St. Cyprian in Riverview, and St. Stanislaus Kostka in Wyandotte.

The pastors, principals and lay leaderships of each of the schools met with the cardinal and his priest advisors (known as the College of Consulters) to outline why they had come to the conclusion that the closures were necessary.

In February, similar meetings were held with leadership from two other parishes: St. Albert the Great in Dearborn Heights; and St. Angela in Roseville. Recommendations to close their schools at the end of the current school year were accepted at that time.

“Because all these schools are parish sponsored and funded, the recommendations to close them originated locally, albeit reluctantly,” said Ned McGrath, director of communications for the Archdiocese of Detroit. “They were the result of long consultations between the pastors, parish councils, school principals, and school committees.”

McGrath indicated that in all cases, the parishes were looking at increasing expenses, while at the same time facing declining enrollments in their schools that translated into fewer tuition payments to support their education ministries.

“Closing a school is always the last option considered,” McGrath added. “While everybody involved may be sad at these final outcomes, it is certainly understandable given the economic and enrollment circumstances the schools are facing.”

He noted that for the current school year (2006-2007), Our Lady of Loretto has an enrollment of 143, St. Albert an enrollment of 82, St. Angela an enrollment of 129, St. Cyprian an enrollment of 133, and St. Stanislaus an enrollment of 102 students. Two of the schools, Our Lady of Loretto and St. Cyprian, had projected enrollments for next year (2007-2008) of 85 students each. Additional enrollment data on the schools can be found at www.AODcommunications.org.

The Catholic Schools Office of the Archdiocese of Detroit will be working with the school communities affected to help families find alternate sites for the Catholic education for their children.

Following these five closures, there will be 88 elementary schools and 22 high schools in the Archdiocese of Detroit. These schools are enrolling students right now right now and tuition assistance is available. Information concerning tuition assistance can be found on the Archdiocese of Detroit website at www.AODonline.org.

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