



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Community Supports Diocese of Fall River Catholic Schools and Families**

FALL RIVER, Mass – The Diocese of Fall River, the Catholic Foundation of Southeastern Massachusetts and the Foundation to Advance Catholic Education (FACE) are pleased to announce awards for financial support that are helping to welcome children back to the Diocese's Catholic schools this fall. These awards are supporting much-needed additional assistance to our schools and our families who have been impacted by the COVID 19 pandemic. Total awards from FACE thus far for the new school year are \$1.3 million for nearly 950 students.

Shares Foundation to Advance Catholic Education Board Chair Claudine Cloutier, "As a result of the support from the Flatley Foundation, the Thomas Rodgers, Jr. Family Foundation, the John and Christina Craighead Foundation, and BayCoast Bank, as well as through the generosity of individual donors, we have been able to make great progress in securing additional scholarship aid. Our goal has been to ensure that no child is denied access to a Catholic education because of the financial strain the pandemic has placed on so many of our families."

New Superintendent of Catholic Schools for the Diocese of Fall River, Daniel Roy, shares, "When we say, 'We have a place for you,' we mean it. A high quality Catholic education, which has been shown to level the playing field for students from all backgrounds, is available in all of our 20 outstanding schools. The donors who have joined with us to help support our schools and families realize the importance of continuity of education for our young people, especially in unprecedented times such as these. We are so grateful for their generosity."

Bishop Edgar da Cunha, S.D.V. confirms that, "These loyal donors and supporters have shined light and hope in the darkness that some of our families have faced as a result of this pandemic."

Families from across the Diocese, which has schools in Southeastern Massachusetts and on Cape Cod, have benefited from this support. The support has been deployed to provide additional aid to hundreds of students as well as to provide new aid and flexibility in responding to families expressing requests for aid. Andrew Raposo, Principal of Espirito Santo Parochial School in Fall River, states, "When the COVID-19 pandemic began, and everyone's lives were affected, there was a real concern about how our schools would be sustainable going forward—not only that, but a concern for our families, if they would be able to afford a quality, Catholic education. The Foundation to Advance Catholic Education (FACE) stepped up to the plate to seek those additional funds to benefit our families to keep our kids in our schools and keep our mission alive. To the donors who gave generously, I can't begin to express our gratitude to you for what you have done for our kids. Thanks

to this funding, at least 25 families received an increased award and five were able to keep their children enrolled at Espirito Santo after believing that they would need to un-enroll their children due to financial hardship.”

According to Miriam Finn Sherman, Chief Executive Officer at the Catholic Foundation of Southeastern Massachusetts, “The generous support to our schools and our families has a two-fold benefit. Not only does the support provide very real financial assistance during a time of great need, but it also communicates that a values-driven and high quality academic experience remains a priority during these times.”

For more information about the Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Fall River, please go to [www.catholicschoolsalliance.org](http://www.catholicschoolsalliance.org).

For more information about the Catholic Foundation of Southeastern Massachusetts, please go to [www.catholicfoundationsema.org](http://www.catholicfoundationsema.org).

For more information about the Foundation to Advance Catholic Education, please go to [www.face-dfr.org](http://www.face-dfr.org).

### **About the Diocese of Fall River Catholic Schools Alliance**

The Catholic Schools Alliance is comprised of administrators, teachers, staff, parents and clergy joined in partnership to educate the children of the Diocese of Fall River in Catholic faith and values. Our schools have a demanding educational culture that helps students from across the academic spectrum reach their God-given potential. With an emphasis on service and respect for the dignity of every person, we prepare students to meet the challenges of today’s diverse world and become meaningful contributors to society.

### **About the Foundation to Advance Catholic Education (FACE)**

Since the opening of the first school it has been the desire of the Diocese to make these schools accessible to all families who wish to provide a Catholic education for their children. It was to this end that in 1991, the Diocese of Fall River established the St. Mary’s Education Fund using the proceeds from the sale of the St. Mary’s building. The Fund, a separately incorporated entity, provides “need based” scholarships enabling students to attend the Catholic Schools of the Diocese. In 2015, the St. Mary’s Education Fund changed its name to the Foundation to Advance Catholic Education (FACE). FACE believes that there is a place in Catholic schools for all children and works to ensure that no child is denied the opportunity of attending one of our schools due to financial hardship.

### **About the Catholic Foundation of Southeastern Massachusetts**

Since its founding in 2018, the Foundation is actively growing in its service to the Catholic Schools Alliance, the Foundation to Advance Catholic Education (FACE), the Catholic Social Services, and the Catholic Charities Appeal. In addition, CFSEMA has launched a new giving society, *The Anima Christi Society*, which is dedicated to celebrating the many generous individuals who have included the Diocese or their parishes in their estate plans. Steering The Catholic Foundation is an engaged and dynamic Board of Directors: Co-chairs Patrick Carney and Nick Christ, as well as George Agostini, Bob and Chris Long, Richard Lafrance, Maryellen Sullivan Shachoy, Spiritual Director Reverend Marcel Bouchard, Bishop da Cunha, Reverend John Murray (Moderator of the Curia) and Reverend Richard Wilson (Vicar General), as well as honorary Board member, Joseph Ciffolillo.