



# THE BASILICA OF SAINT PETER

1529 ASSEMBLY STREET, COLUMBIA, SC 29201  
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July 13, 2020

Dear Parishioners of Our Lady of the Hills Catholic Church:

For 170 years, Saint Peter's Parochial School has provided Catholics and non-Catholics an unbroken legacy of academic excellence grounded in faith and the practice of virtues. Our school survived the Civil War and every other societal challenge and we are poised, yet again, to help children and families adapt to the uncertainties of COVID-19.

Our public schools are facing disarray - already coping with too many students and too few teachers. With the added uncertainties of COVID-19, they may have to totally alternate their schedules further decreasing direct student education.

Parents need more certainty both in terms of class schedules and safety and the start of school is just around the corner.

With these concerns in mind, I have been working with our school principal, Mrs. Aubrey Wall, to plan for the return to the classroom in August. I believe, and am compelled to share with you, that **St. Peter's Catholic School is better equipped than public schools to address the challenges of returning to the classroom** for a variety of reasons:

- 1) **Smaller classes:**
  - a. We can easily achieve **safe social distancing** guidelines.
  - b. **Our student-teacher ratio is 15:1**, a benefit to students who may need to catch up from the modified spring semester.
- 2) **Traditional, in-classroom instruction, 5 days per week.** We won't require longer days or odd schedules that frustrate routines for both students and parents.
- 3) **The inherent flexibility of a private school** to adapt to changing needs/requirements related to the virus.
- 4) **Our focus on faith** to understand and cope with the emotional toll the virus has had on students and families.

These advantages mean that students can safely return to a scholastic environment and families can return to some degree of normalcy.

Understanding that safety remains of utmost concern to all, new protocols will include:

- six feet of distance between students in the classroom,
- staff masks,
- optional student masks,
- daily temperature checks,
- staggered recess,
- frequent hand-washing and use of hand sanitizer,
- guided traffic flows on campus,
- interior and exterior safety signage, and
- immediate notification to all families if a student or staff member is determined to have been infected.

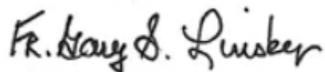
Learn more about how we're working to create a safe environment and give families the assurances they need to return to school confidently: [stpeterscatholicschool.org/learn-more](http://stpeterscatholicschool.org/learn-more)

The parish of Our Lady of the Hills has always been supportive of the mission of St. Peter's Catholic School. As you evaluate your options for August for your own children or another beloved child in your life, I hope you will seriously consider St. Peter's. Our tuition is a fraction of the cost of other private schools. Further, we offer monthly payments, discounts for families with multiple children, and need-based tuition assistance.

Enrollment is capped at 135 to maintain safe social distancing and an ideal student-teacher ratio--so **please act quickly before all available seats are filled.**

Please contact Principal Aubrey Wall at [awall@stpeterscatholicschool.org](mailto:awall@stpeterscatholicschool.org) or 803-252-8285 with any questions or to schedule a tour.

Sincerely,



The Very Rev'd Canon Gary S. Linsky, V.F.  
Rector

P.S. While e-learning has helped our nation avoid a complete shutdown of the educational system, we recognize that long-term distance learning is not ideal for many students and robs them of the valuable social interaction that is key to their educational and emotional development. That being said, we have an outstanding distance learning plan in place, in the event a student experiences an extended absence. Read more about our plan for distance learning at [stpeterscatholicschool.org/why-st-peters/distance-learning](http://stpeterscatholicschool.org/why-st-peters/distance-learning).