



## ARCHDIOCESE OF BALTIMORE

320 CATHEDRAL STREET • BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21201 • 410-547-5447 • FAX: 410-727-5432

OFFICE OF THE AUXILIARY BISHOP

November 20, 2020

Dear Friend in Christ,

This has certainly been a remarkable and trying year in so many different ways. From the pandemic to divisive politics to racial unrest, we seem to be getting it from all angles in 2020. These challenges make me wonder what tomorrow holds and what we can do now to heal all that divides us and make a brighter future, especially for our young people. While I cannot claim to have come up with a solution to eliminate the many challenges facing our society, I am nonetheless convinced that Catholic schools do have a substantial impact in not only improving the lives of those who attend, but also in improving entire communities in which they exist.

We have something incredible to offer in our Catholic schools: academic excellence combined with a solid formation of the human person in the Gospel values. The results speak for themselves. Overall, more than 95% of Catholic school graduates go on to college. And with a degree in hand, many stay local and contribute in countless ways to our community. The obstacle for many in Baltimore City is that tuition prevents them from gaining access to a Catholic education. The *Partners In Excellence Scholarship Program* is the key that unlocks that door.

Affectionately called PIE, this initiative plays a vitally important role in giving children access to a Catholic education, particularly those from low and moderate-income households in the City of Baltimore. When I think about fostering an awareness of the dignity of human life and the key issues regarding poverty, racial equity and justice, education is a very tangible and meaningful way to work toward improving these areas. Within our schools, students discover their own God-given gifts and learn how to use these gifts in positive, life-affirming ways. PIE has helped more than 12,000 children to do just that for 25 years now.

I am fully convinced that the more young people in Baltimore who receive a Catholic education, the better our community will become. I wish every child in the City could attend one of our schools! And while we may not have enough Catholic schools to accommodate that dream, we have plenty of capacity in our existing schools and plenty of families who would love to enroll their children. *I am appealing to you today to help more children get in the door.*

If you've been struggling like I have with how to make a difference, please take this opportunity to get involved with PIE by making a donation toward a PIE scholarship or by becoming a PIE Advocate, because we need help sharing the story of our schools and PIE!

There is plenty of reason for hope in healing what divides our community. PIE is one concrete way that we can contribute to the change so desperately needed. I pray that you'll join me in getting involved. Thank you for the consideration and may God bless you and your family!

In the Lord,

Most Reverend Adam J. Parker