FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DIOCESE OF ROCKVILLE CENTRE ANNOUNCES CLOSING OF SAINT CHRISTOPHER SCHOOL

ROCKVILLE CENTRE, NEW YORK – March 22, 2021 – Due to declining enrollment and the growing need for parish financial support which the parish is unable to continue to provide, the Diocese of Rockville Centre has announced the closing of Saint Christopher School in Baldwin at the conclusion of the current school year. Staffed by the Sisters of Saint Joseph since its founding in 1925, Saint Christopher School has played a vital role in forming future generations of young Catholics in the Baldwin area.

Since 2015, Saint Christopher School has seen nursery through eighth grade enrollment decline 41% to 179 students at the start of the 2020 school year. As enrollment has declined, so have revenues. Although the parish has made significant efforts to manage costs, the continued operations of the school require over $350,000 per year in subsidy support. The school provided an excellent learning experience both digitally and in-person during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, operating in this environment exacerbated the financial challenges faced by the parish and the school. Given these pressures, Saint Christopher’s parish is no longer able to support school operations.

While financial pressures due to enrollment decline existed prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the impact of the crisis on school families and the Saint Christopher parish community has placed significant burden on already-struggling schools. After consultation with financial experts, advisors, and representatives, the pastor of Saint Christopher has made the difficult decision to close the school.

“Announcing this closing in addition to the announcements we made last week relating to the closing of Saint Thomas the Apostle and Saint Raymond’s is very, very sad,” said Sean P. Dolan, Director of Communications, Diocese of Rockville Centre. “The Diocese of Rockville Centre thanks the dedicated and committed principal and teachers, both lay and religious, who have taught at Saint Christopher’s,” said Dolan.

Students from Saint Christopher School will be welcomed into the other Catholic elementary schools in the Diocese of Rockville Centre. School leaders and the team at the Department of Education will assist parents and students in the process of selecting and transferring to one of the other strong Catholic schools in the area.
We realize the disruption closing a school can have upon parents. To that end, the Morning Star Initiative Team and the Department of Education have arranged a transition webinar for parents interested in transferring to neighboring Catholic Schools. For more information visit [www drvcschools com](http://www.drvcschools.com). A special hotline (516-280-4124) and dedicated email address (education@drvcschools.org) have also been established for comments and questions during this time.

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**CONTACT:**  
Sean P. Dolan  
Director of Communications  
(c) 516-510-0473  
E-mail: sdolan@drvc.org