



## St. Frances of Rome School in Cicero to Stay Open

**Parish, Big Shoulders Fund and Archdiocese of Chicago partner to sustain school financially going forward**

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**Chicago, (March 6, 2024)** -- Today, the pastor at St. Frances of Rome School in Cicero announced that the school will remain open—reversing the announcement made in January that the school would close at the end of the current school year.

This news comes after Big Shoulders Fund, the Archdiocese of Chicago, the parish of St. Frances of Rome School and St. Anne Parish in Barrington, the school's sharing parish, rallied to provide the funds needed to keep the school in operation for at least the next five years.

"Catholic schools have been providing an excellent education to children in the Chicago area as long as there has been a Chicago," said Greg Richmond, superintendent of Schools for the Archdiocese of Chicago. "With today's announcement, St. Frances of Rome will educate students for years to come."

"We are grateful for our strong partnership with Big Shoulders Fund," Richmond continued. "We are united in the mission to enable all families—including low-income families—to have the choice to enroll their children in a Catholic school."

"We are fortunate to be able to build upon our successful partnership with the Archdiocese of Chicago by adding this vital school serving a vibrant, committed community to our network," said Big Shoulders Fund President and Chief Executive Officer Josh Hale.

"All communities are stronger when families can choose a school that best meets their children's needs," said Richmond. "Our partnership with Big Shoulders Fund strengthens dozens of communities throughout the Chicago area and we are delighted to add Cicero and St. Frances of Rome to that list."

Rev. Radek Jaszczuk, C.Ss.R, pastor at St. Frances of Rome School, shared, "Our school is a special part of our parish and the Cicero community. I am overwhelmed by the generosity of these donors who are joining with us to keep St. Frances of Rome School open."

The news was shared with students, staff and families on Wednesday, just days before St. Frances of Rome School is scheduled to celebrate its 100th anniversary. Phillip Jackson, the school's principal, stated, "The anniversary has enabled us to reconnect with our incredible alumni community, which is eager to support the school for its next 100 years."

### About the Archdiocese of Chicago Catholic Schools

The Archdiocese of Chicago Catholic schools serve more than 40,000 students in 154 elementary and high schools in Cook and Lake counties. It is one of the largest private school systems in the United States. Its schools have received 96 Blue Ribbon awards from the U.S. Department of Education over the past 10 years.

**About the Archdiocese of Chicago**

The Archdiocese of Chicago, the third largest in the United States, serves more than 2.2 million Catholics in 216 parishes in Cook County and Lake County, a geographic area of 1,411 square miles. The Archdiocese, pastored by Cardinal Blase J. Cupich, has more than 13,000 employees in its systems and ministries, including Catholic Charities, the region's largest nonprofit social service agency. The Archdiocese also has one of the country's largest seminaries. The Archdiocese's 154 elementary and secondary schools comprise one of the largest U.S. private school systems. Its schools have received 96 U.S. Department of Education Blue Ribbon Awards.

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