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Featured Omaha school survives in latest archdiocesan plan

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NCR Today



In the March 30-April 12 *NCR* special section on Catholic Education, Holy Name Catholic School in Omaha, Neb. was featured in a story on the state of Catholic education in the United States.

At the time, Holy Name faced an uncertain future after an early proposal for reconfiguration in the Omaha archdiocese listed it among six schools recommended to close, viewed as unable to sustain itself long-term. The parish was recommended for closure, as well.

Following up on that story, on Wednesday the Omaha World-Herald reported Bishop George Lucas, while unveiling Promise 2020 ? the archdiocese?s final plan for its schools and parishes ? announced that Holy Name would remain open.

In the report, available in full here, it is recommended that Holy Name parish continue its ministry in the North Omaha region, and for the school to continue, on the condition it meets several funding and viability criteria. That includes the submission of a comprehensive, five-year plan with specific financial and enrollment benchmarks.

Part of the financial support for Holy Name will come from the nonprofit Christian Urban Education Service, or CUES. In a March interview with *NCR*, Msgr. James Gilg, the archdiocese's superintendent of schools, highlighted the nonprofit he helped establish when speaking of successful sustainability models for inner city schools.

In addition to Holy Name, CUES will work with All Saints School, as well as continue its nearly 40-year support of Sacred Heart School.

Additionally, the new plan lists Holy Name among six parishes enlisted to more intentionally minister to Hispanic Catholics in the area, while continuing to welcome Sudanese and other immigrant populations in its community and currently enrolled in its school.

While the final plan bodes hope for Holy Name, it still calls for closing three schools and reducing parishes from 34 to 26 through mergers in the next five years. A regional Catholic school consortium will also be established for elementary schools in the urban south central and urban southeast deaneries.

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