

Dear Parents,

I hope everyone is having a nice weekend. We are one week away from the beginning of the 2020-21 school year. The teachers and staff are continuing to work on making this a wonderful and positive educational experience for all students. Although this will be an unusual school year, we are committed to our OLM students and families.

During the week of August 3 through August 7, the teachers will be on campus getting things setup for virtual learning. We will be working on schedules and the best way to meet each and every child's needs for learning. We are cognizant of the impact that this school year will have on our students and families whether we are on-line learning or in-person learning.

The OLM teachers will be reaching out to you this week(some have already reached out), to make a connection and listen to your concerns for this coming school year. We not only want to meet the student's needs, but also the parent's needs, as well. We must work together to ensure the learning environment is the best it can be for everyone involved.

All students will be issued an OLM chrome book. The chrome books will be setup for each student so as to make it easier for them to utilize the different applications needed for on-line learning. We are trying to make this process as seamless as possible. Again, we will be offering the same rigorous OLM curriculum that we always have for our students.

We have designated Thursday, August 6, from 4:00pm-7:00pm and Friday, August 7, from 8:00am-11:00am for pickup of chrome books, textbooks and other materials for our students. Please come through the back entrance and we will have all the needed materials ready for your child. Please wear a face mask and remember to socially distance. We do think it's important for our students to see their teacher and classroom, but again only with socially distance in mind.

We realize that some students have been affected by COVID-19 to a large degree and some have not. With this in mind, we will also be working on the socially emotional impact of COVID-19 on our students. It's important that we help our students learn to communicate and share their feelings and give them coping skills to deal with adverse situations such as COVID-19. Part of this will be through faith-filled activities and other socially emotional curriculum.

I will be posting a handbook for virtual learning next week. It will outline the guidelines for on-line student learning. One thing we are recommending is that students wear their school uniform for on-line learning. This will help set the Catholic School classroom atmosphere. We will have themed free dress on Fridays.

Our Faith-Families will continue this year. We have many activities and get togethers planned whether virtually or in-person this year.

The Fresno Diocese is still working on a waiver for us to come back in person, but this is timely process. Our school is ready for in person learning as well, as virtual learning. We feel we are in a great place to offer both types of learning.

The final thing I would like to share is the most important thing OLM Catholic School can offer to our students and parents is the element of faith. Our strong academics are a given, but more importantly the faith element is the key to our Catholic School. We must continue to build and work on this as a school family...whether in person or virtually. Teaching our children about faith is so vital to their development. Many people have been affected by COVID-19...either through sickness, loss of job, financial, front-line workers....etc., we must hold each other up in prayer. Many things are not in our control, but the one thing we can do is ask God to give us the faith and hope needed to endure this situation. We must share with our children that no matter what is going on...God loves all of us...but He loves children the most!!!!

I would like to thank all of you who have supported OLM School over the last several months. I know many of you are making huge sacrifices to send your child to OLM School during this time. I realize that some of you may be thinking why should I pay for on-line learning when I can do this for free. I assure you that we are offering a strong Catholic Education for your child that you will not be able to receive anywhere else. Enrolling your child in OLM School sends a message that you believe in a Catholic School Education and all that entails...whether virtually or in person. I have shared with you that I am extremely competitive and I want OLM School to be the best and I need your help to ensure that it continues to be the best school possible. We must work together. Once again thank you for your trust in OLM School!

I understand that we have posted the start date for OLM School with two different dates. The official start date is Monday, August 10, 2020.

I look forward to working with all of you throughout this school year. Please contact me if you have any questions, concerns, suggestions...etc..

God Bless All of You!

Mrs. Judy Blackburn