

# Our Lady of Mercy July Newsletter

Dear Parents,

Welcome to our new families and best wishes for a happy summer to our returning families. I know it has been a different summer, but I hope you are still enjoying a safe and relaxing summer.

I know many of you are anxious and wondering how the OLM School year will begin. I have been working with the Fresno Diocesan Office of Catholic Education so that we can open safely on August 5.



We are doing everything we can to open in August.

We have organized classrooms to ensure there is 6 feet of social distancing and/or plexi glass utilized in some classroom areas. Temperatures will be taken for all students.

Masks will be required for students in grades 2-8. Masks can have any color or design.

All students will be assigned and given a chrome book K-8. We are offering parents an opportunity to purchase a chrome book for your child. The cost of the chrome book is \$300.00. Please contact the office if you are interested in purchasing one.

Students will be using chrome books, as well as good old fashion pens, pencils and paper to complete work. We will use Google Classroom as our platform for on-line learning.

We also realize that some parents may want to keep their children home for safety reasons. In this case, we will offer our lessons on-line through streaming and Zooming. Each classroom will be equipped with an ipad, television, and microphone to either stream a lesson or watch a live lesson.

We are doing our best to meet everyone's needs and provide a strong Catholic Education for all students.

We are also excited about converting our computer lab into a "television station" in order to stream activities into the classrooms. Some of those activities will include morning flag salute and prayer, prayer services, masses, and other activities that students might want to share with the school.

It is our hope that we can keep our students and families connected while still social distancing.

All of these things are being put into place for opening in August. However if we cannot open, or if we have to close, these things will still be utilized to keep the learning going and to stay connected.

I will be sending and posting more guidelines for reopening OLM School in the next 2 weeks.

The main thing we must remember is that this will eventually end and we will have some normalcy back into our lives. For right now we have to make the best of this situation. We must learn and grow. I know it has challenged me to think outside the box and I have.

## UNIFORMS

We have posted on our web-site the information needed for the OLM School uniform dress code. There are a few changes on the dress code. Girls may now wear either a navy blue shirt or white shirt. Also, I have decided to let the students wear any color shoe they would like to wear to school this year. However they are not allowed to wear boots or sandals to school. Uniforms can be purchased from the Dennis Uniform Company website. There is also a store in Fresno that will provide curbside pickup for your convenience.





## LUNCH

Students will eat lunch in designated areas and/or in the classroom. We will still offer our hot lunch program, however the lunches will be boxed in containers. We are working on the purchase of lunch and milk tickets on line. Look for more information in a the next two weeks. We will again be offering pizza lunches twice a month.

## FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

Classes for students from preschool through eighth grade will begin on Wednesday, August 5th. Classes for students in grades kindergarten through eight grade begin at 7:50am. Students may be dropped off in the front of the school or the back circle. Temperatures will be taken at that time for all students.

Dismissal on Wednesday, August 5th, Thursday, August 6th, and Friday, August 7th will be at 12:30pm. There will be no extended care services on these days.

As a reminder the first bell rings at 7:50am. At 8:00am the second bell rings. When students arrive on campus before 7:50am, they are to go to their homeroom class.

## CALENDAR UPDATE

I have included an up-dated calendar for the 2020-2021 school year. Again this could change!

## SCHOOLWIDE LEARNING EXPECTATIONS

This is a reminder of what OLM School's learning expectations are for our students. Please review these with your children.

Students graduating from Our Lady of Mercy School should be:

1. Active faith-filled people who:
  - a. know the basic teaching of the Catholic Church
  - b. live the Gospel Message through service
  - c. participate in the faith life of the Church by celebrating the liturgical seasons and Catholic traditions
2. Effective communicators who:
  - a. read, write, and speak with understanding
  - b. listen attentively
  - c. respond respectfully
3. Responsible citizens who:
  - a. share their time, talents, and treasures with their community
  - b. exercise personal responsibility and stewardship for the environment
4. Successful learners who:
  - a. demonstrate a strong foundation in basic subject
  - b. use current technology and research skills.
  - c. practice effective problem solving

## MISSION STATEMENT

OUR LADY OF MERCY SCHOOL ENLIGHTENS THE MIND WHILE ENRICHING THE SOUL

## RETIREMENT

I would like to take this opportunity to thank two very special teachers on their retirement.

Mrs. Elinor Romero is retiring from our preschool after 31 years. She has taught and loved so many of our children over these past years. Her kindness and care touched so many little ones in our preschool. Mrs. Romero's life and commitment to our children has been a beautiful and ongoing story of purpose, compassion faith and love. I wish her the best in the next chapter of her life.

After 18 years of teaching 8th grade and 2 years in kindergarten at OLM, Mrs. Patrice Keeler has decided to also retire. Mrs. Keeler took over 8th grade teaching position after I became principal. She has guided and challenged her students to be the best person possible. Her excellent teaching of academics was a given, but she thought it was more important to teach her students about their faith. Mrs. Keeler modeled this faith each and every day and was a true example of God's love for her students and parents. Mrs. Keeler wants to spend more time with her family and doing some of the hobbies she enjoys, but hasn't had time to do for the past 18 years. She also recently became a grandmother and will surely be spending time with her new granddaughter in Sacramento.

I wish Mrs. Romero and Mrs. Keeler the very best in their retirement. OLM school has been blessed to have these two remarkable women on our campus. The glory of God's love shined through each of them. I thank God for them and ask God to Bless them.

## NEW TEACHER

I now would like to take this opportunity to introduce our new 8th grade teacher. Ms. Darlene Lopez will take on the duties of 8th grade. Ms. Lopez is originally from Merced and both her nieces and nephew attended OLM School. She has been a teacher and administrator in Catholic Schools for many years. Recently she was at St. Joachim's School in Madera. However, she has decided to come back home to Merced to teach and be close to family. I have known Ms. Lopez for many years and am excited to have her on our OLM staff.

Please continue to look for more information on our OLM School website or contact me with any questions.

God Bless You!  
Mrs. Judy Blackburn