

Academy of St. James of the Marches

400 Totowa Rd.
Totowa, NJ 07512
973.956.8824



Good afternoon One and All:

There has been a great deal written about school openings of late. It seems that every District/School is "doing their own thing." I have a Diocesan meeting today and I thought I would update everyone after that but I am understandably getting many questions.

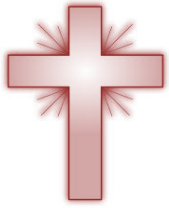
Here is our plan as of today. I want to impress upon you that the Governor has final jurisdiction over schools so he could mandate a change we would have to follow.

- **School will open for students on WED., SEPT. 2nd** using the following schedule to have each group of students be informed and adjust to the new changes. This is one week ahead of our usual starting date. I really want to get the students back into school.

Day	Classes	Time
Tues. Sept 1	Faculty only	8 AM – 2 PM
Wed. Sept. 2	Grades K - 2	8 AM – 12 PM
Thurs. Sept. 3	Grades 3-5	8 AM – 12 PM
Fri. Sept. 4	Grades 6-8	8 AM – 12 PM
Mon. Sept. 7	NO School	Labor Day
Tues. Sept 8	All Grades	8 AM – 12 PM
Wed. Sept. 9	All Grades	8 AM – 2:30 PM

- I am hoping that all children will be ready to start school and we are making MANY plans to insure that the school is safe for both children and staff. In order to accomplish that the following is happening and will happen:
 - an impact cleaning/ disinfecting of the school was completed
 - the ventilation system and all air vents were cleaned and "blown out"
 - all classrooms have been thoroughly cleaned out and all tables, common items, computers have been removed.
 - classroom desks have been socially distanced (to the best of our ability)
- In order for you to see what this all looks like we are going to **create a video of the school** for parents and students to view that will be ready on Mon. Aug. 3rd for you to view to get a clear idea of what we are talking about.
- A concern for families and all of us regards children/families who do not feel comfortable sending their children to school. I understand that. Therefore, there will be an option for children to attend virtually at home. However, there will be a schedule the child at home will follow, which will be the same for the in person student. A student will have to attend our morning prayer and all instructional classes per the in class schedule. The teacher will not be "live" in the classroom the entire day - just the instructional periods.
- The teacher's first responsibility will be to the in class students. At the completion of the lesson she will look to the "chat" section of google classroom for questions from at home children. She will then address them.

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- We have purchased every staff member with a laptop that has a two-way camera so it can record her in front of the camera and then flip it to be in front of the screen.
- We learned as a school that although we did a great job with our last remote learning there are particulars we need to strengthen. Children at home will have to be on a camera. They need to attend every class every day. We will create a contract regarding at home expectations. It is going to be demanding for the staff to work both actual and remote. I appreciate them being willing to do both.
- I have reviewed previously on the protocols that will be in place for students entering the building.
- I have explained that we will have a staggered start and end time within a 20 min period at the beginning and ending of the day. We will socially distance those students at arrival and dismissal times.
- Staff will wear shields and/or masks during teaching times and when moving around the classroom.
- Students will wear masks whenever leaving their desk but while sitting at their desks they have an option depending on what the family requests. Younger children will not wear masks while in the classroom unless requested by parents.
- Staff will all have a COVID test in the middle of Aug. to validate their status regarding the virus. In order words to determine they are "not detected".
- **By August 7th families are going to have to determine if they are sending their children back to real time school.** I must plan on arranging classrooms to socially distance children and a real number for "in class students" must be created. Please understand that this is important. If I have too many children I have to create another class and I do not want to have to do that if the demand is not there.
- I believe in getting children in school! We have many new teachers and establishing a relationship with them is important. Also, children move up a grade to a new teacher and they want to get to know their new teacher. When children have a strong bond with a teacher, they work harder! They need time to establish that bond. This socialization is so very important for learning. Also, seeing their friends is critically important to many as we have all socially distanced for a while.

There have been staff changes, and we have book issues, uniform changes but there is plenty here to digest so I will follow with another email with those issues.

We are having a Zoom meeting tomorrow at 7 PM and parents are invited to attend. We had a Task Force Meeting last Thursday with a smaller group of parents but all are invited to attend this meet. The information follows:

[Join with Google Meet](#)

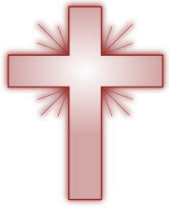
I want to thank Father Marc and all the Staff for their continued support. Please if you are looking for financial assistance apply at tcsfund.org. They are willing to assist families with tuition. Please settle your outstanding bills as soon as possible and REGISTER your child if you are going to attend ASJM either in school or at home. We need your support and don't forget to keep praying. These are times where our Faith is necessary to weather the storms that surround us at moments.

Hope all is well and look for the next email!

Love,

Lelia

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Hello again:

So there are a few important items I need to inform you about regarding ASJM. I presume some of you already know these changes but they follow:

- **STAFF:** Nurse Aylin Acikgoz, Mr. Zach Slotter, Mrs. Linda Martino have all resigned and moved to more lucrative public school assignments. It is as simple as that. All three staff hated leaving but we cannot fight a significant raise offer. I thank them for their service and know they will be truly missed. Mrs. Maryann Walsh, a Northern Region staff member, also resigned.

To replace those staff (as previously informed) I welcome:

Mrs. Susan Hartmann: 4th grade

Mrs. Lisa DiLillo: 2nd grade

Mr. John Mythen: 6th grade

Mr. Slotter resigned late last week so I am looking for a Math teacher. Please let me know if you would have any leads!!!

- **BOOKS: We are missing many textbooks!** We had a textbook dropoff system in June but many hardcover books are not back. We will be cross referencing with our lists and families will be charged the replacement rate for a missing textbook. We have signed documentation of books returned. As an FYI a textbook in Math or Science is about \$65. per book! Please look under those beds and in closets and return found textbooks. This is especially important for the 8th graders which is why they are on this email. We are missing many books from our graduating students.
- **UNIFORMS:** Because the risk of going out for remote learning a student will only have to wear a St. James maroon polo or a polo that is maroon. Pants will be khaki colored but they do not have to be Flynn & O'Hara. PANTS CANNOT BE TIGHT! In other words, find a uniform shirt and buy appropriate khaki colored pants.
- **FINANCIAL:** Please settle all financial accounts by Aug. 1. You MUST speak with me or Mrs. Lopez if you cannot settle your account. We continually reach out to families so follow up is needed.
- **BUSING:** I have no information at this time regarding the possibility of busing. It is concerning and I do believe we should all be looking for carpools.
- **BC/AC:** As long as we are in school we will be offering both before and after care for students until 6 PM.
- **GYM:** Gym will be very adjusted but at this time it will be happening. Children will stay in a hoola hoop, socially distanced and exercise within that. Maroon sweats and white sneakers are still necessary for gym.

Still many questions unanswered but this is a start between these two emails. I am confident all will work out according to God's plan. Contact me with questions, ideas for join us tomorrow night.

All the best,

L

Lelia Pappas

Principal

Academy of St. James of the Marches: [A Journey in Joy and Holiness](#)

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