

Dear Mercy Families,

We have been so impressed with the commitment, diligence, and respect your daughters have brought to Distance Learning this week. We know these are not easy times, and we continue to keep our Mercy students at the heart of all our thoughts and decisions.

As Governor Newsom talks about the potential of schools being out until the fall, we will assume that Distance Learning will be our new normal until a change comes from the county or the state. These are tremendous times. Our hearts are truly heavy for what could potentially be the loss of a high school semester, particularly for our seniors who have been looking forward to the special joys that the weeks and months prior to graduation bring. We recognize that these are truly challenging times for our students.

Our goal at Mercy is to support them the best we can as we all adapt to this new normal.

**Distance Learning Campus Ministry Program** Please [click here](#) for various Campus Ministry resources. These resources include opportunities for mass, meditation, mindfulness, and service learning.

**Service Learning-** We know many of our students enjoy helping others. In a time where we seem stuck, we want to encourage students to remember we can always help others if we think outside the box. We are currently working on creating service learning opportunities for our students. One is already listed in the service learning section of the Campus Ministry Resource Page. We will be working with local elementary schools to see if there are opportunities for our students to tutor elementary students via Zoom during our County's Shelter in Place. We will send more information about this opportunity as it gets better finalized.

\* We understand that some students did not complete their required service hours. We of course will be flexible with our grading policy that is tied to this. Please know we do expect that if we are able to create digital service opportunities for your daughters that they will participate to try and add some additional hours.

**Distance Learning Counseling and Wellness** Please [click here](#) for a letter from our Counseling Department that details the various support available to our students and to you. Additionally they have created a [document of available online wellness resources](#). I encourage you to familiarize yourselves with these resources and to recommend them to your daughters.

**Additional Opportunities:** In addition to the resources listed above, we encourage you to familiarize yourselves with opportunities that are available to both our parent and student community. These opportunities will be led by our faculty and staff and include options such as College Counseling, Wellness Challenges, Lunchtime Meditations, and opportunities to speak with Administration. The [Distance Learning webpage](#) will be continually updated with the weekly schedule of sessions and activities. Specific Zoom links can be found in Schoology.

**Alumnae Outreach-** We are sending an email inviting our alumnae community to connect with our students by offering various Zoom sessions that allow our alumnae to share their expertise with our students. Examples might include Career Advice, Resume Help, Financial Planning, etc. As these opportunities arise they will be posted on Schoology for students with links.

**Main Office Update** We have purchased a cell phone for Mercy High School. All calls to Mercy High School will be forwarded to this number, and we will honor our normal working hours of 7:30AM- 4PM.

**School/Life Balance** In order to model a healthy school/life balance for our students we ask that you respect the working hours of 7:30AM-3:30PM of our faculty and staff. Please note that should you send a communication outside these hours that you may not hear back until the following day. Please encourage your daughter to email her teacher during school hours if she needs an answer to complete an assignment for the following day.

We will continue to communicate with you, and we encourage you to communicate with us. We value your feedback, and we appreciate your support. We are so sorry that we find ourselves in this situation, yet we are grateful to be on this journey together with you and your daughters. I have no doubt that if we partner together we will be able to make the very best lemonade out of these lemons!

A silver lining from COVID-19 is that we are forced to slow down, reconnect, and re-prioritize our lives. Though frustrating, this is a true blessing in today's world. Your daughters will be off to college in the blink of an eye- enjoy this precious gift of time that COVID-19 is giving us.

Thanks,



Natalie Cirigliano Brosnan '02