



Saint Joseph Regional School Our Lady of Mercy Academy



August 25, 2022

Empowering students to grow as informed, inspired, compassionate souls.

Greetings OLMA Families and Faculty,

We are looking forward to seeing everyone on Monday morning! We especially extend a warm welcome to all of our new students and families! I would also like to warmly welcome our first-ever Seniors and their families for their final year at Mercy Academy.

Please pay close attention to all of the important details below for the start of school. If you have any questions at all, please do not hesitate to reach out directly to Allison in the Main Office (amurray@mercyacademykeene.org) or Liberty Ebright, Dean of Students, (lebright@mercyacademykeene.org).

Have a wonderful, blessed weekend! We will see you soon.

May Your Spirit Be Lifted,

Christopher Smith
Principal

1 JOHN 4: 7-8

Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for **God is love.**

IMPORTANT DATES

Friday 8/26 – New Student Orientation – 8:45am-12:00noon

Monday 8/29 – **FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL!**

Monday 9/5 – Labor Day – **NO SCHOOL**

Friday 9/9 – Back-to-School Picnic – 5:30-7:30pm

Thursday 9/15 – Back-to-School Night

Friday 9/23 – Golf Tournament at Bretwood

[CLICK HERE for the complete updated 2022-2023 SCHOOL CALENDAR](#)

NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION will take place **TOMORROW, Friday, August 26**, and is mandatory for all freshmen and new students. Students should arrive promptly by 8:45am and enter through the main front door facing Main Street. We will be touring the building, reviewing policies, setting up school email accounts, rotating through schedules, and having some fun getting to know one another. Lunch will be provided. Students will be finished at 12:00noon. Students are not required to be following the dress code for New Student Orientation.

Families should drop off and pick up their students along Davis Street for the orientation. Faculty members will be outside to direct you. The parking lot is being sealed and re-stripped, so it will not be available at all on Friday.

We are looking forward to a great morning!

ARRIVAL

Students are expected to arrive at Our Lady of Mercy Academy **by 8:00am**, which is the warning bell for the start of homeroom. A student is considered tardy when they are not in their homeroom (first block) by 8:05am. **Students must enter the building every day at the main front door facing Main Street.**

PLEASE DO NOT drop off or pick up on Main Street as this will impact the traffic moving through town at a busy time of day. We have specifically been asked by the City of Keene not to have cars stopping on Main Street.

DEPARTURE

School ends at 2:45pm. Students may be picked up along Davis Street or from the parking lot immediately behind Mercy Academy. Any students leaving the school campus on foot after school must exit the building from the front door facing Main Street and utilize the sidewalks.

ABOUT THE HIGH SCHOOL EXPERIENCE

High school is an exciting time. For freshmen, it is a new, more independent environment. For upperclassmen transferring from other schools, their experience will also be different and exciting. In a typical year, everyone will likely feel some degree of anxiety. Please be patient and encouraging with your children throughout the first few weeks of school. As a first step to independence, we strongly encourage parents to refrain from accompanying their students into the building for New Student Orientation and on the first day of school. This can be difficult, but your student needs to learn to navigate this experience on their own. These first few days of school are a tremendous growth opportunity for all of the students.

COVID INFORMATION

Below are a few key points from the Diocese of Manchester's COVID guidance for the 2022-2023 school year.

- Employees and students need to **stay home and not report to school if they are sick with any illness** or not feeling well.
- Mask use will remain the option of the individual employee and visitor, and the decision of parents for their children.
- COVID vaccines will not be required for employees, students, or visitors, and school employees will respect that a person's vaccination status is personal medical information.
- Students and employees will frequently wash or sanitize their hands throughout the day.
- Disinfecting desk areas and shared supplies on a regular basis will remain the norm.

To read the full document with all details from the Diocese Superintendent's office, [CLICK HERE.](#)

SUMMER READING

Our all-school read this summer is *Tattoos on the Heart: The Power of Boundless Compassion* by Father Gregory Boyle. We will be discussing this as a school and in small groups starting the first day of school and extending through the week. There will be a brief reading check to ensure all students have read the book and can participate in an informed discussion.

There are copies of the book available for purchase at Toadstool Bookshop (12 Emerald Street, Keene).

Tattoos on the Heart deals with some heavy topics, including gang violence. As with any media consumed, parents are encouraged to please familiarize themselves with the content. If anyone has any questions or concerns regarding the book, please reach out directly to Chris Smith at csmith@stjosephkeene.org.

ROME INFORMATION FOR 11TH/12TH GRADE FAMILIES

Greetings 11th and 12th grade families,

I hope you have had a beautiful and restful summer! We will be having another parent meeting to discuss our "2023 Pilgrimage to Rome" at the end of September or early October after the Golf Tournament Fundraiser (so that we have the proceeds to discuss). You will receive an email with the date and time for that meeting sometime in mid-September.

In the meantime, a couple of reminders:

1. **Registration:** If you know that your child will be going on the trip and you'd like to register, please feel free to do so! The information is below:

Register here: <https://www.pilgrimages.com/proposal/frtremsblay/>

Username: Saint

Password: Francis

2. **Passports:** If your child does not have a valid passport, please start that process now! If you need information on how to get a passport for your child, please let me know. We would like all of the students who are going on the trip to have their passports in hand by the end of 2022.

If there are any questions at all, please email Annie Pearson: anniep1979@gmail.com.

God Bless,
Annie Pearson

LUNCHES

Hot lunches will begin on **Tuesday, September 6**. You may start placing orders via Renweb/FACTS now and pay online. Payment may also be made by cash/check at the Main Office.

Mondays/Fridays -- Cheese Pizza (\$2.25/slice) (from Pizza Pi)

Tuesdays -- Hot dogs/veggie dogs with chips (\$2.00)

Wednesdays -- Ham/turkey/bologna/veggie sandwiches with chips (\$4.50) (from Gomarlo's)

If you have any questions, please contact Allison in the Main Office (amurray@mercyacademykeene.org).

DRESS CODE

Since the educational process is a formal endeavor, OLMA has a student dress code.

This dress code supports the attitude of respect we have for one another. Cleanliness, neatness, sensibility, and safety (in the case of shoes), while maintaining comfort, guide the choices of the dress code.

On Wednesdays, Our Lady of Mercy Academy attends Mass; these days will be ‘dress up’ days. The expectation on Wednesdays is that students should be dressed significantly nicer and be more ‘put together’ than on other school days. Students may choose from a buttoned down, collared shirt (tucked in) with tie, dress pants, and a belt; dress pants (with a belt as needed) and a blouse, a dress, or blouse and skirt that reaches the tips of fingers when hands are held naturally at the side of the body. Shoes must be clean and in good condition. Students arriving to school not appropriately attired will be given the option of borrowing clothing from our lending closet or calling home for their parents/guardians to deliver appropriate clothing.

For the remainder of the week, students may wear casual pants, jeans (with minimal distressing, but no holes), or athletic wear. Track pants or soccer pants and yoga pants (with pockets and thicker material) are permissible, however traditional sweat pants and leggings are not acceptable. No offensive language or messaging on clothing will be permitted. No exposed midriffs or spaghetti straps. Midriffs must remain covered when arms are lifted above the head. All dresses, skirts, and shorts must reach the tips of fingers when hands are held naturally at the side of the body. Hoods on hoodies must be worn down during class time. No hats or beanies are to be worn during class time. Hair must be worn out of the student’s face. No flip flops or slides.

The dress code is open to administrative interpretation.

CELL PHONE/ELECTRONIC DEVICES POLICY

OLMA’s cell phone policy is guided by the principle of being present. Students are expected to actively engage with their teachers and other students. The school recognizes the convenience, educational, logistical and safety advantages of cell phones, iPods, smart watches, etc. A student may have these electronic devices at school, but use will be limited to before school, after school, passing periods and during lunch. **Use of such devices during class time is prohibited**, unless directed by a teacher for legitimate educational purposes. **Students will be directed to turn off/silence cell phones/smart watches at the beginning of class and store them in the provided storage compartments located in each classroom.** Students may retrieve their phones/smart watches at the end of the class period. Continued violation of this rule may result in confiscation of the device and/or other corrective action. The school reserves the right to examine any such confiscated device, and when appropriate, a student may be held accountable for violations of this behavior policy. If a student’s cell phone/smart watch is confiscated, a parent must pick up the device from the office. Students are responsible for notifying their parents if their device has been taken.

In general, we encourage parents/guardians to try to limit contact with their student directly on his/her cell phone or other communication device during the school day.



Our Lady of Mercy Academy | 161 Main Street, Keene, NH 03431

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