

ST MARY'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Educating Today's Students To Be Disciples of Christ by forming the mind in love.



Distance Learning Plan for the 2020-2021 School Year

August 4th, 2020

ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL

On Friday March 13, 2020, we were instructed that all schools in the diocese would be temporarily closed to meet the challenge of the COVID 19 virus. Within a matter of hours we had to inform parents, reassure students, and consult with the teachers about how to continue not only instruction but also the life of the school. Many of our teachers, including myself, were not familiar with the techniques of distance learning. We all had to learn fast. Most of us imagined that we would be back to school within two weeks after the Easter vacation. Unfortunately, this proved not to be the case. As we begin for our Fall semester all schools in the Imperial Valley and many other schools in California are closed until the conditions improve. We are plunged into great uncertainty. We must turn our attention from an uncertain future to a certain present. We know the challenges. We know with the benefit of experience what will work in terms of online instruction. The teachers have spent their summer vacation working out strategies, attending webinars, and generally improving their hold on online pedagogy.

I know that you are all concerned about your children. You want the best for them. We promise to work with you to ensure that our students will not only endure this distance learning period but flourish. Many of you found yourself enlisted as 'teacher's aids' during this time. It is a role for which many of you did not feel entirely qualified. Your patience and dedication has shown that you truly want the best for your children. Our teachers will support you in this new role and will do all they can to ensure that the process of distance learning is as easy as possible to follow. What is important is that you communicate with us whatever anxieties or difficulties you may have so that we may help to resolve them. We all want to be back in school. The children miss their friends and their teachers and the routine of school. We pray that this epidemic may soon burn itself out and we can all be together again.

St Mary's School Principal: [Fr. Allan White O.P. \(760-352-7285\)](#)
Vice Principal for Instruction: [Mrs. Cecilia Terán \(760-352-7285\)](#)

[St Mary's Catholic Church \(760-352-4211\)](#) Pastor: [Fr. Mark Edney](#)

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Section I: SCHOOL COMMITMENT

1. Technology Access: St Mary's is equipped with Chromebooks to lend out to students as needed. Parents should monitor their child's internet use. A **Technology Form** must be completed and signed by each student/family.
2. Instructional Minutes: students will participate in virtual instructional minutes per grade level (asynchronous and synchronous)
3. Parents should consider carefully limiting non-school screen time to ensure that the students enjoy a balanced life. Students should be able to make the distinction between school screen time and 'play' screen time.

St Mary's Learning Schedule

4. Communication:
St. Mary's School office is open daily from 7.30 a.m.-3 p.m., and 7:30 a.m.-12 p.m. on minimum days, unless otherwise stated. The front office staff is available to answer questions, provide information, or help in any way we can exclusively by way of phone or email in order to safeguard public health. If personal contact is necessary an appointment needs to be arranged by way of zoom or telephone.
Office phone # (760) 352-7285 / Email: adminassistant@elcentrostmarys.org

Information will be communicated in a timely fashion in the following ways:
by text, by zoom, by e mail or by monthly newsletter.

5. Administration
The Principal and Administrative Staff are available for conferences via Zoom or in-person in extraordinary circumstances **by appointment only**. Questions are welcome via email and will be replied to within 24 hours.

Section II: FAITH COMMUNITY

As Catholic school leaders, we are being invited to a period of "creativity and inventiveness." -Leading with Hope

The skills we are developing in the midst of this crisis will improve our pedagogy and allow us to better serve our students and, in that way, serve the Lord who is with us in the midst of this difficult time.

The Diocese of San Diego makes the following undertaking.

St. Mary's School is a committed Catholic community determined to maintain its Catholic life and values. Our catechetical, sacramental, and moral programs will continue to be developed in line with the conditions imposed by Distance Learning.

All Schools in the Diocese of San Diego will cultivate a community where each student develops a more profound relationship with the person of Jesus Christ.

Under the direction of our Pastor and Principal and with the engagement of our faithful Catholic teachers we will ensure:

- The celebration of liturgical traditions includes prayer together, liturgical worship, and service opportunities via Zoom.
- The integration of the teaching of the Catholic Church and the sharing of Gospel values.
- St Mary's is unusual amongst Catholic Elementary schools in that it has two priests on its Faculty. They will continue to be available and accessible to our Faculty, staff, children and parents.
- We will continue to promote the involvement of our parents in the growth in the faith of their children.

As a visible community of faith, we are committed to maintaining our relationships with our students and families through virtual and socially distanced in-person events.

Events include, but are not limited to the following:

- ● Liturgical celebrations such as online [Friday school Mass via zoom](#), Reconciliation during Advent and Lent, Adoration, praying the Rosary, Christmas program, Holy Week traditions, May Crowning, First Holy Communion & First Reconciliation, and the daily Angelus. We will seek to incorporate all of these values in our Catholic life together as best we can in the present circumstances.
- ● Daily formation in the faith will continue, through practicing the exercises of Catechesis, and utilizing supplementary programs and resources.
- ● Daily prayer will continue, with a focus on feast days, the virtue of the month, and interdisciplinary faith-based instruction.
- ● We will encourage the expression of the faith at home through online short reflections and aids to family prayer.
- ● We will research the possibility of Regular Christian service opportunities to promote the active Christian charity of our students and their families.

Section III: STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

1. Attendance

Attendance will be taken each morning and reported to the office. Attendance will be added to the student’s official record. Daily attendance is not only mandatory, it is essential to student growth in learning. Additionally, **students are expected to attend school during Distance Learning in their school uniform.** Wearing a uniform reminds students that they belong to a community with a tradition and a common way of life; it reminds them to shift into the appropriate attitude for learning in school. Routines such as these bring comfort, security and consistency to a child’s life. Parents/guardians must contact the office if a student is sick or otherwise unable to attend class at **(760) 352-7285 or via email: adminassistant@elcentrostmarys.org**

Per Law AB-77 (June 2020): A pupil who does not participate in distance learning on a school day shall be documented as absent for that school day. For purposes of this section, daily participation may include, but is not limited to, evidence of participation in online activities, completion of regular assignments, completion of assessments, and contacts between teachers and pupils or parents and guardians.

2. Digital Learning Platforms

Whether we are on campus or learning from a distance, students will be using the following digital platforms:

Kinder- 2nd 	Grades 3rd – 8th  Google Classroom
K-8 th will meet for live whole group or small group sessions through zoom	
COMMUNICATION TOOL	
All teachers encourage parents to download ClassDojo to maintain communication regarding assignments, homework and student performance in class	

3. Participation

Students are expected to take responsibility for their own learning by participating actively in the forms of instruction. Examples include:

- Arriving to each synchronous (live) class on time, both whole group and small group (see student schedule)
- Check Seesaw (K-2) and Google Classroom (3-8) daily
- Students may ask teachers questions for clarification via Google classroom Grades 3rd -8th and Seesaw for K-2nd.
- Participate in class discussions
- Participate in Mass and faith-related opportunities in order to deepen our sharing in the Body of Christ.
- Showing their best efforts in asynchronous (recorded or working on their own) assignments
- Attend tutoring sessions to receive support or ask questions
- Turn in assignments in a timely manner
- Students should communicate with their teacher if they experience a difficulty of any kind. Late work can always be accepted as long as students/families are communicating with teachers.

4. Assessment/Grading

Students will be assessed on their progress towards mastery of grade-level standards.

- Grades K-8th will continue to receive feedback on progress towards mastery of a particular subject.
- Students will not be penalized for late work as long as they are in communication with their teacher(s) and an accommodation has been arranged.

5. Schoolwide Learning Expectations (SLE)

Students are still expected to demonstrate St. Mary' SLE's as they are always representing our school community, even in a Distance Learning setting:

- *Life Long Learners who are EAGER*
- *Active Christians who PRAISE*
- *Active Community Members who SERVE*
- *Integrated Individuals who are MORAL*

Distance Learning gives students the opportunity to deepen their appropriation of a subject through broadening their studies, developing personal interests and taking responsibility for their own learning.

Teachers will ensure effective instruction despite the lack of in-person teaching through intentional and strategic lesson planning.

Section IV: PARENT EXPECTATIONS

1. Learning environment

- In these extraordinary circumstances parents will be called upon to assist their child in creating a dedicated learning space that is free from distraction. It is important that a place is set aside for distance learning and the completion of assignments. It is essential that during class time parents and family members should respect the time spent in virtual class and ensure freedom from interruption by the circumstances of domestic and family life.
- Parents are *not* expected to be teachers. They will, however, find themselves called upon by their children to help them when difficulties arise. Parents may be the first 'port of call', but they should not be the last. Teachers are there to ensure that the children learn and to that purpose are happy to answer any questions parents may have and to resolve any difficulties that students or parents experience. In the event of these occurring it is of vital importance that the difficulty is solved sooner rather than later so that your child's education does not suffer. If there are difficulties, please contact the teacher so everyone can work together to solve any problems. Additionally, regular office hours will be held by all teachers to support students each week. If these processes do not resolve the concern, please contact the principal.
- Parents should assist their child in making sure their learning device is kept in a safe place and ready to go (charged or plugged-in) for online instruction each day. Please ensure that the internet connection is of sufficient strength to allow uninterrupted study.

2. Participation

We encourage parent participation in this project since experience shows that parental support makes a positive impact on student learning, faith formation, and the overall attitude of the student towards education and well-being. For this reason, parents must:

- Communicate an absence to the front office
- Alert the office if a student is ill (especially since we must track illnesses to be prepared to reopen at a moment's notice). If there has been exposure to a positive COVID-19 patient, the school MUST be aware.
- Attend, virtually, (or communicate with the teacher/school if attendance is absolutely impossible) events that promote unity and teamwork within our St. Mary's community
 - Back to School Orientations in August
 - PTG meetings
 - School events
- Login to Gradelink, at least weekly, to check student grades.
- Check email regularly for updates from school
- Communicate with teacher(s) any struggles, concerns, or questions you have(and successes too)
- Alert the teacher and/or front office of school technology issues or damage to equipment immediately
- Engage in faith activities with your child (prayer, Mass, good deeds)
- Respond to teacher/office emails/ communications promptly

3. Conferences

Parents are welcome and encouraged to request conferences with teachers via Zoom or other means, when concerns arise that cannot be resolved via an email or phone call. Please email teacher(s) directly. Your email will be returned within 24 hours.

Section V: TEACHER EXPECTATIONS

1. Attendance

Teachers are expected to attend all synchronous (live) sessions unless a sick or personal day has been requested and approved by the principal. In this case, parents will be notified of a change in schedule.

2. Instruction

- Daily schedules will be provided by email to parents. Students 3rd-8th will receive a copy through google classroom.
- Teachers will design a digital learning platform that is organized, easy to navigate, and up-to-date. We will be using Seesaw (K-2) and Google Classroom (3-8).
- Teachers will provide an engaging blend of online and offline activities that are standards-based.
- Teachers will also provide a combination of synchronous and asynchronous sessions within each school day to allow for direct instruction, guided practice, collaboration, and independent study.

3. Communication

- Teachers will send a weekly email each Friday to keep parents and students informed of class content, school activities, and any other pertinent information for the week ahead.
- Teachers K-5th will hold study support sessions from 2-3 p.m. Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays to give students extra support and to answer any questions. Teachers 6th-8th will hold office hours afterschool on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2:00 – 3:00 and study sessions on Fridays during school hours for those grade levels (please see schedule for details).
- Teachers will give timely and meaningful feedback to students in the form of rubrics, written or audio notes, and 1:1 discussions (with another adult present on Zoom), to help increase progress towards mastery of standards.
 1. Students will also be given opportunities to self-reflect and self-assess their own progress towards mastery of a subject.
 2. Timely feedback includes returning work and reporting grades in Gradelink weekly.

- Teachers will communicate any concerns, such as changes in work or behavior patterns and successes, such as reaching goals to the student, parents or administration as needed. Teachers will also reply to student (grades 3-8 school email addresses only) and parent emails within 24 hours.

Section VI: DISTANCE LEARNING SCHEDULE

Schedules will be provided by hyperlink to parents and will be shared with students on google classroom.



St. Mary's School

Year-at-a-Glance
2020-2021

AUGUST 2020	
10 th -14 th	Faculty Orientation Office open from 8:00 am-3:00pm by appointment only
19 th	K-8 th First Day of School (Teachers will provide information to each class for zoom sessions and schedules)
20 th – 21 st	Back to School Orientation Meetings with each teacher Details will be provided by teachers through email
28 th	School mass @ 8:30 am via live stream Details will be provided by teachers through email
SEPTEMBER 2020	
7 th	No School – In observance of Labor Day
8 th -25 th	STAR Testing
17 th	PTG Meeting all parents via Zoom
24 th	Adoration K-8 th – moment of prayer
4 th , 11 th , 18 th , 25 th	School mass via live stream
OCTOBER 2020	
2 nd	Blessing of the Pets- live stream ceremony
7 th	Living Rosary – live stream
9 th	Monthly Awards
15 th	Shake Out Day- Earthquake Drill
16 th	End of quarter I
21 st -22 nd	Parent Teacher Conferences Via Zoom
23 rd	No School- Teacher Professional Development Day

26 th	I Quarter Awards Ceremony via Zoom
2 nd ,9 th ,16 th ,30 th	School Mass via live stream
NOVEMBER 2020	
1 st	Daylight Savings Time
6 th	8 th grade Saints Presentations to classrooms
11 th	No School- Veterans' Day
13 th	Monthly Awards
19 th	PTG Meeting all parents via Zoom
23 rd -27 th	No School Thanksgiving Break
6 th ,13 th ,20 th	School Mass via live stream
DECEMBER 2020	
4 th	Monthly Awards
10 th -17 th	Mid terms
18 th	II Quarter Ends
21 st - Jan.5 th	No School- Christmas Vacation
4 th ,11 th ,18 th	School Mass via live stream

***School resumes January 6th**

The Revd. Dr. Allan White O.P.

Principal of St. Mary's School