

UUAA 3.22.20

Dear Upper School Students and Families:

I know we're all being swamped by links, articles, video clips, and other online resources as we adjust to our current situation. So I will keep this as brief as possible.

Here is a final summary of how tomorrow (Monday) is meant to go:

Students should go to their homeroom/advisory Google Classroom page by **9:00 a.m.** They will find instructions for how the opening time will go, including any links to Zoom conferences for their homeroom or grade. This opening session will include a 5-6 minute chapel via a link to a private Youtube channel set up by Dr. Antista, and led by Mother Clare. This link is found under the Classwork tab of the UPPER SCHOOL ALL STUDENTS Google Classroom page (email me for the join code). Families are very much welcome to watch along. The opening session will end with time for everyone to prepare for the first academic period at 9:30.

Academic sessions begin each day at 9:30, 11:00, and 1:00. In addition to the opening homeroom check-in, those are the most important times when students are expected to be immediately available and participating online. Again, communication and instruction will run through Google Classroom pages specific to these courses, and that will be where students can find links to any routine Zoom sessions for that course. Parents, please do whatever you can to help your children establish effective routines and physical spaces for distraction-free work. And, while your support of their schoolwork is always appreciated, please respect the privacy of any video conference times so teachers and students can create comfortable virtual spaces for discussion. Audio or video recording of other students online is also not allowed.

The day ends with time devoted to enrichment/elective/club activities. There's been some confusion over electives - my apologies. Students, you're not ranking your top choices but rather listing the activities you want to join. You basically get whichever activities you want! Every student will be part of 2-4 clubs. These activities don't happen at specific times or only on certain days. The 2:00-3:00 time slot every day is meant for students to pursue these electives, as well as any art, music, or band/choir assignments, at their own pace. However, on occasion a teacher might set up a Zoom session during that hour for a quick club check-in.

Communications for those electives will also run through separate Google Classroom pages. **Elective rosters may not be finalized by the end of the day Monday so don't worry if you aren't able to work on enrichment tomorrow.** We'll distribute join codes for the various clubs as soon as possible--keep an eye out. But if you haven't emailed your advisor with your list of 2-4 enrichment choices, please do so **right away!**

Whether before, during, or after school hours, students are also encouraged to partake in fitness activities orchestrated by Coach Santucci. All Upper School students must join the Upper School PE Google Classroom (email me for the join code) if they haven't already for instructions.

A few quick pointers for parents: First, several families have wondered why their emails to their children are getting bounced back. Our student email accounts can only receive emails from addresses within the stmichael.net domain. This is intended to prevent spam and messages from unreliable sources. Parents, however, are encouraged to accept invitations (if they haven't already) to receive "Guardian summaries" from the children's various Google Classroom pages. Unless parents are using Gmail accounts themselves, however, these summaries will only be received on a weekly basis, whereas Gmail users can set their account to receive summaries on a daily basis. I don't think there's anything we can do about that.

If you're ever trying to dig up a memo about our coronavirus response or distance learning program, you might want to bookmark the webpage we've set up to serve as a hub for those communications: <https://stmichael.net/covidresponse/distancelearning/>

Sheltering in place with adolescents may seem like the premise for a bad Hollywood script yet one we must accept. A thoughtful article about the challenges of doing so can be found [here](#) .

Finally, please don't hesitate to contact the school for support in any way during this crisis. Economic disruptions are bound to grow. There are numerous programs offering free meals for students, even if not enrolled in a particular school district. A summary can be found [here](#) .

Thanks again to all who have reached out this week as we adjust to our new educational platform on the fly. Your patience and good will are very much appreciated!

Best wishes,
Alex Hawes
Upper School Division Director
ahawes@stmichael.net
722-8478 ext. 223