

Happy Wednesday, families:

This weekend we celebrate a really neat set of feast days: St. Monica and St. Augustine. St. Monica, of course, was St. Augustine's mother. St. Augustine spent his early life pursuing worldly desires. St. Monica prayed fervently for his spiritual welfare and conversion. Eventually, St. Augustine was baptized and would lend his incredible intellect to the Church. Few thinkers have impacted the Church quite like St. Augustine. Instead of spending time on St. Augustine, let's focus on St. Monica.

What a gift mothers are to their children. What a beautiful example St. Monica is for all of us. First, she loved her children. She worried incessantly and prayed constantly. She is also a wonderful model of patience for surrendering our prayers to God's will. She must have trusted that God would eventually answer her prayers for her son, and He did! It wasn't according to her timeline or plans, but reflects her abandonment to God. Let's remember to say thank you to all those mothers who care for their children, who worry for their children, and who pray for them!

And now for some reminders and pieces of information:

The first day of classes for students in 1st-8th grade is **Tuesday, August 31**. The preschool and kindergarten students have their first day of school on **Tuesday, September 7**. I look forward to meeting the students!

Parents of middle school students please plan to attend a mandatory back-to-school night on Tuesday, August 31st at 7:00 pm.

I would like to offer a welcome to all of our new families. Thank you for choosing Our Lady of Grace! As a reminder, please register for an account on FACTS to manage your tuition account. Those accounts can be registered [here](#).

I am excited to announce that we are partnering with Northeastern Music Programs again to offer instrumental music lessons to interested students who are enrolled in grades 3-8. If you'd like to learn more about the program or to sign your child up, visit this [link](#).

Students will return to school in their normal uniforms. The Swap Shop was already open for a couple weeks. If you were unaware or unable to make it, please contact the school to schedule a time to visit the Swap Shop. The Swap Shop offers gently used uniforms to our families at no cost.

Our Lady of Grace is partnering with Yay Lunch! for lunch services this year. Yay Lunch! curates a menu in partnership with five local vendors. Instructions for ordering can be found in the attached document. As Yay Lunch! prepares their menu, they will begin accepting orders on September 16th and the first delivery date will be September 20th.

On that note, if any parent is interested and able to volunteer as a lunchroom monitor, please reach out to the school office at 215.757.5287. Lunch monitors assist with the operations of lunch and would be at school from 12:00-1:15.

Thanks in advance to any parent who considers giving their time to volunteering!

I am ready to release a detailed plan regarding our school opening and COVID-19. Attached you will find our Health and Safety Plan in its entirety. Please know that these decisions were made in close consultation with our local health department and relies on the expertise of medical professionals. All decisions were made with the safety of our students as the primary concern. After reading the document, please feel free to reach out by email or by phone with questions or concerns.

Without having to first go to the document, there are two major items to stress:

- Masks are required to start the school year.
- Students who test positive for COVID-19 are required to isolate for ten days from their positive test.

As a reminder, the situation is constantly changing. This is a living document and will be adjusted to meet the current circumstances,

In addition to our Health and Safety Plan there is also a letter from the Archdiocese of Philadelphia attached.

Go Gators!

In Christ,  
Mr. Harper