



MOUNT CARMEL SCHOOL

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MCS COVID-19 Update #9

Dear Mount Carmel School Family,

With the end of the school year upon us, it is quite amazing that we have endured this pandemic and are finishing strong. On that note, before everyone leaves for the summer, we want to share some important updates with all of you, all of which are summarized in these bullet points and followed by a more detailed set of announcements.

- A safe, in-person high school graduation ceremony will be held in Mount Carmel Cathedral on June 20.
- All other major year-end school events, including the 8th Grade Graduation, are still postponed until early August.
- The End of Year Awards Ceremony will proceed as a virtual event this Friday, June 5, at 10:00 am.
- We continue to work on plans to safely reopen for the 2020-2021 school year.
- Free COVID-19 community-based testing continues to be available.
- Campus still closed until further notice.
- Help us help you by contacting appropriate school officials if you or your child needs support.
- How can you help? Follow the guidelines below.
- Please be patient with us as this is a dynamic situation that changes everyday.

SAFE HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION CEREMONY ON JUNE 20

After working with Governor Ralph DLG Torres's COVID-19 Task Force and the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation (CHCC), we will be able to hold an in-person high school graduation ceremony. The ceremony is slated for Saturday, June 20, at 4:00 pm at Mount Carmel Cathedral and will follow several safety protocols, including those that have recently been issued for churches and houses of worship. Some of these measures will include, but are not limited to, the following:

- We will strictly limit attendance to 25% capacity of Mount Carmel Cathedral based on occupancy assessments by the CNMI Department of Public Works. To that end, a limited number of participation tickets will be issued to graduates and their families and faculty and staff. Live-streaming of the ceremony will be facilitated to accommodate family and friends that cannot attend due to the 25% capacity limit.

- All participants will be required to wear face masks, and face masks will be provided to anyone that does not have one readily available.
- All participants will be required to maintain a distance of at least six feet from each other. Markers and barriers will be laid out to guide such distancing.
- The cathedral will be professionally cleaned and disinfected prior to the graduation.
- Hand sanitizers will be available at each entrance point of the Cathedral.
- Trained ushers wearing personal protective equipment will be present to help enforce these safety measures.
- Additional safety protocols will be developed and implemented as the school prepares for the graduation.

If you are a Senior that has already left island, you will be recognized during the ceremony, so be sure to tune in via the school's Facebook page at www.facebook.com/mtcarmelcnmi.

ALL OTHER MAJOR YEAR-END EVENTS POSTPONED UNTIL EARLY AUGUST

While the school will proceed with a high school graduation, due to the safety risks and logistical hurdles of holding a similar ceremony for our 75 8th grade students, we will stick to our plan to hold their ceremony in early August. That ceremony, along with other events, like induction ceremonies for honor societies, First Holy Communion, and Confirmation, will be determined as follows:

Option 1: Events will be held before/at the beginning of next school year. By mid-July, should the Office of the Governor, the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, and the CHCC determine that it is safe enough to lift social distancing directives that prohibit public gatherings, the school will reschedule all major events for the week before and during the first week of the 2020-2021 school year, July 27 through August 7.

Option 2: All events will be held online before/at the beginning of next school year. By mid-July, should the Office of the Governor, the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, and the CHCC determine that it is NOT safe enough to lift social distancing directives that prohibit public gatherings, the school will reschedule all major events for the week before and during the first week of the 2020-2021 school year, July 27 through August 7 and hold these events as virtual events online, with live video streaming on the school's Facebook page and YouTube channel.

As decisions are made about which option to follow, a detailed schedule of events will be published.

VIRTUAL END OF YEAR AWARDS CEREMONY THIS FRIDAY AT 10:00 AM

We will hold a Virtual End of Year Awards Ceremony this Friday, June 5, at 10:00 a. m. with live video streaming on the school's Facebook page and YouTube channel. The ceremony will feature recognition for academic, extra-curricular, and athletic accomplishments, messages from special guests, and the announcement of the Class of the Year, Knights of the Year, and Jedi Knights of the Year. Just visit either of the following links to catch the show:

- www.facebook.com/mtcarmelcnmi
- www.youtube.com/c/MountCarmelSchool

2020-2021 SCHOOL YEAR

As announced previously, Mount Carmel School remains committed to safely resuming face-to-face classes, improving online learning, and providing financial assistance. Please refer to the attached document "Our PROMISE To You" for details about our plans for the upcoming school year.

FREE COVID-19 COMMUNITY-BASED TESTING CONTINUES

Free COVID-19 testing is available for anyone in the community. To register for testing, please click on the following link:

<https://governor.gov.mp/covid-19/testing>

HELP US HELP YOU BY CONTACTING APPROPRIATE SCHOOL OFFICIALS

Please note the following points of contact for the listed areas:

Teachers and Learners

Principal Barbara Merfalen: bkmerfalen@gmail.com

Vice Principal Bobby Baldazo: bsbmtcarmel@gmail.com

Spiritual Health

Campus Minister Vir Abueme: abuemevir@gmail.com

Social/Emotional Health

Counselor Tobed Smith: tobeds@gmail.com

Registrar

Office Manager Leeani Villagomez: mtcarmelschool.secretary@gmail.com

Financial Transactions

Business Manager John Blanco: mtcarmelknights@gmail.com

Media and Communications

Director of Institutional Development Victoria Deleon

Guerrero: v.dlquerrero95@gmail.com

WHAT YOU CAN DO

This public health crisis calls on all of us to do what we can to keep our community safe. This is what you and your friends and family can do to help:

Stay Healthy: Wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds especially after you have been in a public place, or after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol. Cover all surfaces of your hands and rub them together until they feel dry. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands. Clean AND disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily. This includes tables, doorknobs, light switches, countertops, handles, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, and sinks. If surfaces are dirty, clean them, using detergent or soap and water prior to disinfection.

Stay Home: Protect yourself and others by minimizing contact with others. Since someone may carry COVID-19 without showing any symptoms, social interactions, especially among large crowds, may unintentionally spread the virus. Parents are thus asked to keep their children at home and refrain from letting them visit residences of friends or family or meet up with them in public.

Stay Informed: Refer to reliable and credible sources of information. Do not rely on or spread rumors, hearsay, and fake news that runs rampant on the coconut wireless and online. The CHCC and the CDC provide important resources and information that provide clear guidance on how all of us can get through this crisis. Follow these COVID-19 updates from the Governor's COVID-19 Task Force, CHCC, and CDC:

<https://governor.gov.mp/covid-19/>

<https://www.chcc.gov.mp/coronavirusinformation.php>

<https://www.coronavirus.gov>

Stay Strong: As a Catholic school, our faith can bring us strength, no matter what is happening in world. Students can pray devotional prayers appropriate for the season of Lent like the Holy Rosary and the Stations of the Cross. Also, everyone can follow daily masses from Mount Carmel Cathedral on the following Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/pg/dioceseofchalankanoa/videos/>

DYNAMIC SITUATION

As this is a dynamic situation that changes on a daily basis, the future is uncertain and many questions still remain. The school's Leadership Team, guided by Bishop Ryan P. Jimenez and the school's Board of Directors, are making decisions based on the best and most accurate information available at any given time. Please be assured that no matter what we do, we will provide ample notification and information to all students, parents, teachers, and families via email, our website, all our social media outlets, and local media. In other words, you will definitely hear from us and know what to do.

These are challenging times, but we have survived devastating typhoons, economic recessions, and many other tragedies. With **FAITH** in our Lord, **HOPE** for a better tomorrow, and **LOVE** for each other, we will get through this together. We are **KNIGHT STRONG**. We are **MARIANAS STRONG**. To see a great example of this strength and spirit, check out some recent school videos at the following links:

[Minecraft MCS](#)

[The MCS Theatre Club 2019 Production of "Tasi"](#)

[KNIGHT STRONG MCS Alma Mater](#)

[MCS TED-Ed Student Talks](#)

[MCS TED-Ed Student Talks 2.0](#)

[2020 MCS Teacher Appreciation Video](#)

[2020 Virtual Pep Rally](#)

[A Special Message from AlumKnights to the Class of 2020](#)

Our Lady of Mount Carmel...

Galvin Deleon Guerrero, EdD
President
Mount Carmel School, Inc.