



Loreto Secondary School Clonmel

Coleville Road, Clonmel, Co. Tipperary

31st March 2020

Dear Students,

I hope that you are all keeping safe. Ordinarily, we would keep you up-to-date on a daily basis via announcements from your class teachers, the intercom and year assemblies. As this is not possible the best we can do at the moment is to send texts, emails and put letters on our website. The link to our *Letters to Families* is [here](#).

- **New Challenges**

We know that before now neither students nor teachers have been involved in *remote teaching and learning* and there is a huge amount to learn about this. We are learning, and continue to learn, together.

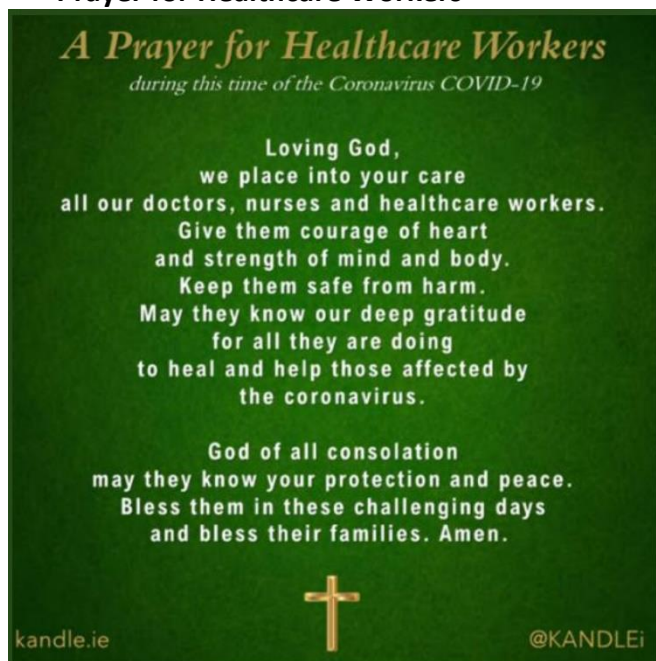
We also know that our students and their families are facing a wide variety of challenges; for example

- your family is isolating;
- family members are sick;
- limited WIFI access,
- family member working on the front lines;
- baby-sitting younger siblings; and so on.

Your teachers and their families have similar challenges. Each of us understands the challenges that collectively we face. *Keeping our country safe and well requires the very best of us at this tough time.*

You may have some personal circumstances that we are not aware of - if appropriate please consider letting your teacher know about these circumstances (via private message on Teams or email), as there may be some way that your teacher or someone else on staff can help. **If we don't know we can't help!**

- **Prayer for Healthcare Workers**



Some of our 5th Year students have asked that we might take some time with our families to pray for healthcare workers, especially those in our local hospital, South Tipperary General Hospital.

Those working in our hospitals (in a huge variety of roles) are doing us all a great service and putting their lives at risk for us.

We can all help those on the frontlines. Please stay at home and remember if going out for exercise:

- Stay Local – maximum of 2km from home
- Keep your distance – minimum of 2m apart
- Stay within your own household group
- Enjoy the outdoors respectfully
- Follow cough and sneeze etiquette

To all who are working on the front lines including members of our extended Loreto Community we want to say thank you for all that you are doing.

Yesterday, Monday 30th March 2020, the President of Ireland, Mr Michael D. Higgins said:

"The days ahead will be difficult, for all of us, but what a memory it will be when the virus has passed, to know that we gave of our best.

Let us not forget ever that we are not travelling through the darkness alone, but that we are on this journey together."

- **Easter Holidays**

As was noted in a letter to families on 13th March regarding school closures the normal school calendar will apply. **This Friday 3rd April 2020 at 3.20pm you will begin your Easter Holidays.** After the last few weeks I know that you, your family and all your teachers will need this break to re-charge the batteries.

As would normally be the case your teachers may be setting you work to complete during the Easter holidays but neither you nor they will be in school (this includes remote teaching and learning) during the two-week holiday.

- **Contacting the school**

As all staff are now working from home school telephone lines are no longer being answered, therefore the only contact to use is: reception@loretoclonmel.ie

Also please be mindful that, no doubt like many families, WIFI access is not as reliable for staff working from home, so there may be a delay in replying to your emails.

Administrative staff will also be on holiday for one week of our Easter break.

- **Coping during this time - Keep Active and Connected**

On the last page of this letter there is *An Active Coping Calendar for April 2020* published by Action for Happiness, which you might find useful.

As a school we understand that the lack of certainty around school closures and state exams may be causing anxiety for some of our students, and indeed their families. We advise all our students and their families in the coming weeks to look after your mental health. There are two keep ways to help with that:

keep active



keep connected



There are so many opportunities and ideas on-line for keeping **active**, some of which our PE teachers have passed on to our students – try something new each day!

You are also reminded to keep **connected** to your family and friends. You can stay apart but still stay connected.

Remember to include members of your year group that might not have as big a circle of friends as you have.

- **Directory of Free Products/Services**

You might be looking for something to do during the time when you need to stay at home, especially during the Easter holiday. Check out this useful directory of free online services, books, streamings, etc. There is something for everyone [here!](#)

We all look forward to returning to our school with normal classes and exam preparations as soon as we can.

You will, these last few weeks, have realised that, although technology is a wonderful thing, there is no substitute for personal human interaction and face-to-face contact. I believe when this crisis passes, we will all cherish even more than before our 'real world' relationships with family and friends.

Please take care of yourself and those closest to you and be assured of the continued support of all the staff here for you – our students.

Anne Mc Grath,
Principal

ACTIVE COPING CALENDAR: APRIL 2020

SUNDAY **MONDAY** **TUESDAY** **WEDNESDAY** **THURSDAY** **FRIDAY** **SATURDAY**

"Everything can be taken from us but one thing: the freedom to choose our attitude in any given set of circumstances" ~ Viktor Frankl

5 Get active. Even if you're stuck indoors, move & stretch	6 Contact a neighbour or friend and offer to help them	7 Share what you are feeling and be willing to ask for help	1 Make a plan to help you keep calm and stay in contact	2 Enjoy washing your hands. Remember all they do for you!	3 Write down ten things you feel grateful for in life and why	4 Stay hydrated, eat healthy food and boost your immune system
12 Immerse yourself in a new book, TV show or podcast	13 Respond positively to everyone you interact with	14 Play a game that you enjoyed when you were younger	8 Take five minutes to sit still and breathe. Repeat regularly	9 Call a loved one to catch up and really listen to them	10 Get good sleep. No screens before bed or when waking up	11 Notice five things that are beautiful in the world around you
19 Do three acts of kindness to help others, however small	20 Make time for self-care. Do something kind for yourself	21 Send a letter or message to someone you can't be with	15 Make some progress on a project that matters to you	16 Rediscover your favourite music that really lifts your spirits	17 Learn something new or do something creative	18 Find a fun way to do an extra 15 minutes of physical activity
26 Take a small step towards an important goal	27 Thank three people you're grateful to and tell them why	28 Make a plan to meet up with others again later in the year	22 Find positive stories in the news and share these with others	23 Have a tech-free day. Stop scrolling and turn off the news	24 Put your worries into perspective and try to let them go	25 Look for the good in others and notice their strengths
			29 Connect with nature. Breathe and notice life continuing	30 Remember that all feelings and situations pass in time		

ACTION FOR HAPPINESS

www.actionforhappiness.org

30 actions to look after ourselves and each other as we face this global crisis together

Keep Calm · Stay Wise · Be Kind