



## Office of the President

March 25, 2020

## Office of the President

March 25, 2020

Dear Mercy community,

This morning, State Superintendent of Schools Dr. Karen B. Salmon announced that Maryland public schools will be closed through April 24, 2020. For the next month, our Mercy students will continue their academic work through our virtual campus, *Mercy Online 2.0*. Our Easter Break will occur April 9<sup>th</sup> through 19<sup>th</sup>, as previously scheduled. Online learning will take place April 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>, which was originally reserved for Field Day, one of our most beloved traditions. We will celebrate Field Day when we are all able to come together in person. Events scheduled in May and June remain on the school calendar as previously published even as our team works on contingency plans in these unprecedented circumstances.

In this time of uncertainty it is imperative that our Mercy Girls continue their academic progress, guided by our expert and caring faculty and supported by their advisers and counselors. Our fourth quarter began on March 23<sup>rd</sup>, and we look forward to another two months of robust instruction and enthusiastic learning on the part of our Mercy Girls.

We know that our continuing reality is a challenge for families who now are mostly confined to their homes. Yet, we are confident that our deep sense of community among our students, families, faculty, staff, alumnae and friends together with the reassuring structure of classes, advisee group meetings, and student activities—all conducted virtually—will encourage and sustain us in the weeks and months ahead.

With this new information, we know that many questions come to mind, especially around our beloved traditions. We are carefully reviewing the April calendar and considering creative ways to celebrate Field Day. Regarding Prom, please know that if this event cannot go forward on April 25<sup>th</sup>, our venue is graciously working with us on future dates.

We want to make one point very clear: as soon as we are permitted to gather together as the Mercy community, we will do so. We also want to reassure our seniors that we will do everything possible to honor your Mercy experience, celebrate your academic achievements, and recognize your well-earned successes and accomplishments.

Catherine McAuley, her Sisters of Mercy, and her lay companions faced many public health challenges as they carried out their ministries nearly 200 years ago. They met these trials with

courage, grace and wisdom, and in many communities led the nursing of the sick. We, too, must be like Catherine, following the best medical advice of our day, caring for each other, adhering to a reassuring routine, and engaging in prayer.

Encouraged by Catherine and her example, we pray on this Feast of the Annunciation, “O God, you sent the Angel Gabriel to Mary to announce that she was to be the mother of your Son. May we be attentive to the signs of your life within us and accept our responsibility to bring you to birth in our world. Through our prayer and action, may your people know mercy from generation to generation. We ask this in the name of Mary and Jesus. Amen.”

In the days and weeks ahead as our new reality continues to unfold, we will continue to communicate with you. In the meantime, we wish you and your families the blessings of good health and happiness in the days ahead.

Sincerely,

Mary Beth Lennon '85  
President

Kevin G. Burke P