



June 2018

Dear Future Humanities Student,

We are pleased that you will be participating in the interdisciplinary Humanities course next year. We have many exciting learning experiences planned, including several field study trips related to our essential question of the year: What Gives Life Meaning? In October our class will be travelling to the Peloponnese for a three-day field study visit to the ancient Byzantine site of Mistra. With its impressive, well-preserved churches, mansions and palaces, and breathtaking views of the surrounding mountains and valleys, the remains of the city of Mistra provide a fascinating glimpse into the last two centuries of the Byzantine Empire

Sir Steven Runciman brings the city to life in his short and very readable book *Lost Capital of Byzantium: The History of Mistra and the Peloponnese*. As background for our visit to Mistra and our study of Byzantine civilization we are assigning this book as your summer reading for next year's Humanities course. You can order the book from a local English language bookstore such as Public, or purchase it from Amazon. Use the following ISBN numbers in ordering:

ISBN-10: 1845118952

ISBN-13: 978-1845118952

You may also download the PDF from the internet. Here is a link we found:

<http://www.doc88.com/p-2436833931319.html>

Please carefully follow the Instructions below for Completing the Summer Reading Assignment.

ACS Athens Mission Statement:

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Instructions for Completing the Summer Reading Assignment

1. Read each of the chapters of Runciman's Lost Capital of Byzantium listed below:

Chapter 1 - The Vale of Sparta

Chapter 2 - The Coming of the Franks

Chapter 3 - The Foundation of Mistra

Chapter 4 - The Return of the Greeks

Chapter 9 - The City of Mistra

Chapter 10 - The Philosophers of Mistra

Chapter 12 - The End of Ancient Mistra

2. For each chapter complete the following written reflections:

- A. Select an event/idea described in the chapter that shows the role of Mistra as an important centre of Byzantine civilization. In two or three paragraphs explain why you think this event/idea is significant and support your response with specific examples and quotations from the chapter. (Cite page numbers.)
- B. Identify one person discussed in the chapter whom you found interesting and write at least one paragraph to explain how this person made an impact on Mistra. Use specific examples and cite page numbers from the book.

This summer reading activity is due during the **first week of school**, as a hard copy. It will be assessed as a regular assignment for the First Quarter, and you will be asked to share your ideas with the class.

We look forward to seeing you in September. Have a great summer vacation.

Ms. Jasonides and Ms. Zavacopoulou