



November 2, 2020

Dear Diocese of Monterey Catholic School Community,

On the Feast of All Souls Day today, my prayers are with you as we remember those in our lives who have gone before us. May we honor their memories and find comfort in knowing they are in heaven with our Lord.

I'm writing to you today to provide a Diocesan update, to share my continued gratitude and to highlight our health and safety protocols.

Diocesan Update

The Diocese of Monterey includes the four counties of Monterey, San Benito, San Luis Obispo and Santa Cruz. Each week, the California Department of Public Health assigns each county a Risk Level on a four-tier scale, which determines the county's re-opening activities. As it relates to schools, all our preschools have been open since the summer, and grades TK-12 are in different phases of returning to in-person learning depending on the county.

- **Monterey County – Tier 1: Purple/Widespread**
 - Preschools open
 - Waivers approved for grades TK-6, returning in November
- **San Benito County – Tier 2: Red/Substantial**
 - Preschool open
 - Waiver approved for grades K-6, returned in October
 - Grades 7-8 returning in November
- **San Luis Obispo County – Tier 2: Red/Substantial**
 - Preschools open
 - Waiver approved for grades TK-6, returned in September
 - Grades 7-8 returned in October
 - Grades 9-12 phased return began in October
- **Santa Cruz County – Tier 3: Orange/Moderate**
 - Preschools open
 - Grades TK-12 returned in September

More information regarding County Risk Levels can be found on the State's website: <https://covid19.ca.gov/safer-economy/>.

Gratitude

I would like to commend and to extend my appreciation to our principals, administrators, teachers and staff for their incredible efforts in providing a robust distance learning program and in transitioning to an engaging in-person program. The demands on our educators are many, and the

nurturing environment they provide our students is unmatched. I am humbled by their service to the Catholic schools in our Diocese and am grateful for their ministry.

I would also like to extend my appreciation to our Catholic school parents and families for having faith in our schools. Choosing a Catholic education comes with many sacrifices for a family, and I am grateful for the continued partnership.

Health and Safety Protocols

Our schools are doing a great job in consistently implementing the health and safety protocols outlined in our operations plans. Thank you for supporting these protocols, which include daily symptom screenings, wearing masks, social distancing, proper hand hygiene, cleaning and disinfecting, and illness management. As you know, these plans are based on the guidelines provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the California Department of Public Health and the school's County Public Health Office. As more is known about the novel coronavirus SARS-CoV-2 and its related disease COVID-19, guidelines are frequently updated, which leads to multiple revisions to schools' operations plans.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the California Department of Public Health have provided guidance for travel and for upcoming holiday celebrations. Depending on the school's operations plan, families may need to participate in the school's remote learning option following travel to ensure the health and safety of students and staff. Please check with your school's principal regarding specific school policies. Thank you for your support and cooperation.

Prayers

When the initial shelter-in-place orders were announced in March, it was hard to imagine that Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's would be affected. This will be our daughter's first holiday season, and it will surely be memorable. Regardless of how we celebrate, I am reminded of what we hear in 1 Corinthians 13:13,

“So faith, hope, love remain, these three; but the greatest of these is love.”

I pray that our Catholic school community is filled with faith in our Lord, hope for the future and love of our families as we journey together during this time.

Sincerely in Christ,



Kimberly Cheng
Superintendent of Schools