



## ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE of PORTLAND

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Dear Parents and Guardians,

As we approach the holiday season, I wanted to extend my sincere gratitude to the students, school families, teachers, and staff for your continued vigilance in following our safety protocols to ensure the safest environment possible at our Catholic schools. Your efforts and dedication have been lauded by not only the Church, but by the wider community. Once again, our Catholic schools are shining examples of how faith, mutual respect, and preparation will always win the day! Your child's education is the beneficiary of this diligence, and I can't thank you enough.

In that spirit, I wanted to provide you with an update on the Maine CDC guidelines for going out-of-state and how it relates to our Catholic schools, particularly considering the potential for holiday travel:

- As of November 4<sup>th</sup>, traveling to Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Vermont requires no special action. If the CDC changes its list of acceptable states, diocesan policy would be amended with the changes.
- If your family visits a state not listed above, the student or parent/guardian traveling with the student must receive a negative COVID-19 test after returning to Maine but prior to returning to school. Testing for children under the age of 18 years is not required when travelling from a non-exempt state to Maine with adults who receive a negative COVID-19 test. The student must not attend in-person instruction until a negative test result is received by either the adult or the student. An alternative is to quarantine as a family for 14 days after returning to Maine.

For a list of testing sites in Maine, visit the special section on the State of Maine website at [www.maine.gov/covid19/restartingmaine/keepmainehealthy/testing](http://www.maine.gov/covid19/restartingmaine/keepmainehealthy/testing). The list includes "swab and send" locations that are providing tests under a contract with the Department of Health and Human Services. The "swab and send" sites send samples to the state lab for testing and offer sample collection free of charge.

As the CDC has advised, celebrating virtually or with members of your own household poses the lowest risk for spread. As your actions have displayed over the past months, I know that you will thoughtfully consider the risk of virus spread when making your holiday plans. Thank you so much for choosing to send your child to a Catholic school. I hope the experience has been as fulfilling and inspiring for you as it is for us.

Have a wonderful, blessed, and healthy holiday season,

*Marianne Pelletier*

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Superintendent

Maine Catholic Schools