

# *St. Mary's Nativity School*

## *2021-2022 Return to School Plan*



*Safety, Presence, and Growth*

*in a*

*Christ-Centered Environment*

**THE DIOCESE OF HOUMA-THIBODAU**



## MESSAGE FROM THE BISHOP

*My dear people of God in the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux,*

*The month of August always brings about excitement and new school year jitters for many as our schools begin to open their doors and welcome thousands of our children back into the classrooms.*

*When I was in elementary school I attended Catholic of Pointe Coupee, and the excitement I would have the days and nights before our school opened was always nerve-racking. I knew I would meet new teachers, make new friends and learn new things in the upcoming days. My mom and dad would be sure our uniforms were ready, school bags were packed and we knew which bus to get on each day. As we enter this new school year, I will be praying for all of the families, students, administrators, faculty and staff of our schools as they return to routines, or enter upon new routines, and deal with excitement and expectations.*

*I want to state that I am incredibly proud of our teachers, administrators and our parish youth formation leaders and volunteers who have gone above and beyond this past year during such challenging times. Even throughout this summer, our teachers and parish coordinators of youth formation were busy training and learning new strategies for the classrooms ensuring our children receive their best.*

*This past summer our Office of Parish Support hosted our diocesan Youth Summit where our parish coordinators of youth formation gathered for three days to pray together and learn best strategies for our youth as we enter a new catechetical year in our parish schools of religion.*

*In addition, behind the scenes, the teachers and staff of our Catholic schools attended a multitude of professional development sessions, learning about new technology advancements and strategies to best educate our children. I greatly appreciate their willingness and desire to ensure the best for the children in our parish schools of religion and Catholic schools.*

*We look forward to opening our classrooms again this school year, as well as reengaging in our parishes' schools of religion. The mission of the church is to form disciples, and our Catholic schools and parish schools of religion are the most impactful way for us to live out our mission. In fact, our Catholic schools are by far one of the largest ministries in our diocese, serving almost 5,000 students across our 11 Catholic schools. The faith formation of our youth is at the top of our priorities here in our diocese. I want to personally wish our administrators, staff, volunteers, families and children a wonderful, fruitful school year. I pray that Christ will be in your hearts and your minds today and always. May God bless the 2021 – 2022 school year!*

*Please know of my continued prayers for you.*

*Yours in Christ,*

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Shelton J. Fabre".

*+ Most Rev. Shelton J. Fabre*

*Bishop of the Diocese Houma-Thibodaux*

## MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT



*Dear Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux Catholic Schools Family,*

*The 2020-2021 school year in the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux Catholic schools was, indeed, one like no other. The impact of COVID-19 was definitely evident, as our communities, state, country, and world felt the impact of a global pandemic like most have never experienced. Our Catholic school family was not exempt from the direct and indirect effects of the virus. However, the beauty of the deep faith and commitment to our Lord and Savior was just as evident. Through it all- the triumphs, the tragedies, the disappointments, and the celebrations- one thing remained true. God was, and IS, with us!*

*Through the diligent efforts of our dedicated Catholic schools community, the students we serve continued to thrive and grow spiritually, emotionally, and academically, despite the challenges before them! Students, parents, teacher-ministers, school leaders, staffs, clergy, and all who make up our Catholic schools community committed themselves to doing all they could to make our 2020-2021 school year all that it could be! Through the careful and intentional work of so many, our schools completed a full year of in-person instruction, affording the students we serve an outstanding academic education in a Christ-centered environment, culminating in beautiful graduations and end-of-year Eucharistic celebrations and closing programs.*

*The commitment of our students, teacher-ministers, parents, staffs, clergy, school and diocesan leaders, and all who worked tirelessly to provide safe and successful school environments is what allowed the 2020-2021 school year to be the success that it was. Through creativity and commitment, our students flourished! Their resiliency, through all the many challenges that could have caused some to waiver, allowed the year to be one of formation, learning, growth, and wonderful memories that will always be with them.*

*Our school families did not allow the adjustments to physical school environments to pause their efforts to live the Church's social teaching. The beauty of the ongoing formation of our students and larger school communities was evident in so many actions and activities. Whether it was welcoming and assisting students and their families who had been displaced due to Hurricane Laura into our school communities, collecting and delivering gifts of thanks and prayer for the COVID-19 front line workers in area hospitals, donating money to the Missionary Childhood Association that is used to build schools, hospitals, provide medical care, food, and clothing in mission countries, volunteering at the Louis Children's Home for abused and neglected children, or walking alongside a fellow student, co-worker, or parent who experienced the illness or loss of a loved one, our school families continued to make the Mission possible through their call to action-through examples seen and, many times, unseen.*

*Our students have also continued to thrive in their many curricular and extracurricular school experiences, including winning the South Louisiana Quiz Bowl Championship, several state championships in Varsity athletics, hosting Right to Life school-wide assemblies, and earning more than \$10 million in college scholarships in addition to their TOPS academic awards by our graduating classes! Congratulations to our students and all those who make up their support systems, allowing them to set their goals and give it their all!*

*With a new school year upon us, we are excited to embrace all that is to come for our Catholic schools family with great hope for a new faith-filled and successful school year! In a time when many dioceses throughout the country are experiencing a decline in Catholic school enrollment, we are blessed to report an increase in our total enrollment for the 2021-2022 school year! What a blessing it*

*is to have some many of our families entrust their children into our care and to afford us the opportunity to minister to them!*

*Today, the joy, wonder, and blessings of the 2021-2022 school year is at our doorstep. The Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux, once again, is diligently preparing for the safe return of our students and employees to our schools. Utilizing our Task Force comprised of school administrators, teachers, medical health professionals, parents, school board members, community leaders, and diocesan leadership, a carefully reviewed and revised Return to School Plan has been promulgated. The intent of the guidelines is to aid our schools in their individual plans for their safe operation so our employees, students, and families feel secure and confident as our new year commences. We remain committed to our priorities of safety, presence, and growth as we return to school:*

- SAFETY- The diocese is committed to utilizing appropriate safety measures in the context of a return to work and schools.*
- PRESENCE- The diocese is committed to keeping our schools open and do not want to burden parents with challenging schedules that would make it difficult to work.*
- GROWTH- The diocese wants our children to continue their academic progress in a safe, secure, and Christ-centered environment in our schools as we work in the ministry of Catholic education to form the whole child.*

*Indeed, the impacts of COVID-19 remain a serious challenge to our schools and larger communities. Understanding the fluidity of the situation, the Return to School Plan is a living document that will be updated as needed as we respond to additional guidance received from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH), the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE), the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE), and our*

*local medical partners and leaders. Our schools will post their Return to School Plans on their school websites, updating as needed.*

*The Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux is grateful for the deep commitment of its school families to the ministry of Catholic education and looks forward to welcoming its students and staff back to school. With Jesus Christ at our side, we are full of hope and ready to embark on our 2021-2022 school year!*

*Blessings,*

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Suzanne Delaune Troxclair". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

*Suzanne Delaune Troxclair*



BELIEVE, ACHIEVE, SUCCEED WITH CHRIST

# St. Mary's Nativity School

3492 Nies Street  
Raceland, Louisiana 70394

Marissa Bagala  
PRINCIPAL

Telephone 985-537-7544  
Fax 985-537-4020

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We appreciate your patience and understanding as we continue to make preparations for the 2021-2022 school year. We, along with the Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux and the Office of Catholic Schools, are committed to implementing a safe, efficient, stable educational environment. All decisions regarding upcoming changes have been made according to recommendations from the Louisiana Department of Health, the Louisiana Department of Education, the Centers for Disease Control and local medical professionals and stakeholders. As we prepare to open our school, the health and safety of our students and employees remain among our top priorities.

We have partnered again this year with Thibodaux General Hospital. They have provided all employees with best practices when dealing with COVID and other illnesses. The hospital will provide the Nurse 911 services for our children and families. We encourage you to call them if you have any COVID questions or concerns.

Our plans are made knowing that at any time the situation may change and adjustments may be needed. Revisions to our plan will be documented on our school webpage. Communication will be sent to parents via text and/or email stating any necessary revisions.

We will begin school on Wednesday, August 4, 2021. Since Lafourche Parish School system begins on Thursday, we will not have bus transportation until Thursday. We would like to remind you that students may be dropped off in the car line beginning at 7:15 A.M. Morning bell time remains at 7:45 and dismissal at 2:45 P.M.

We would like to highlight a few areas of our return to school plan.

**Masks:** Students in 3rd through 8th grade are required to wear cloth face coverings which cover both the mouth and nose securely. We will ask that a spare mask be carried in your child's school bag in the event of soiling. Please place this mask in a sealed plastic bag and label with your child's name and grade. The choice of style,

color, or theme is yours in keeping within school appropriateness. Although masks are not required for students in Pre-K 3 through 2nd grade, they are strongly encouraged.

**Water Bottles:** Our communal water fountains will not be used until further notice. Each student will be required to bring their own personal filled water bottle daily. These bottles may be refillable or single serve. Please ensure that the top closes securely and is clearly labeled with your child's name and grade.

**Lunch:** Currently, there are two options for lunch.

- OPTION 1: The cafeteria will again offer free nutritious lunches. Students will eat in their classrooms or other pre-designated areas.

- OPTION 2: Any student may bring their own lunch during the 2021-2022 school year without the need for a doctor's excuse. As in previous years, lunches that are brought by a student may not need to be heated nor contain items obtained from fast food restaurants. Soft drinks and candy are also not allowed. We suggest that students practice opening their own lunch boxes and containers. If they can master this task, they will spend less time waiting on a teacher and help to eliminate hand to surface contamination. If you choose to bring your own lunch, you will need to make the commitment for the year without any changes. Students will not be allowed to bring their own lunch some days and eat from the cafeteria on other days.

**Cleaning and Sanitation:** Our faculty and staff will work with health care officials in order to provide a healthy environment for your children. Proper hand washing procedures will be followed throughout the day. High touch surfaces will be cleaned frequently.

Hand sanitizer will be available throughout the school campus. Students are not allowed to bring their own personal hand sanitizer on their person or in their school bags.

**Before and After Care:** At this time, before and aftercare will be provided daily. In order to utilize these options, we must require that the student attends on a regular schedule. For instance, you may need to utilize after care daily and morning care only on Monday. Or you may just need after care on Wednesdays. We can no longer accept afternoon phone calls to place a child in after care or have a child attend sporadically.

If all families are diligent regarding sending their children to school healthy and all employees remain diligent, unified we will have an amazing year.

God Bless,

Marissa Bagala

**St. Mary's Nativity Catholic School**  
**2021-2022 Return-to-School Plan and Procedures**

**Catholic Identity**

1. Catholic schools have a two-fold purpose: providing an education that is academically excellent and one that is deeply rooted in Catholic identity.
2. As a Catholic School, in all settings, Religion will continue to be a focused subject.
3. Daily prayer, emphasis on school liturgy, and reinforcement of prayer will continue to be an important driving force for the St. Mary's Nativity Catholic School Family.
4. To ensure our spiritual growth through the liturgy, school Masses will continue throughout the year. School Masses will be for students only until further notice, but we ask that you continue to pray for our students. Church safety protocol will be followed. As per Bishop Fabre's guidelines to return to school, Fr. Clyde strongly recommends all students and staff wear masks for Mass.

**Monitoring and Screening**

1. Daily symptom screenings will be conducted of any person entering the building (students, staff and family members). Nonessential visitors will be restricted at this time.
2. St. Mary's Nativity has partnered with Thibodaux Regional Hospital to assess our facilities, train our staff members, and give recommendations for a safe return to school/work. More information will be posted on our website as soon as it is available.
3. Please do not send your child to school if your child is not feeling well or has a temperature of 100.4 or higher using an oral thermometer, or 99.4 using an infrared forehead monitor. A child must be fever and virus free for at least 24 hours without the assistance of a fever reducing medication before returning to school.
4. Please review the daily questionnaire prior to your child's arrival at school. If the answer to any questions is "yes", keep your child home and notify the school of your child's absence and any pending concerns.
5. If during the school day, a student or staff member exhibits signs or symptoms of COVID-19, the individual will be quarantined in a separate area until they are able to leave campus. Parents will be notified immediately and offered assistance in adhering to the CDC Guidelines prior to returning to school.
6. St. Mary's Nativity School will adhere to all CDC and Diocesan Return to School Guidelines and procedures when relative to releasing information.
7. The award for perfect attendance will be suspended for this year.

## **Social Distancing**

1. It is highly recommended that students wear face coverings over the nose and mouth in all grades. Face coverings do not have to be uniform; however, they cannot contain scary images, political slogans, inappropriate pictures, or inappropriate sayings.
2. It is highly recommended that all teachers and adults wear face masks.
3. Classroom seating will be spaced as far apart from each other as possible. All of the students will face the same direction. Children will not be seated face to face.
4. Students that have more than one academic teacher will remain in their homeroom class the entire day (except for Pre-Algebra and Algebra students). The teachers will switch classes to provide academic instruction.
5. Students will participate in P.E. and Art classes in their homeroom classes.
6. Each student will have his/her own supplies. Students will not be allowed to share supplies. Please have supplies labeled to the extent possible.
7. Recess will be by grade level. Teachers will utilize "brain breaks" and restroom time as necessary.
8. Students will use the restrooms at designated times, and the number of students in the restroom at a time will be closely monitored.

## **Supplies and Water Systems**

1. Water fountains will not be used to limit the risk of diseases associated with water fountains.
2. The children will be able to bring clear water bottles to school. Label the water bottle with your child's first and last name.
3. Please put extra labeled water bottles in a lunch box. Do not place water bottles in the school bag to avoid damaging books/notebooks in case of leakage.
4. The school will support healthy hygiene behavior by supplying approved supplies such as soap, hand sanitizer, paper towels, tissue, disinfectant spray, disposable gloves, and no-touch trash cans. Students will not be able to bring their own hand sanitizer.

## **Transportation**

1. Buses are allowed to operate at 100% capacity, and, as required by Presidential Executive Order No. 13998, ALL passengers MUST wear a mask, regardless of bus capacity or vaccination status.
2. At this time, morning and afternoon car lines will follow the same procedures with an emphasis on social distancing. Car riders' temperatures will not be checked; however, a questionnaire review will take place prior to the student exiting the vehicle. Students experiencing no symptoms will then proceed directly to the hand sanitizing stations.
3. Students riding the bus will not have their temperatures checked as they exit the bus. Students will proceed directly to the hand sanitizing station.
4. Students will report to their homeroom classrooms once sanitized and must remain seated in their assigned desk. Students will be supervised at all times.
5. Parents are encouraged to bring their child to school rather than riding the bus.

## **Counseling**

1. If a child is in crisis, the Lafourche Parish School System will be contacted for assistance. A list of counselors can be obtained from the office.
2. Father Clyde will be available upon parent request.

## **Cleaning/Disinfecting Efforts**

1. Hand sanitizer will be provided by the school for each classroom and the main entrances of the campus.
2. Students will sanitize their hands periodically throughout the day.
3. At least twice a day, any and all "touched items" in each classroom will be sanitized. This includes the desks, tables, chairs, countertops, door knobs, and light switches.
4. Common areas that are frequently touched such as toilets, urinals, faucets, etc. will be sanitized at least twice a day.
5. Students will have their own supplies and will not share supplies with other students.

## **Curriculum**

1. We are returning to school on August 4<sup>th</sup> using a **Traditional School Setting** with our students receiving in-class instruction five days a week. Our goal is to secure curriculum-driven instruction while protecting the student's educational opportunities within a Christ-centered environment.
2. Teachers and Administration will ensure all standards are covered.
3. If the governor mandates that adjustments must occur due to the pandemic, schools could possibly operate using the following approach:
  - a. **Non-Traditional School Setting** - Governmental and Diocesan authorities may deem a return to school as inadvisable. In this case we would have to continue with a comprehensive distance learning program. If this is the case, the logistical and planning considerations that need to be made would include technology support, developing and delivering high quality online instruction and assessment, supporting Catholic Identity, and maintaining community.
4. A plan is developed to assist children who are absent for a prolonged time. Students and teachers will be established in Google Classroom where classwork, assignments, and live streaming of lessons will be uploaded. The teacher/teachers will contact the parent of the student that will be absent for an extended time to arrange for the continued education of the child. Teachers and students will receive in-depth Google training (Classroom, Docs, Slides, Forms, etc.) A training guideline will be uploaded for parents if necessary.

## **Food Services**

1. Students will be served individual plated lunches. The food will be served in disposable plates and disposable utensils will be used.
2. Breakfast will be delivered to the classrooms before school starts.
3. Pre-K through kindergarten classes will eat lunch in their classrooms. First grade through 8<sup>th</sup> will eat in the cafeteria using a staggered schedule.

4. There will be no visitors for lunch until restriction guidelines change.
5. Students will be allowed to bring their own lunch without completing a meal modification form for the 2021-2022 school year. Just a reminder, if a student chooses to bring their own lunch, they must bring lunch daily. Eating the cafeteria lunch on selected days is not allowed.
6. Breakfast and lunch will be free for all students. We still encourage parents to complete a free/reduced meal form.
7. All treats or class snacks must be purchased from a store or bakery and brought to school in the original sealed packaging.

### **Visitors**

1. Nonessential visitors will be restricted at this time.
2. Daily symptom screenings will be conducted on any person entering the building.
3. All visitors must wear a mask/face covering and check in with the main office immediately upon arrival.

### **Communication**

1. Please check your emails, the school's website, and the school's Facebook page often as specific information will be sent out as it becomes available.

### **Before and After Care**

1. Before and after care services will be provided.
2. The aftercare program will use multiple rooms and an outdoor setting to follow the social distancing guidelines.
3. Hand hygiene stations will be located at the entrance of the cafeteria where the programs will be located so that children can clean their hands before they enter.
4. Students will have assigned seating in order to maintain social distancing.
5. Employees will sign the students in and out of before/after care. We ask that parents remain by their car.
6. In order to utilize these options, we must require that students attend on a regular schedule.
  - For instance, you may need to utilize After Care daily and Before Care only on Monday; you may need After Care on Wednesdays only.
7. We can no longer accept afternoon phone calls to place a child in After Care due to space and staff requirements.

### **Extra-Curricular Activities**

1. We will participate in various athletic competitions as deemed safe by the Diocese and CDC.
2. Committees, clubs, etc. will meet with social distancing.

### **Calendar**

In the event of a school closure for an emergency, the principal has the authority to use selected holidays as make-up days.

## St. Mary's Nativity School Daily COVID- 19 Questionnaire

Please review the questions below each day prior to your child's arrival at school. Upon exiting your vehicle each morning your family will be asked the following daily COVID-19 wellness questions.

**\*\*A paper copy survey does not need to be submitted. \*\***

**Yes**      **No**      Have you or anyone in your household had any of the following symptoms in the last 21 days: sore throat, cough, chills, body aches for unknown reasons, shortness of breath for unknown reasons, loss of smell, loss of taste, fever at or greater than 100 degrees Fahrenheit?

**Yes**      **No**      Have you or anyone in your household been tested for COVID-19?

**Yes**      **No**      Have you or anyone in your household visited or received treatment in a hospital, nursing home, long-term care, or other health care facility in the past 30 days?

**Yes**      **No**      Have you or anyone in your household cared for an individual who is in quarantine or is a presumptive positive or has tested positive for COVID-19 in the past 21 days?

**Yes**      **No**      Do you have any reason to believe you or anyone in your household has been exposed to or acquired COVID-19?

**Yes**      **No**      To the best of your knowledge have you been in close proximity to any individual who tested positive for COVID-19?

If the answer is "yes" to any question, please keep your child home and notify the school of your child's absence and any pending concerns: 985-537-7544.

## Updated (01/03/2022) COVID Protocols Chart

### Updates - Isolation & Quarantine:

Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux Updated January 3, 2022	
Situation	Protocols
<p>Symptomatic for COVID-19:</p> <p><b>DO NOT COME TO SCHOOL</b></p>	<p>Option 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stay home for 5 Days.</li> <li>• Test on Day 5 or later and submit the results to the school.</li> <li>• May return to school after Day 5, providing there is a negative test result <u>and</u> all symptoms have resolved.</li> </ul> <p>Option 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stay home for 10 days, returning if all symptoms have resolved.</li> </ul> <p><i>Note: If you test positive <b>at any time</b>, follow guidelines below (Positive for COVID-19; Isolate).</i></p>
<p>Positive Test for COVID-19:</p> <p><b>Isolate</b></p> <p><u>Regardless</u> of Vaccination Status</p>	<p>Option 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stay home in isolation for 5 days.</li> <li>• No symptoms or symptoms are resolving, end isolation.</li> <li>• Continue to wear a mask around others for 5 additional days.</li> </ul> <p>Option 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Isolate for 10 full days.</li> </ul> <p><i>If you have a fever, continue to stay home until your fever resolves.</i></p>

**Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux**  
**Updated January 3, 2022**

<p>Exposed to Someone with COVID-19: <b>Quarantine</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Boosted</li></ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>OR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Completed the primary series of Pfizer or Moderna vaccine within the last 6 months</li></ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>OR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Completed the primary series of J&amp;J vaccine within the last 2 months</li></ul>	<p><b>Option 1:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Wear a mask around others for 10 days.</li><li>• May test on Day 5 (not mandatory) and submit negative test results.</li><li>• If symptoms develop, get a test and remain home until symptom-free, following the protocols in this chart and in place at the school.</li></ul> <p><b>Option 2:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Quarantine for 10 full days.</li></ul>
<p>Exposed to Someone with COVID-19: <b>Quarantine</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Not Boosted or Unvaccinated</li></ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>OR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Completed the primary series of Pfizer or Moderna vaccine <b>over 6 months ago</b> and are <b>not boosted</b></li></ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>OR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Completed the primary series of J&amp;J <b>over 2 months ago</b> and are <b>not boosted</b></li></ul>	<p><b>Option 1:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Stay home in quarantine for 5 days.</li><li>• Test on Day 5 and submit negative test results to school to return to classes.</li><li>• After that, continue to wear a mask around others for 5 additional days.</li></ul> <p><b>Option 2:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Quarantine for 10 days.</li></ul>