

Dear Parents,

There are changes to the programs designed to prepare your child for receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation. With this new school year, these changes are being implemented at All Saints and it is important that you understand them. Below are the new Diocese of Knoxville Guidelines. We look forward to seeing you and your students at an information night on September 10, 2017 beginning at 6:00pm in the parish hall.

Please be patient with us as we begin this new chapter in Faith Formation for our Parish.

In Christ's Love
Deacon Tim Elliott
Annie Nassis

Diocese of Knoxville Confirmation Guidelines

Beginning in the Fall of 2017, the following will be implemented in parish confirmation programs throughout the diocese:

2017-2018 School Year: Students in grades 6 - 12 are eligible to participate and be prepared for the sacrament of confirmation. Eligible candidates must attend classes and retreat requirements for confirmation. Classes will begin in Sept. 2017. Confirmation will be April 7, 2017 at The Cathedral of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

All Saints uses one of the programs approved by the Diocese for the formation for Confirmation. The Program we use is the Dynamic Catholic Program "Decision Point" by Matthew Kelly.

Formation for the Sacrament of Confirmation will be implemented in one of two ways:

1. Students enrolled in Catholic Schools will receive their formation at the Catholic School.
 2. Students not enrolled in Catholic Schools will receive their formation through the parish school of religion
- NOTE: Candidates enrolled in Catholic Schools are not required to attend their parish school of religion. However, they are welcome to attend parish preparation classes, service opportunities and parish retreats.

Candidates must write a letter to the Bishop expressing their intent to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation

All Students must produce a newly issued baptism certificate "With Notations" and turn it into the confirmation coordinator at their current parish

Candidates for Confirmation must attend a one-day retreat offered by the diocese. There will be a minimum of four diocesan retreats available for the candidates to attend.

The **TENTATIVE MANDATORY** Diocesan Retreat Dates and Locations are:

- November 11 at St. Jude, Chattanooga
- [Either] January 13 or January 27 at St. John Neumann
- February 24 at St. Mary, Johnson City
- March 17 at Holy Trinity, Jefferson City

Please note that All Saints Parish will be offering three different parish retreats purposed to build community among our young people in our parish, grow stronger in their faith and personal relationship with God, and to encourage service within our parish and wider community. Attendance of the parish retreats are strongly encouraged and provide great growth and unifying experiences. The dates for our All Saints parish retreats are:

Oct. 27-29: Life on the Streets Homelessness Awareness Weekend

- Open to grades 6-12 (Middle school and high school participants in separate, age appropriate activities)
- Participants will experience a homeless simulation first hand by sleeping outside in cardboard boxes. Participants should bring their own boxes (start looking now).
- Service to the community and potential opportunities to work with the homeless population of Knoxville are part of the retreat activities.

Feb. 23-25: Middle School Retreat

- Open to grades 6-8
- Retreat is held at Camp Bayoca in Wears Valley, TN
- Participants stay in bunkhouses
- Retreat focuses on community building, personal reflection, prayer, outdoor activities, videos, discussions, and games.
- Retreat is built around a theme.

March 23-25: High School Retreat

- Open to grades 9-12
- Retreat is held at Camp Bayoca in Wears Valley, TN
- Participants stay in bunkhouses
- Retreat focuses on community building, personal reflection, prayer, outdoor activities, videos, discussions, and games.
- Retreat is built around a theme.

Identification of Opportunities for Service:

The diocese will no longer require service projects for individuals to be confirmed. As part of the formation and/or the retreat, service will be promoted as an action that comes from the grace given at Confirmation.

Parishes are strongly encouraged to provide service opportunities, but these activities will not be a prerequisite to receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation.

As a parish and as followers of Christ, All Saints is HIGHLY committed to serving our parish and wider community. We have found that our teens are much more committed to their faith journeys when serving within the parish and community. We will be scheduling multiple service learning opportunities throughout the year.

We STRONGLY encourage confirmation candidates to invest in varied opportunities to serve in the community. Some of the opportunities to serve this year will include (additional opportunities will be added as the year continues):

- Oct. 27-29: Life on the Streets Homelessness Awareness Weekend (service opportunities available to retreat participants)
- Dec. 3: Volunteer Ministry Center Lunch: Prepare and serve a meal for the homeless in Knoxville.
- Dec. 10: Angel Tree Warehouse - We will be helping process and sort gifts for the Angel Tree program which serves the underserved of Knoxville.
- Feb. 3-4, 2018: Feed the Hungry Weekend (3 shifts available). We will have three different service projects going on this weekend on both Saturday and Sunday. Two projects with Second Harvest Food Bank and one project with Volunteer Ministry Center.
- Summer 2018: Catholic HEART Workcamp
- Service in various parish ministries, (liturgical, musical, catechetical, charitable, etc.)