

**ATTENTION HIGH SCHOOL YEAR I PARENTS:**

We are looking forward to working with your students helping to prepare them to live as Disciples of Christ and become adult members of the Catholic Church. The curriculum framework for High School age students set by the U.S. Catholic Bishops contains Six Core Courses and we will spend two years completing these courses. We have found that some of the optional courses included in the curriculum tie right in with our theme, so we have included segments from some of those as well. Our goal is to nurture a mature faith in each person and to build up the body of Christ.

Our High School program requires the completion of these two years, but students have a three year time frame to complete them. That way, if a student has multiple conflicts during one of the years and is unable to commit to the program for whatever reason, they will have another year to try again. Confirmation is based on an individual's readiness, *not* a particular grade. Readiness involves the student being well informed about their faith, practicing their faith through prayer, Mass and the reception of the sacraments, and they should be enthusiastic about serving in their parish community using their God given talents.

*The two years can be completed in:*

- *Grades 9 & 10 with the chance to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation in the fall of Grade 11*
- *Grades 9 & 11 with the chance to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation in the fall of Grade 12*
- *Grades 10 & 11 with the chance to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation in the fall of Grade 12*

**Class participation and attendance, weekly worship at Mass with the reception of the Sacraments, and service to the parish community are all “requirements” for Confirmation.** If students miss more than 2 classes, don't attend Mass regularly or participate in service to their parish, they obviously are not able to make the commitment and can try again in a year that is less busy for them.

Once students enter into the second year, they along with a parent, will receive the Discernment portion of the program. Both parents and students will learn how discernment is a decision making process which includes prayer and dialogue between the person seeking the sacrament and those immediately concerned with the preparation of the candidate, namely the pastoral staff, catechists, and sponsors. #43 from the Handbook of Religious Education – Diocese of Worcester.

Once the students have completed and turned in the requirements that show their willingness to live a life as Christ's disciple and are eager to pursue the sacrament, they will receive a date to meet with our discernment team. This interview with the discernment committee is an opportunity for students to express their dedication to their faith through worship, prayer and service. When it has been determined that they do in fact exhibit the readiness to receive this Sacrament, they will be given the dates for the Immediate Confirmation Prep (ICP) Program.

The Immediate Confirmation Prep Program replaces the six week 11<sup>th</sup> Grade Confirmation Class and offers students the opportunity to receive the sacrament a year earlier. The I.C.P. class consists of one six hour class plus Mass on a Sunday in May or June and students have two dates that can choose from. Following completion of the ICP, students will attend a one day (Sunday) Fall Confirmation Retreat and celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation sometime shortly after that.

**WHAT SHOULD WE DO NOW?** *(It is up to the student to let us know they are actively practicing their faith.)*

- *Continue weekly worship at Mass through-out the summer and all year.*
- *Become involved and provide service to your Parish community at St. Denis Church.*
- *Develop a habit of prayer to grow closer to God.*
- *Celebrate the sacraments regularly (Reconciliation and Eucharist)*
- *Never stop learning about the rich traditions of our Catholic faith.*

*Moving through this HS program is totally up to you. We will provide you with the information, requirements and due dates, but we are not going to chase after you for it. This is your commitment to your faith and your decision to live in relationship with Christ. When requirements are met, you will move on to the next step. If you miss the due dates that we've set, or neglect to fulfill any of the requirements, you will have another opportunity next year.*