

September 2021

Dear Parents,

Good News! The time is approaching for us to restart our Confirmation program. I thank you for your patience during these last couple months that I have arrived at St. Augustin's. I have been doing my best since I arrived to give this matter the attention it deserves. Our young people deserve a Confirmation program. Now more than ever our youngest generation needs to be armed with the fullness of the Holy Spirit.

And so it's time to begin anew, to start fresh with a brand new Confirmation program – a program that meets the needs of our young people, that instills in them a love and appreciation for the Catholic Church and that teaches them to know, love, and serve God throughout their whole life.

With that said – I am excited to announce that this past week I hired a new Director of Religious Education (DRE) for St Mary's. Her name is Michelle Pickering. Michelle's home parish is St. Mark's in Jamestown. She brings with her a wealth of experience and education. Michelle has taught Theology in Catholic High Schools and Middle School for many years. She was also the DRE at St. Barnabas in Portsmouth and at St. Mark's Jamestown for several years – and she is no stranger to building a Religious Education program from the ground up and she is eager to get started. As part of her role at St. Mary's she will be overseeing the combined Confirmation program.

Please join me in welcoming Michelle to our St. Mary's and St. Augustin's family as together we begin a new chapter in our Confirmation program. Moving forward, our Religious Ed program will be different than has been in the past. We will no longer have a summer Confirmation program. The program will take place during the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grade academic year.

My hope is to begin this year's Confirmation classes the week after Columbus Day. Specific dates and times will be announced soon. At this stage – it is crucial that we know how many Confirmation students we have between the parishes. So the first step is to get every student registered as quickly as possible.

You can find Confirmation registration forms at the back of the Church, in our office, or right here on our website. Please fill out a registration form for your child and return it to St. Mary's Office as soon as possible. The deadline for registering is Friday, October 8 at 3pm.

Please note that there will be an opportunity for those who have missed their Confirmation in the past two years to make their Confirmation in the year to come. Anyone who is entering 10<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> grade in the Fall of 2021 is welcome to take part in the Confirmation 2 program this year (with our 9<sup>th</sup> graders) and then be confirmed at our next Confirmation ceremony.

Thank you and May God Bless You and Your Family,

*Fr. Rowley*