

**St. Bernard & St. Margaret Mary Parishes
Faith Formation/Youth Ministry
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August 10, 2010

To the parents of high school students:

If you have not already done so, it is time to register your child for LifeTeen –our new high school religious ed format! Please read this letter carefully. **The required informational meeting for all students in grades 9 & 10 and at least one parent and/or sponsor will be held either on Sunday, September 11 OR Sunday, September 18 at 5 PM in St. Joseph School gymnasium (you come only once – choose whichever date is most convenient).** This letter will provide you with some necessary information about our new program for high school students and the process of preparing for Confirmation. **In the unlikely event that you are unable to make either meeting date, please contact me BEFORE September 18. Classes begin on September 25. We are using an entirely new format this year, and it is really important that everyone understands the changes.**

The Sacrament of Confirmation for students completing the second year of preparation will be celebrated on Thursday, May 3, at 7. The rehearsal (mandatory) will be Wednesday, May 2 at 6 PM. Please mark your calendars now.

Hopefully your child has already selected a sponsor for Confirmation. This person must be a **practicing, confirmed Catholic, at least 16 years old.** Ideally, it should be one of the child's baptismal godparents, but if they are not practicing the faith any longer another sponsor should be chosen. The sponsor may **not** be a parent (this is Canon law). If the sponsor cannot be present for the Confirmation, another person may stand in as proxy.

Classes meet on Sundays from 5-6:30 PM. **Class attendance is mandatory, but 4 excused absences will be allowed. There will be a Student Mass on the first Sunday of every month (except January, when it will be the 2nd Sunday). It is required that students attend this Mass, preferably with their families. The Student Mass will be at 5 PM, followed by class from 6-7:30PM.**

It is expected that students involved in preparation to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation will be attending Mass each Sunday or Saturday vigil. This is minimal church involvement for the practicing Catholic.

NET retreat will be held for First year Confirmation students and is required. Second year Confirmation students who did NOT attend the NET retreat last year will need to attend this year. The NET retreat this year will be held on Sunday, November 6, from 12-6 PM (will include Sunday Mass) at St. Bernard Church. If your student needs to attend NET this year please mark your calendar now. **I will have registration forms for NET at our parent meeting on September 11 & 18.**

Participation in the Steubenville Conference during the summer between the first and second year of preparation is strongly encouraged. I will have more information about this at our meeting. Second year confirmation students who did NOT participate in the Steubenville

Conference this past summer will be asked to attend the Teen Encounter retreat during the school year at the St. Basil Center in Methuen, MA. The dates are November 18-20, 2011; February 10-12, 2012, March 23-25, 2012, or April 20-22, 2012.

In addition to Mass attendance and retreats, students preparing to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation are expected to perform service to our church and community. **Second year confirmation students will be required to complete 15 hours of service, prior to Confirmation and are responsible for documenting this information and presenting it to their teachers.**

Participation in youth ministry activities is strongly encouraged. We will offering activities based on the Theology of the Body during youth ministry time this fall. Youth ministry will run from 6:30-8 PM on Sundays, and supper will be provided. Laina Barakat, our youth minister, and Liz Wilber, a young adult with training in Theology of the Body will be running our sessions and will be available to answer your questions at our parent meetings.

If you have not yet registered for class, please fill out the attached form and return to me as soon as possible. If you need a registration form they can be downloaded at <http://www.swnhcatholics.com/pdfs/faithformationregistration1011.pdf>. A calendar for the upcoming year is enclosed.

Thank you for being involved in your child's continuing faith formation. We appreciate your continued support as we share the faith with these young people. Please feel free to call or email me if you have any questions. I look forward to our meetings in September!

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Joy Davis, DRE