



THE BASILICA OF SAINT MARY OF THE ASSUMPTION

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August 10, 2026

Feast of St. Lawrence, Deacon and Martyr

Dear Parish School of Religion (PSR) & St. Mary School (SMS) Families,

I hope you all had a wonderful summer filled with family, friends, and fun. It is hard to believe it is already back to school time.

I know that many of you have heard about the change in our diocese about the age for being able to be presented to prepare for and to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. Also, many of you are very interested to know how this will affect your family. After meetings and communications with the Diocese of Columbus and in conversation with Msgr. Eilerman, SMS principal, Mrs. Elrich, the SMS teachers, and myself, we have a plan for the implementation of this change. I will take the time to recap the change for those who have not heard about it yet, lay out how this is being implemented throughout the diocese, and how this will be implemented here at the Basilica of St. Mary of the Assumption.

In June 2025, Bishop Fernandes promulgated the change to lower the age of Confirmation to about nine to ten years old in the Diocese of Columbus. Please read the full letter from Bishop Fernandes which is linked below. This decision was made, after a Diocesan Committee was commissioned to investigate the possibility of lowering the age of Confirmation. This committee consisted of the Office of Evangelization and Catechesis, the Office of Divine Worship, the Office of Catholic Schools, and several priests of the Dioceses of Columbus. The letter shares how there were many steps taken and how the process took over a year of consultation and deliberation. A major concern and factor in Bishop Fernandes's decision was the increasing number of children deciding to leave the Catholic faith at earlier ages than seen before.

The Diocese of Columbus is implementing this process in three waves based on deaneries. The Basilica of St. Mary of the Assumption is in the third wave of deaneries to implement the process. The first wave was this past year, 2025-2026. The next wave of deaneries to implement will be this year, 2026-2027. So, we will be starting the implementation process the following year, 2027-2028.

With the Basilica of St. Mary of the Assumption in the third wave, that means this year, 2026-2027, the children in 8th grade will be prepared and will receive the Sacrament of Confirmation in Lent; the same as previous years. We will be taking 2 years to implement the process to get Confirmation to the age of nine/ten. The first year of implementation,

2027-2028, the children in grades 8, 7, and 6 will be prepared and will receive the Sacrament of Confirmation in Lent. Then the following year, 2028-2029, the children in grades 6, 5, and 4 will be prepared that year and they will receive the Sacrament of Confirmation in the autumn of 2029. Then moving forward, the children in 4th grade will be prepared to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation and then they will be Confirmed the following Autumn in 5th grade. We will of course continue to be in contact with the diocesan offices concerning how this second wave is going and any helpful information they have from their experience that may affect our plan of implementation.

If you want more information about this change in our dioceses, please read the letter from Bishop Fernandes and check out the below links from the diocesan website that provides more information.

Link below is Bishop Earl K. Fernandes Confirmation Letter
[BEKF-Confirmation.pdf](#)

[New Sacrament of Confirmation Policy - Catholic Diocese of Columbus](#)

The above link includes a video from Bishop Fernandes

[Confirmation Age Change Frequently Asked Questions - Catholic Diocese of Columbus](#)

If you have additional questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to myself or Mrs. Elrich, Principal of St. Mary School.

Please know of all our prayers for you and your families as we transition into this new school year and as we transition to this new age for Confirmation in the upcoming year.

Sincerely in Christ through Mary,

Miss Shana Leonard
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