



# Saint Mary's Parish

8 Church St. ~ Holliston, MA ~ 01746 ~ (508) 429-4427

June 5, 2024  
Feast of St. Boniface

Dear St. Mary's Parents,

Most probably, you have already heard about the change of Confirmation age in our Archdiocese. The official Decree from Cardinal O'Malley came into effect on May 1, 2024. As of that date, the new age for Confirmation is Grade 8, at roughly 13 or 14 years of age. For parishes like ours with a Fall Confirmation ceremony, this means that Confirmations will eventually all take place at the start of Grade 9.

This change is the result of a study begun by our Archdiocese in 2017. The study determined that 8<sup>th</sup> graders *"would benefit from receiving the grace of the sacrament at an earlier age, are less likely to have already moved away from a commitment to their faith, have closer connections to their families, and have less to preoccupy them."*

Parishes were notified of this coming change last Fall, and we immediately began exploring the various forms of implementation presented to us. We were given three years to fully make the transition. I write to inform you of how this all will now unfold here at St. Mary's in the coming school year.

**Next year's 10<sup>th</sup> Graders** - having already completed year one of our Current Confirmation Program – will complete year two of our Current Program as scheduled. They will still be Confirmed in the Fall of 2025.

**Next year's 9<sup>th</sup> Graders** will enter year one of our Current Confirmation Program as scheduled. The following year they will complete year two of our Current Program. They will still be Confirmed in the Fall of 2026.

**Next year's 8<sup>th</sup> Graders** will join with next year's 9<sup>th</sup> Graders and enter year one of our Current Confirmation Program. The following year they will complete year two of our Current Program. They will then be Confirmed in the Fall of 2026 - a year earlier than they would previously have been.

**Next year's 7<sup>th</sup> Graders** will begin year one of our NEW Confirmation Program. The following year, in Grade 8, they will complete year two of our NEW Confirmation Program. They will then be Confirmed in the Fall of 2026 - two years earlier than they would previously have been.

I have enclosed a copy of the days and times that classes for the affected grades will be held starting next fall. All levels of Confirmation Preparation will involve a service hour expectation, to help our young people embrace the charity, generosity and love that are the hallmark of a Catholic Christian life. As always, weekly Sunday Mass remains the foundation of Catholic family life and religious education. To learn of the Lord in even the very best class - without the experience of the Sunday Mass to bring that knowledge alive - is a poor and watered down version of faith formation. For that reason, reflecting on each student's weekly Mass experience will be an integral part of all Confirmation Grade levels.

We will do all we can to make the new Confirmation age a blessing in the lives of our young people. And we know that you will do the same.

In Christ's Peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a stylized, overlapping loop and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Reverend Mark J. Coiro  
Pastor

**Fall 2024 – Spring 2025**

Registrations go live on the St. Mary's Website on **Monday, July 1**. <https://stmarysholliston.com/>  
The Deadline for all Religious Education Registrations is **Monday, August 18**.

**Grade 7** has a Monday or Wednesday option.

**Grades 8, 9, and 10** have a Tuesday or Thursday option.

**MONDAY WEEKDAY CLASSES**

**GRADE 7:** Confirmation Year 1 (New Program) on alternate weeks from **7:00 to 8:30 PM**.

**TUESDAY WEEKDAY CLASSES**

**GRADES 8 and 9:** Confirmation Year 1 (Current Program) on alternate weeks from **7:00 to 8:30 PM**.

**GRADE 10:** Confirmation Year 2 (Current Program) on alternate weeks from **7:00 to 8:30 PM**.

**WEDNESDAY WEEKDAY CLASSES**

**GRADE 7:** Confirmation Year 1 (New Program) on alternate weeks from **7:00 to 8:30 PM**.

**THURSDAY WEEKDAY CLASSES**

**GRADE 8 and 9:** Confirmation Year 1 (Current Program) on alternate weeks from **7:00 to 8:30 PM**.

**GRADE 10:** Confirmation Year 2 (Current Program) on alternate weeks from **7:00 to 8:30 PM**.