

January 5, 2008

To: All Pastors
All Directors of Religious Education
All Principals
All Parish Secretaries

From: Virginia Meagher
Office for Worship

CC: Bishop Stephen E. Blaire
Diane Taricco
Sr. Gloria De Jesus
Linda Henkel
David Springer
Ray Desagun

RE: **The Scheduling of Confirmations for 2010 and Changes to the Confirmation Guidelines**

There are several changes that we are making to the customary practices in the Diocese of Stockton regarding Confirmation. It is our custom for parishes to begin calling Diane Taricco at the beginning of each January in order to schedule their confirmations for the following year. This first-come, first-served approach has served some of our parishes well and others not as well. In an effort to streamline the time and energy devoted to this scheduling, and to ensure that parishes are able to "take turns" getting their first choice (especially weekend dates), this procedure will be changed going forward.

In order to schedule your parish's Confirmation(s) Mass(es) for 2010, you must complete and return the attached form to Diane Taricco, no later than Friday, January 16, 2009. All requests for dates and times will be considered, and you will be notified of the date selected by Friday, February 6, 2009.

Please note that you must provide weeknight options in your list of preferred dates. It is not possible for every parish to celebrate confirmation on weekends. Parishes that request weekend dates but do not get them, will have first preference for them in 2011.

Bishop Blaire prefers that single Confirmations not exceed 60 people at a time. If you have more than that in your parish, you should break the group down into smaller celebrations. At the other end of things however, if you have less than 30 students being confirmed, you may want to consider coordinating your confirmation with a neighboring parish.

A second change concerns the signing of Confirmation certificates, and is effective immediately. While it has been the custom in the Diocese for certificates to be sent to the Diocese for the Bishop's signature, this will no longer be the practice. Confirmation certificates are statements by the Pastor, as the

responsible person, that an individual was appropriately prepared for and received the Sacrament of Confirmation, administered by Bishop Blaire, on such a date at such a parish. Going forward, it will be the Pastor who signs Confirmation certificates. Any that are sent to the Chancery will be returned to the parishes unsigned.

Finally, here is a reminder regarding a change that was made last year to our Confirmation celebrations. Bishop Blaire is very pleased with the practice of parishes providing a photographer to take a picture of each person being confirmed, and wishes for this to continue. He will not pose for individual pictures before or after Confirmation, but will take one group picture if it is requested. The cost of these pictures should be figured into the fees for the students early, so that there are no participants who cannot receive a picture because of a lack of ability to pay. If one person gets a picture, so do all the participants. Therefore, professional photographers who send proofs to families where families then need to buy a picture package are not appropriate.

If you have additional questions regarding the practice of Confirmation Celebrations, please feel free to call the Office for Worship, Monday – Wednesday, at (209) 466-0636, ext. 637.