



DIOCESE OF BIRMINGHAM IN ALABAMA

Office of Religious Education

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Parish Religious Education Programming Suspension - Extended

To all pastors and parish catechetical leaders,

Bishop Baker has approved the continued suspension of all parish religious education classes for the remainder of the 2019-2020 program year, through all of May 2020. As before, this suspension should include PSR/CCD, First Communion, Confirmation, youth and young adult ministry, adult faith formation, campus ministry, and other such catechetical programs.

Parish outreach and support to parents as the primary faith formators of their children is strongly recommended at this time. Parish efforts to provide remote opportunities for worship, community building, and catechetical programming by electronic means, such as livestreaming, teleconferencing, etc., is also encouraged. In this regard, the Offices of Religious Education and Discipleship and Mission have been instructed by the Bishop to continue to support and resource parish leaders, and will do so through the remainder of this challenging time.

If your parish conducts online programming with minors that includes the possibility of two-way communication (e.g. group chats, videoconferences, etc.), please make use of the Catholic Schools' policies regarding electronic communications. These policy statements were newly adopted for use in parish programming with minors - you may find them at <http://bit.ly/bhamcomm>

As previously noted in the Bishop's statement dated March 27th, beginning April 11th and continuing through May 31st, all priests of the diocese with current ministerial faculties have been granted "the faculty to confirm any person, aged 16 or older, who was baptized a Latin Rite Catholic and has prepared for the Sacrament of Confirmation through the RCIA...and is properly disposed." If your "parish's regular Confirmation Mass... has been cancelled due to the COVID-19 crisis, it will be rescheduled once public worship is resumed."

Please continue to join in prayer with our Holy Father in asking our Lord for an end to the coronavirus, for relief for those afflicted, and for the eternal salvation of those who have passed.

Yours in Christ,

Director, Office of Religious Education