



Diocese  
of  
Cleveland

Cathedral Square

507/2009

OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

Dear Father and Parish Life Coordinator,

Over the many months since my coming to our Diocese of Cleveland, I have had the opportunity to visit all of the parishes. Many of the visits have been at the time of the parish celebrations of Confirmation, celebrating Mass and greeting the people. These visits have helped me experience the variety of practices that are present within our diocese, and most particularly the different ages at which children receive Confirmation. Also, I have heard much comment, as you may well imagine, about the values and challenges that go along with each of the various practices. Some of the conversations have even requested that a set age or grade be set, so that there may be uniformity throughout the diocese. At times I have convened special groups to discuss the reception of Confirmation and have asked the Office for Catechetical Services to convene it's staff and others so I may hear their thoughts.

I share all of the above to assure you and those whom you serve that I have attended to this matter engaging a great number of people in a conversation on the matter of a diocesan statement on the time for the reception of Confirmation for those Catholics baptized as infants, that is, before the age of seven.

Having consulted widely and having prayerfully reflected on this matter, I hereby promulgate the policy that in the Diocese of Cleveland children baptized as infants will be prepared for the reception of Confirmation at the earliest in eighth grade and at the latest in eleventh grade. This policy abrogates all other practices in the Diocese of Cleveland. The effective date for the implementation of this policy is 1 July 2009.

It is my sincere hope that this policy while not demanding strict uniformity will provide a basic time span thereby helping to achieve a basic approach for formation and education for all who are to be Confirmed so that they will "be suitably instructed, properly disposed, and able to renew the baptism promises." Canon 889.2.

May this letter be an opportunity for all of us to grow in appreciation for catechesis for our children, particularly in their preparation for reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Thanking you for all you do in behalf of all whom you serve, I am

Sincerely yours in Christ,  
*Richard Lennon*  
Bishop of Cleveland

*Maureen Guerin Sullivan*  
Chancellor  
29 May 2009