

JOURNEY

PARENT INFORMATION PACKET

SOPHOMORE CONFIRMATION RETREAT

FEBRUARY 16-18, 2018

FRIDAY 5:00 PM - SUNDAY 3:00 PM

- GENERAL INFORMATION - LOCATION, EXPECTATIONS, PACKING LIST
- WHEAT LETTERS AND EXPLANATIONS - DUE FEBRUARY 7
- RETREAT FORMS - DUE FEBRUARY 7



WHAT IS JOURNEY?

JOURNEY IS A CONFIRMATION RETREAT FOR ST. THOMAS AQUINAS AND ST. CECILIA SOPHOMORE CANDIDATES. THE WEEKEND WILL FOCUS ON THE CALL TO DISCIPLESHIP AND THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BAPTISM, FIRST COMMUNION AND CONFIRMATION. JOURNEY FOCUSES ON THE ROLE OF ADVENTURE IN THE LIFE OF FOLLOWING CHRIST. WE ARE CALLED TO BE COUNTER-CULTURAL, TO BE PEOPLE OF HOPE AND CONSECRATE OUR LIVES TO PRAYER AND A SINGULAR PURPOSE: TO BUILD THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

OUR JOURNEYS ARE UNITED BY GRACE. GRACE IS DEFINED AS THE FREE GIFT OF GOD'S LOVE. IT IS THE COMMON THREAD THROUGH ALL OF OUR LIVES, FROM THE AHA! MOMENTS TO THE MOMENTS OF NO HOPE. GRACE MEETS US WHERE WE ARE BUT IT NEVER LEAVES US THE SAME. IT CARRIES US THROUGH LIFE AND IT WILL CARRY US TO THE END OF TIME.

ON THIS YEAR'S RETREAT, THE GOSPEL AND READINGS CALL US TO LIVE DIFFERENTLY: TO LIVE DIFFERENTLY THAN BEFORE WE ENCOUNTERED THE LORD, AND TO LIVE DIFFERENTLY THAN SOCIETAL NORMS. HOLINESS WILL BE A COMMON THEME IN THIS YEAR'S RETREAT. WE WILL REMIND TEENS THAT TEMPTATION SHOWS UP- NOT AS A DEVIL WITH POINTY HORNS- BUT AS A LESSER GOOD, SOMETHING WE HAVE ALWAYS WANTED BUT IS NOT QUITE GOOD ENOUGH FOR US. THIS RETREAT WILL BE ABOUT REFUSING TO SETTLE FOR MEDIOCRITY AND CHOOSING WHAT IS BEST INSTEAD, FOR THE WORLD OFFERS US COMFORT, BUT WE WERE NOT MADE FOR COMFORT - WE WERE MADE FOR GREATNESS (POPE EMERITUS BENEDICT XVI.)

JOURNEY RETREAT TEAM

A TEAM OF UPPERCLASSMEN, COLLEGE STUDENTS AND ADULTS FROM LIFE TEEN CORE SERVE AS THE RETREAT TEAM. WE CHANGE EACH YEAR'S RETREAT TO ADAPT TO THE SUNDAY READINGS, SO THESE WOULD BE GREAT TO USE IN YOUR WHEAT LETTERS. WE GATHER ONCE A WEEK TO PLAN AND ADAPT THIS RETREAT FOR THIS SPECIFIC CLASS OF TEENS BASED ON OUR INTERACTIONS WITH THEM AT SMALL GROUP, LIFE TEEN AND IN PRAYER. THESE TEENS ARE BUSY. WE BUILD THIS RETREAT TO PROVIDE A RARE ESCAPE FROM THE DEMANDS OF DAILY LIFE AND THE PRESSURES ON MODERN TEENAGERS.

A SPIRITUAL WALK THROUGH AND UPDATES CONCERNING THE RETREAT WILL BE SENT IN AND AROUND THE DATE OF OUR JANUARY 15TH CLASS. PLEASE PRAY FOR US AS WE BUILD A SPIRIT- LED RETREAT FOR YOUR CHILDREN.

YOUR ROLE ON THE JOURNEY

PARENTS AND SPONSORS ARE ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND AS TEAM MEMBERS IF DESIRED. WHEAT LETTERS ARE COLLECTED FROM FAMILY MEMBERS BY FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 10TH TO SHOW THE SUPPORTIVE ROLE LOVED ONES HAVE PLAYED ON THE TEEN'S JOURNEY FROM BAPTISM TO CONFIRMATION TO DISCIPLESHIP.

RETREAT LOCATION

CAMP QUAKER HEIGHTS, ELDORA, IOWA

- EVEN THOUGH THE RETREAT LOCATION IS CLOSER THIS YEAR, WE DO NOT ENCOURAGE LATE ARRIVALS OR EARLY DEPARTURES EVEN IF YOU ORGANIZE YOUR OWN TRANSPORTATION. (PLEASE SEE BELOW.)
- THE CONFIRMATION RETREAT IS NOT REQUIRED. WITH THAT BEING SAID, WE CANNOT EMPHASIZE ENOUGH HOW IMPORTANT THIS SPECIFIC WEEKEND RETREAT IS AND HOW MUCH IT CAN IMPACT YOUR CHILD'S PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD AND THE CHURCH. WHEN CANDIDATES ATTEND THEIR JOURNEY CONFIRMATION RETREAT AND THE LIFE TEEN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE AS SOPHOMORES, WE HAVE FOUND THESE TWO EXPERIENCES MAKE FOR THE MOST LIFE CHANGING, TRANSFORMATIVE EXPERIENCE OF FAITH AND UNDERSTANDING WE OFFER.

RETREAT PARTICIPATION

- A RETREAT IS CHARACTERIZED BY STEPPING AWAY FROM DAILY STRESS, OBLIGATIONS AND APPOINTMENTS. IT IS PUTTING THE LORD FIRST WITHOUT HAVING TO BALANCE THE MANY HATS WE WEAR!
- THE CONFIRMATION RETREAT IS A ONE-TIME EXPERIENCE SPECIFICALLY FOR EACH UNIQUE TENTH GRADE CLASS. DUE TO THE RETREAT'S INTENSE NATURE, WE ASK THAT ALL PARTICIPANTS ARE PRESENT FROM START TO FINISH. IN OUR MANY YEARS' EXPERIENCE THIS IS WHAT IS BEST FOR ALL OF THE PARTICIPANTS.
- SADLY, WE KNOW THIS RULE WILL MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR SOME TO ATTEND THEIR CONFIRMATION RETREAT BECAUSE OF THEIR IMPORTANT ROLE ON TEAMS, CLUBS, BANDS, ETC. IF FEBRUARY 16-18 SIMPLY DOES NOT WORK FOR YOUR FAMILY, WE HONOR THAT COMPLETELY AND THERE IS NO PENALTY! CONSIDER THE LIFE TEEN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE AS A GREAT "MAKE-UP" OPTION. WE CAN HELP YOU FIND THE SCHOLARSHIPS TO MAKE IT POSSIBLE.
- OUR INTENTION IS NOT FOR THEM TO MISS OUT, BUT FOR EVERY CANDIDATE TO BE ABLE TO EXPERIENCE A "TRUE" RETREAT WHERE THEY CAN FOCUS THE ENTIRE TIME WITHOUT DEALING WITH WHAT THEY HAVE MISSED OR OTHER UNAVOIDABLE SOCIAL RAMIFICATIONS. WE OFFER A VARIETY OF RETREATS EVERY YEAR SO EVERY CANDIDATE CAN ATTEND AT LEAST ONE RETREAT IN ITS ENTIRETY AS A FRESHMAN OR SOPHOMORE.
- THE NATIONAL DIRECTORY FOR CATECHESIS [NDC, #36, 2] DIRECTS THAT CONFIRMATION SACRAMENTAL CATECHESIS "IS DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE AND INCLUDES RETREAT EXPERIENCES."

PARTICIPATION FEE

- THE RECOMMENDED PARTICIPATION FEE TO HELP COVER COSTS OF THE RETREAT IS \$100.
- NO SPECIAL ASSISTANCE APPLICATION IS NECESSARY. PLEASE CONTRIBUTE WHAT YOU CAN.

PACKING LIST

- PILLOW & SLEEPING BAG LABELLED WITH YOUR NAME.
- CLOTHES, TOILETRIES, TOWEL FOR 2 NIGHTS & 3 DAYS
 - AT THE REQUEST OF YOUNG MEN ON PAST RETREATS, PLEASE DO NOT BRING LEGGINGS/YOGA PANTS OR SWEATPANTS WITH WORDS ON THE BOTTOM. THANK YOU.
- FLASHLIGHT
- BIBLE/ROSARY
- WINTER COAT, GLOVES & HAT
- RECOMMENDED
 - BOOTS OR SNEAKERS
 - A WATER BOTTLE AND SNACKS TO SHARE IN CABINS



- CANDIDATES OR TEAM MEMBERS IN POSSESSION OF ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES OR WEAPONS WILL BE SENT HOME. PARENTS WILL BE ASKED TO PICK UP ANY MINORS NOT IN COMPLIANCE OF BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS FROM THE RETREAT CENTER.

WHEAT LETTERS

- WHEAT LETTERS ARE CONFIDENTIAL. PLEASE DO NOT SHARE THE LETTERS OR INVOLVE THE TEENS IN THE COLLECTION/SUBMISSION OF THE LETTERS! MOST KIDS DO NOT KNOW ABOUT THEM BEFOREHAND AND WE'D LIKE TO KEEP THEM A SURPRISE.
- A WHEAT LETTER IS A LETTER EXPRESSING YOUR SUPPORT, AFFIRMATION AND ANY INSPIRATION FOR THE CHILD ON THEIR WEEKEND. A WHEAT LETTER IS A CHANCE TO TELL THEM HOW MUCH YOU LOVE AND CARE FOR THEM. ASSURE THEM OF YOUR PRAYERS AND TELL SOME MEANINGFUL STORY OR MEMORY THAT REFLECTS YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE CANDIDATE. GIFTS/FOOD ARE DISCOURAGED AS PART OF THE WHEAT LETTER CEREMONY. THE CANDIDATES WILL RECEIVE AN ENVELOPE OF ALL THEIR LETTERS AS PART OF THE RETREAT IN A PRAYERFUL ENVIRONMENT.
- WE'D LIKE EACH CANDIDATE TO HAVE AT LEAST 10 WHEAT LETTERS. SUBMIT THIS INFORMATION TO FAMILY AND FRIENDS NEAR AND FAR SO WE CAN SHOW THIS CANDIDATE HOW MUCH THEY ARE LOVED AND PROVIDED FOR BY GOD!
- PLEASE SUBMIT WHEAT LETTERS TO JOURNEYRETREAT18@GMAIL.COM OR 2900 HOOVER (C/O WHEAT LETTER COMMITTEE) BY WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2018. WHEAT LETTERS EMAILED AFTER FEBRUARY 7 WILL NOT BE RECEIVED BY THE CANDIDATE. IF EMAILED, PLEASE DO NOT FORGET TO PROVIDE THE CANDIDATE'S FIRST AND LAST NAME WRITTEN ON THE OUTSIDE OF LETTER OR SECOND ENVELOPE.



WHEAT LETTER EXAMPLES

JOSIE,

YOU ARE SUCH A STRONG YOUNG WOMAN AND I'M PROUD TO CALL YOU MY GODDAUGHTER! YOU ARE KIND, LOVING AND SPIRIT-FILLED. YOU SHOULD ALWAYS FOLLOW YOUR HEART BECAUSE CHRIST DWELLS IN YOU. FOR ME, WATCHING YOU PREPARE FOR CONFIRMATION AND CHOOSE TO FOLLOW CHRIST IS AN INCREDIBLE GIFT. GOD'S GRACE HAS BEEN WITH YOU SINCE YOU WERE BAPTIZED AND IT HAS BEEN AN AMAZING JOURNEY WATCHING YOU GROW IN HIM! REMEMBER THAT THIS IS AN ADVENTURE. THERE IS A RISK AND THERE IS GLORY. MY FAVORITE THING ABOUT BEING CATHOLIC IS PRAYING WITH SCRIPTURE AND THEN RECEIVING JESUS IN THE EUCHARIST. THIS IS WHEN I FEEL THE MOST ALIVE IN MY FAITH. NO MATTER WHERE YOU GO, YOU ARE WITNESS OF WHAT YOU BELIEVE. LIFE IS A BEAUTIFUL GIFT! YOU CAN LEAN INTO YOUR FAITH, INSTEAD OF RUNNING AWAY FROM IT. I WILL ALWAYS SUPPORT YOU AS YOU CHOOSE TO FOLLOW CHRIST. MY PRAYER FOR YOU IS THAT YOU FIND WHO YOU REALLY ARE IN THE GOD WHO LOVES YOU MORE THAN ANYTHING. I KNOW THE LAST FEW YEARS HAVE BEEN HARD AS YOU'VE TRIED TO FIND FRIENDS YOU CAN RELY ON. HONESTLY, I NEVER FOUND A SOLID FRIEND UNTIL I WENT TO COLLEGE. JESUS WAS MY FRIEND IN ALL TIMES BECAUSE I COULD BE MYSELF, AND DISCOVER WHO I TRULY WAS, WITHOUT FEELING PRESSURED TO PRETEND IN ORDER TO FIT IN OR FEEL LIKE I BELONG. I KNOW I BELONG WITH GOD AND THAT IS ALL THAT MATTERS. MY PRAYER IS THAT YOU WILL ALSO FIND THAT ETERNAL ACCEPTANCE IN CHRIST. I AM PROUD TO BE A PART OF YOUR JOURNEY AND I LOVE YOU VERY MUCH.

"FOR I AM PERSUADED, THAT NEITHER DEATH, NOR LIFE, NOR ANGELS, NOR PRINCIPALITIES, NOR POWERS, NOR THINGS PRESENT, NOR THINGS TO COME, NOR HEIGHT, NOR DEPTH, NOR ANY OTHER CREATURE, SHALL BE ABLE TO SEPARATE US FROM THE LOVE OF GOD, WHICH IS IN CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD." ROMANS 8:35-39

YOUR GODMOTHER, JANICE

DEAR MARK,

I HOPE YOU'RE ENJOYING YOUR RETREAT AND THAT YOU HAVE ENCOUNTERED GOD HIMSELF IN A VERY SPECIAL WAY THIS WEEKEND. I WILL BE PRAYING THAT THIS WEEKEND WILL BE ONE TO REMEMBER- ONE THAT WILL BLESS YOU FOR YEARS TO COME. MARK, YOU ARE ALREADY SUCH AN AMAZING MAN OF GOD. THE WAY THAT YOU SEE A NEED AND JUMP TO MEET IT IS SUCH A GOOD EXAMPLE TO THOSE AROUND YOU...ME INCLUDED. I AM ALWAYS SO IMPRESSED WITH YOUR GRACE AND YOUR GENTLENESS. I AM SO THANKFUL FOR THE WAYS THAT YOU HAVE BEEN THE HANDS AND FEET OF CHRIST TO OUR FAMILY. OUR BOYS LOOK UP TO YOU. YOU ARE THEIR SUPERHERO.

I DON'T KNOW WHAT GOD HAS IN STORE FOR YOUR LIFE, BUT THIS ONE THING I KNOW: HE IS FAITHFUL. THIS HAS BEEN THE GREATEST SOURCE OF HOPE AND JOY IN MY LIFE: THAT HE IS FAITHFUL. I PRAY THAT YOU'LL KNOW THAT THIS WEEKEND AND THAT THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION WILL GRANT YOU THE GRACE OF NEVER FORGETTING IT. GOD IS ENOUGH FOR YOU, MARK, NO MATTER WHAT YOUR LIFE BRINGS. HE IS SUFFICIENT. THERE WILL BE CRAZY JOYOUS ADVENTURES ALONG THE WAY, THINGS YOU CAN'T EVEN BEGIN TO IMAGE THAT GOD HAS PLANNED ESPECIALLY FOR YOU. THERE WILL, NO DOUBT, ALSO BE TRAGEDY AND HEARTBREAK. SUCH IS LIFE IN A FALLEN WORLD. BUT, WE HAVE THIS HOPE AS ANCHOR FOR THE SOUL (HEBREWS 6:19). WE KNOW THAT HE IS JEHOVAH JIREH, THE GOD WHO PROVIDES.

THERE IS NOTHING BETTER THAN TO LIVE IN THIS HOPE, IN THE PEACE OF KNOWING THAT GOD IS ENOUGH FOR YOU. AND SO THAT IS MY PRAYER FOR YOU THIS WEEKEND. THAT YOU WOULD SEE AND HEAR AND FEEL GOD PROFOUNDLY, AND THAT YOU WOULD TRUST THAT HE IS ENOUGH; REMEMBER THAT HE IS ALWAYS FAITHFUL.

I HOPE I GET TO CONTINUE TO BE A WITNESS TO THE WAYS GOD IS WORKING IN YOUR LIFE, MARK. IT IS MY JOY TO PRAY FOR YOU NOW AND ALWAYS.

IN CHRIST, ANDREW

