

September 10, 2017

Dear parent, guardian, or sponsor:

PLEASE DO NOT SHOW THIS LETTER TO YOUR SON / DAUGHTER!

We are excited that your teen is preparing with us to receive the sacrament of confirmation and will be attending the retreat January 12th- 14th at Warm Beach Camp in Stanwood. We are hoping this retreat will help our youth go forth feeling closer to God and to each other, and more prepared to receive this sacrament, and be sent forth afterwards to make disciples of others. In order for this all to happen, we need your help!!

The second night is the high point of the retreat, and this is where we need your help. We are hoping to have a reconciliation service Saturday night, followed by the candidate receiving letters from parents, friends, relatives, teachers, their sponsor, and other important people in the student's life. These letters are called *Palanca* (meaning "to lift up") and are messages of love, support, admiration, and recognition that reinforce your son/daughter's specialness in God's plan. We have been amazed at previous retreats when a student has received a great number of letters from family and friends. These letters are a privileged communication between the writer and the retreatant, and are not read by anyone else. This is a unique opportunity to say those things that are often left unsaid, or just to remind the retreatant of how much he or she is loved.

Please ask any of the following to write to your son or daughter: parents, grandparents, long-time friends, significant teachers, priests and ministers, aunts and uncles, neighbors, family friends, students who have already been Confirmed, MQP alumni, Godparents, their sponsor, or anyone from whom s/he would like to hear. Some parents email family and friends, call them or send a huge Facebook group message! After you have asked them to write, please provide them with MQP's address or the Palanca email address.

If there is any confusion about what to do, please email Chelsea Madura at: confirmation@mqp.org

Because part of what makes these letters so powerful is that they are unexpected, **please do not tell your son / daughter about them, and also do not ask anyone who may take part in confirmation in the future (younger siblings, friends who have not attended Destiny retreats, SEARCH retreats, Confirmation retreats, or other similar retreats) to write letters.**

We want to emphasize the importance of receiving letters from parents and other close family and friends. We cannot begin to express the impact of the letters on the student. Since letters from parents are critical to the success of the retreat, **we ask that you specially mark your letter with a "P" (for parent) on the lower left corner of the front of the envelope.** Please either drop them off at the office at Mary, Queen of Peace for them to be placed in my mailbox, or mail them to:

Chelsea Madura
YOUR TEEN'S NAME
1121 228th AVE SE
Sammamish, WA 98075

If your last name differs from that of your student, please include a return address that has both your and your student's last name. We also ask that you ***do not send any oversize items such as packages and other gifts***, as our space and ability to deliver these items is limited. Items other than letters will be kept in the office at MQP to be picked up at a later time. To ensure that all confirmation candidates receive Palanca letters, **we ask that they arrive at MQP by no later than Sunday, December 31st.** Also, palancas may be sent by e-mail as text or as an attachment. Please write "palanca for *your child's name*" in the subject line. The email address is: confirmation@mqp.org

Because retreats can be a powerful emotional experience as confirmation candidates more fully explore the meaning of their own spirituality through reflecting on the faith and life experiences of others, members of our confirmation leadership team are prepared to be sensitive to students' needs and reactions during this time. Still, if you have reason to believe that your son or daughter may be in a particular state of mind where they might be unusually impacted by this experience, or if you have some concerns that you would like to discuss with us, please email Chelsea Madura at: confirmation@mqp.org

All letters need to be to MQP by the weekend prior at the absolute latest by Sunday, December 31st to ensure all letters are placed in the proper teen envelopes that following week before the retreat.

Many blessings and happy writing,

Chelsea Madura

*Pastoral Assistant for Senior High Youth Ministry
Mary, Queen of Peace, Sammamish WA*

(425) 391-1178 Ext. 114