



Confirmed to Make a Difference

# Program Director Manual



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saint mary's press

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# Introduction



Dear brothers and sisters, I have often thought of how the Church may render more clearly her mission to be a witness to mercy. . . . It is a journey which begins with spiritual conversion.

—Pope Francis, Homily on the Year of Mercy, March 13, 2015



At the heart of *Called to Mercy* is the teaching of Jesus and the Church's mission of mercy. We share your longing to invite young people to follow a spiritual path of reflection and conversion of the heart—to an understanding of what it means to be a person of mercy—and to invite them more deeply into a Church that is a witness of God's mercy in the world.

## Imagine a Confirmation preparation program . . .

that helps young people recognize the encounter of mercy in their lives!

that deepens young people's initiation into a community of mercy—the Church!

that inspires young people to show mercy toward others—to be witnesses of mercy in their daily lives!

*Called to Mercy* awakens young people to what Pope Francis calls “the Lord's most powerful message: mercy” (Homily, March 17, 2013).

# A Confirmation Program Like No Other

When developing *Called to Mercy*, we at Saint Mary's Press set out to create a truly new approach to Confirmation preparation that would appeal to youth and meet their real-life needs as well as the needs of Confirmation coordinators. To help us with this, we gathered groups of recently confirmed young people and asked them about their Confirmation preparation experience. Then we asked them to design an approach to Confirmation preparation that would excite them, that would match how they best learn, that would foster what they want in terms of a sense of community, and that would teach them what they would expect to learn in such a program. We asked a handful of Confirmation coordinators, youth ministers, and directors of religious education to do the same.

We designed ideas, tested them, redesigned them, and tested them again. Then we brought in a team of experts who specialize in designing e-learning courses. They were excited about our vision and said, "We sure wish there had been a Confirmation approach like this when we were kids." These experts were so excited about our project that they jumped in and committed to creating an incredible e-learning web application that could be accessed from any smartphone, tablet, laptop, desktop, or just about any device that can connect to the internet.

Knowing we had the best minds at work on how to deliver the program, our next step was to be clear about what we wanted the young people to encounter through this time of preparation. Off we went on a deep spiritual dive into the heart of Jesus' message of mercy. We read, reflected on, and prayerfully considered everything the Church, including Pope Francis, has said about being called to become witnesses of mercy in the world. What could be more powerful than a Confirmation preparation program designed around this great, holy, and most powerful call—a call that is the essence and heart of what it means to live the Christian life?

The reactions to *Called to Mercy* have been positive, with young people saying things like:

- "I love *Called to Mercy*. It is so engaging and helpful. And it relates to my life."
- "It's so great that I can complete the online part of this program on my phone and whenever it works best for my schedule."
- "The learning activities really make me think. I honestly had never thought about some of these things before."
- "The gathered sessions are fun, memorable, and a great way to connect with the other people in my class."
- "*Called to Mercy* has helped me believe that I deserve to be treated with mercy by others and has led me to want to live a life of mercy toward others."

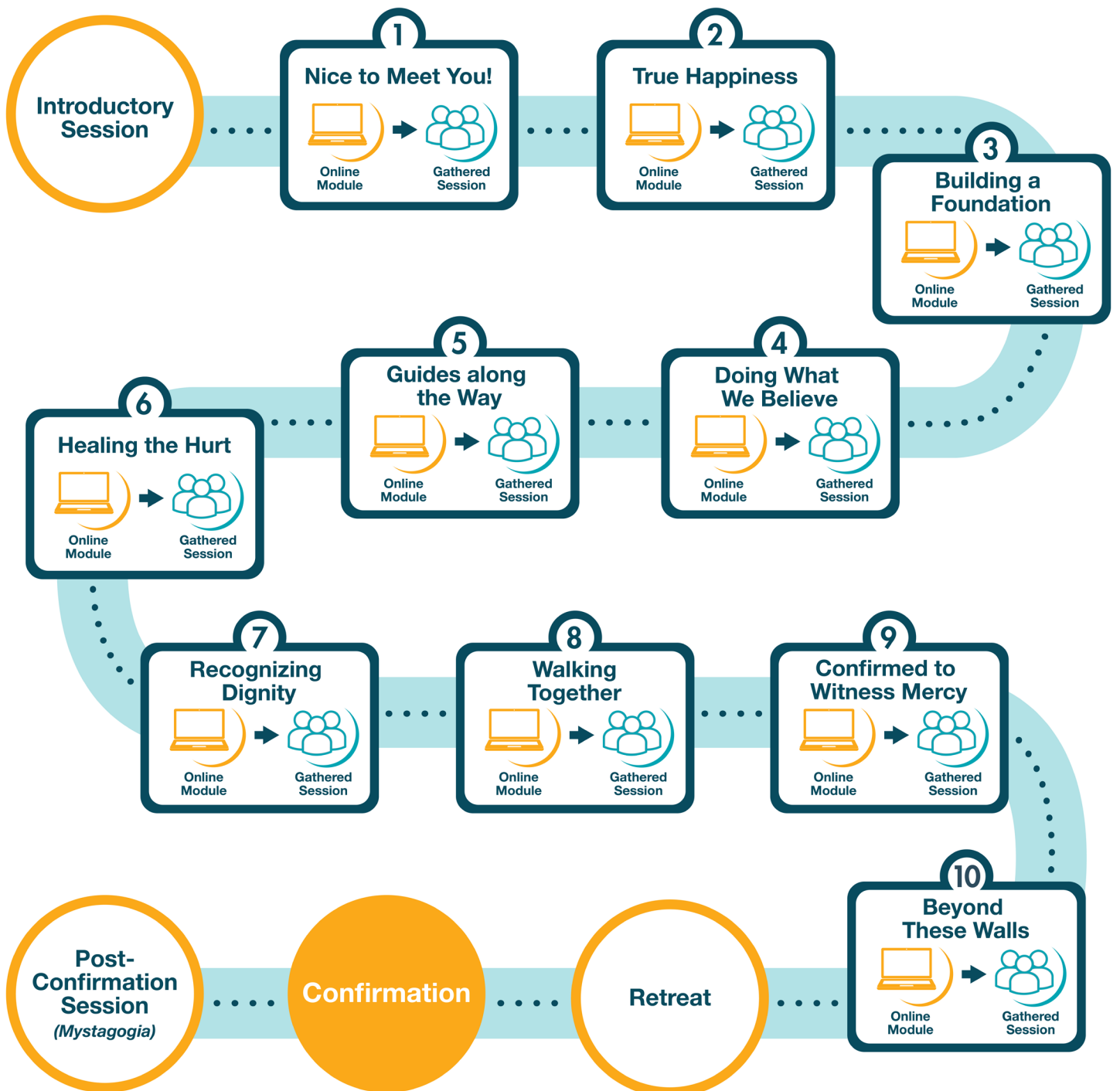
Confirmation coordinators have said things like:

- “I so appreciate that *Called to Mercy* is rooted in active learning, not passive reading of a book or simply watching videos. It’s real, deep, relevant learning.”
- “I love that in *Called to Mercy* I can track and observe the online progress of every young person in the program. I can also see their thoughts and reflections, so I can witness their journey of transformation unfold over the course of preparation.”
- “*Called to Mercy* is excellent in that it provides not only the online modules but also the face-to-face gathered sessions that help to further build community. This has been an important dimension of our program.”
- “*Called to Mercy* has changed the lives of the young people who have been a part of it, and it has changed our community.”

That’s the story of *Called to Mercy*. Now let’s turn our attention to all the pieces of the program and help you implement them in your community.



# Program Structure







# Program Overview

The program begins with an introductory session of orientation. Then the young people complete an online learning module on their own. This is followed by a gathered session that explores the topic more deeply as a group. This pattern of self-directed module followed by a gathered session continues for the ten core parts of the program. A retreat and a post-Confirmation session are also included.

## 1 Nice to Meet You

### Online Module

The young people will:

- learn how to navigate through an online module
- create a personal profile that expresses who they are
- reflect on the important relationships in their life as a foundation for meaning

### Gathered Session

The young people will:

- get to know one another face-to-face in order to build community
- reflect on the Holy Spirit as presented in Scripture and as active in their own lives
- examine human dignity as brought about by the Holy Spirit

## 2 True Happiness

### Online Module

The young people will:

- discern the meaning of true happiness
- consider where love is most needed in the world today
- explore how their Confirmation is a calling to be witnesses of God's love in the world

### Gathered Session

The young people will:

- become familiar with the Great Commandment as a path to true happiness
- distinguish between loving and nonloving thoughts and actions
- examine statistics around global and national poverty, and see the need for love and service on local, national, and global levels

### 3 Building a Foundation

#### Online Module

The young people will:

- identify the Gifts of the Holy Spirit as foundations for happiness
- reflect on the Gifts of the Holy Spirit in their own lives
- consider how they are called to bring the gift of happiness to others

#### Gathered Session

The young people will:

- identify the Holy Spirit as the gift of God
- review the seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit and their meaning
- recognize how they currently serve others

### 4 Doing What We Believe

#### Online Module

The young people will:

- experience inspirational stories of peers practicing acts of mercy
- explore the fruits of the Holy Spirit through the stories of Jesus in Scripture
- consider adults in their lives who inspire them

#### Gathered Session

The young people will:

- recognize the name of each of the fruits of the Holy Spirit
- demonstrate an understanding of the fruits of the Holy Spirit
- brainstorm ways to serve others in their community

### 5 Guides along the Way

#### Online Module

The young people will:

- understand that the saints can be seen as friends
- research a saint's life and the implications for personal faith
- choose a saint who can serve as a spiritual friend and guide in their life

#### Gathered Session

The young people will:

- understand the saints as guides to the Christian way of life
- explore the concept of the Communion of Saints as a communion of friendship
- become aware of their own blessings and their call to serve others

## 6 Healing the Hurt

### Online Module

The young people will:

- learn how forgiveness can motivate us to act with courage and love
- understand how forgiveness can help us when we fail to act with love
- consider practical ways to heal others' hurts

### Gathered Session

The young people will:

- understand the importance of forgiving and being forgiven
- recall that we celebrate God's love and mercy in the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation
- be encouraged to imitate the love and mercy of God through service to others

## 7 Recognizing Dignity

### Online Module

The young people will:

- reflect on ways human dignity can be supported
- explore the Great Commandment and Jesus' call to mercy as being tied to human dignity
- realize that everyone shares equally in human dignity

### Gathered Session

The young people will:

- identify the meaning of human dignity in their everyday lives
- examine the intersection of the Great Commandment and the Ten Commandments
- understand the significance of the Parable of the Good Samaritan as a call to radical love

## 8 Walking Together

### Online Module

The young people will:

- identify ways that community is present in their lives
- explore models of the Church as a way to support the authentic spiritual search for God
- examine their own place in the Church and in their individual parish

### Gathered Session

The young people will:

- review the basic facts about the Seven Sacraments
- express the meaning of one of the sacraments in art
- connect the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist to a life of service

## 9 Confirmed to Witness Mercy

### Online Module

The young people will:

- learn what to expect during the celebration of Confirmation
- become familiar with their own role in the celebration of Confirmation
- reflect on the meaning of the various liturgical components of the Sacrament of Confirmation

### Gathered Session

The young people will:

- better understand the various parts of the Sacrament of Confirmation
- see Confirmation through the eyes of someone who has already celebrated the sacrament
- review a pledge of service to consider part of what they are committing to in Confirmation

## 10 Beyond These Walls

### Online Module

The young people will:

- identify one small step they can take to make the world better
- explore stories of people who have lived the call to mercy
- reflect on the call to mercy in their own lives

### Gathered Session

The young people will:

- engage in service together in their community
- reflect on their understanding and experience of service
- be challenged to take one small step to serve others in the future

## Retreat

The young people will:

- engage in a contemplative and reflective period, free of day-to-day distractions and busyness
- reflect on the theme of mercy as it is found in Scripture, in the words of Pope Francis, and in daily life
- explore their own stories of encounters of mercy

## Post-Confirmation Session (*Mystagogia*)

The young people will:

- deepen their understanding of the Sacrament of Confirmation by reflecting on their experience of it
- express gratitude for the guidance and community they have experienced with the Confirmation leader(s), their sponsors, and their peers
- affirm the commitment they have made by making a service pledge

# Meet the Guides

As the young people begin the online learning modules, they will meet three guides who will lead them through the material. Let's meet the guides now!



**Hi, I'm Karen!**



**Hi, I'm Lauren!**



**Hi, I'm Shawn!**



We are the guides who will accompany and lead the young people through the online modules.

In the first module, we will introduce ourselves and lead the young people in a process of introducing themselves to the community. The young people will encounter us throughout the program in short videos as well as through written dialogue that looks like text messages.



We aren't really "live" guides. We are real people in real life—we actually exist—but we don't interact with the young people in a live way; rather, we guide them virtually, through prerecorded videos and scripts that were written for each module.

Our job is to help the young people navigate through each module.



We set the tone and direction for each module, and we share our thoughts and insights and invite the young people to do the same. We also summarize concepts and explain the teachings of the Church that are explored.

We have had a blast preparing all our interactions for this program, and we hope *Called to Mercy* is an amazing journey for you and the young people in your program.





# Online Learning Modules

## What the Young People Need

one of these



or one of these



or one of these



or one of these



**PLUS**



**OR**



**OR**



Then it's as simple as logging in at [mlearn.smp.org](https://mlearn.smp.org).

The young people are all set and ready to begin module 1!



# What the Program Director Needs

As the program director, you have access to the *Called to Mercy* administrative site. From there you can set up distinct “sections” of young people, each with its own leader (*optional*); access section codes to provide to your young people; move the young people into different sections; and manage the program overall. The best way to use the administrative site is to access it online with either a desktop or laptop computer (any make or model, PC or Mac).



OR



# Registering Your Parish and Enrolling the Young People

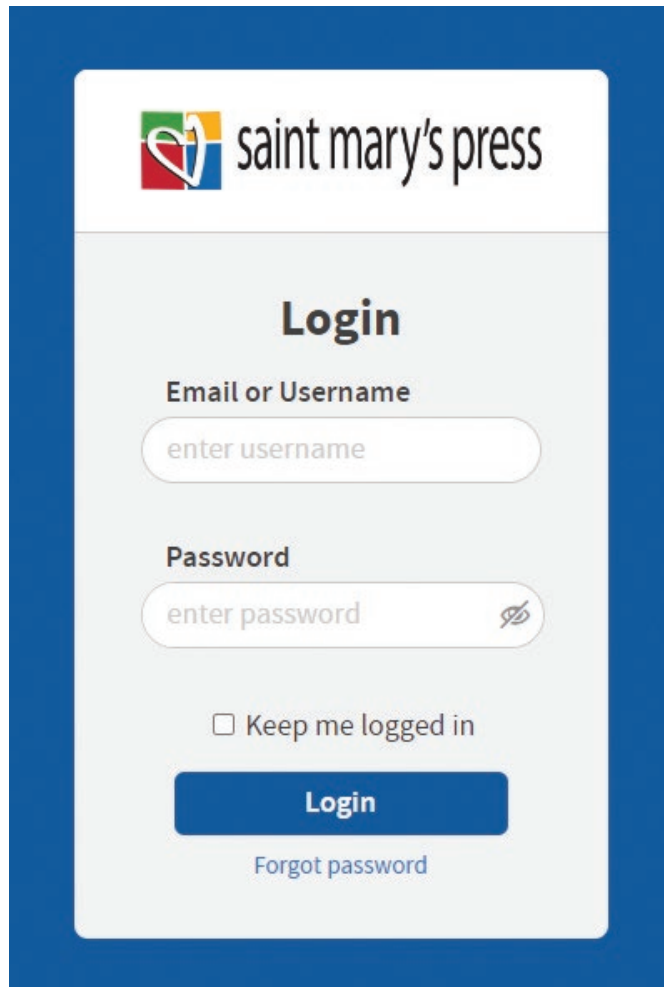
**Step 1:** Call our Care Team at 800-533-8095. We will walk you through the steps to register your parish and enroll the young people in *Called to Mercy*. We are delighted to assist you in getting started. Our team is available weekdays between 7:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. CST.

**Step 2:** Once your parish is registered, we will give you a personal guided tour through the process of enrolling the young people, and we will show you how to navigate through the administrative site so that you can monitor and manage your entire program.

**Step 3:** You will receive a confirmation email. Open this and click the link to reset your password. Then you can log in to your account at [mlearn.smp.org](https://mlearn.smp.org).

The log-in page looks like this:

- a. Enter the email address you provided when you called to register your parish.
- b. Enter your password.
- c. Click or touch the “Login” button.

The image shows a login page for Saint Mary's Press. At the top, there is a logo consisting of a stylized heart with a cross inside, colored in green, yellow, and red, followed by the text "saint mary's press" in a lowercase, sans-serif font. Below the logo, the word "Login" is centered in a bold, black, sans-serif font. Underneath "Login", there are two input fields. The first is labeled "Email or Username" and contains the placeholder text "enter username". The second is labeled "Password" and contains the placeholder text "enter password", with a small eye icon to its right. Below these fields is a checkbox labeled "Keep me logged in". At the bottom of the form is a blue button with the word "Login" in white. Below the button is a link that says "Forgot password" in a smaller, blue font.



**Step 4:** You'll come to the administrative site for *Called to Mercy*. It is referred to as a "course" here because it is one of many different courses that uses the Saint Mary's Press mobile learning environment.

**Manage Courses for .02 AAA SMP**

As a School Administrator for this course, you can manage sections for the courses you've set up through Saint Mary's Press. This means you can add sections, assign instructors and distribute the section code to the instructor. Once the students have the codes, they can begin registering for the section.

If for some reason a student needs to move sections, you can easily do that as well by finding the student in their current section and reassigning them to a new section.

This page may be accessed by:  
 ★ SMP Admins  
 🛠 School Admins

**Course Status Filter**  
 Show Only Active Courses

Course	# Sections	Total Seats	Seats Available	Registered Students	School Admin Actions
2023-24 Called to Mercy	3	10	3	7	<a href="#">History</a> <a href="#">Manage Sections</a>
2023-24 Environmental Justice	3	6	0	6	<a href="#">History</a> <a href="#">Manage Sections</a>
2023-24 Grade 1 Discover!	0	5	5	0	<a href="#">History</a> <a href="#">Manage Sections</a>
2023-24 Grade 2 Discover!	0	5	5	0	<a href="#">History</a> <a href="#">Manage Sections</a>
2023-24 Grade 3 Discover!	0	5	5	0	<a href="#">History</a> <a href="#">Manage Sections</a>
2023-24 Grade 4 Discover!	0	5	5	0	<a href="#">History</a> <a href="#">Manage Sections</a>
2023-24 Grade 5 Discover!	0	5	5	0	<a href="#">History</a> <a href="#">Manage Sections</a>
Connect!	0	5	5	0	<a href="#">History</a> <a href="#">Manage Sections</a>

From the "Manage Courses" screen, you can click on "Manage Sections" to set up unique and distinct "sections" of the program. If just one person is serving as the program director, managing and overseeing the progress of all the young people, you would set up just one section. If you have a large group with multiple leaders monitoring and guiding the young people, you would organize the young people into distinct sections and assign an "administrator" to oversee and monitor each section. A unique access code is provided for each section. The leaders share the appropriate code with the young people, and the young people enroll in that section at [mlearn.smp.org/enroll](https://mlearn.smp.org/enroll).

The "Manage Sections" screen looks like this:

**Manage Sections for Course: 2023-24 Called to Mercy**

Here you can manage Sections in the **2023-24 Called to Mercy** Course for .02 AAA SMP.  
 .02 AAA SMP currently has -2 Open Seats in 2023-24 Called to Mercy.

This page may be accessed by:  
 ★ SMP Admins  
 🛠 School Admins

[Add a Section](#)

Section Name	Section Code	Course	Section #	Instructor(s)	# Enrolled	Reg. start	Class start	Class end	Status
<a href="#">Section 1 Called to Mercy</a>	2wdb768w	2023-24 Called to Mercy	1	Crystal Marchand	7	2023-11-27	2023-11-28	2024-11-28	Underway
<a href="#">Section 2 Called to Mercy</a>	98cczcmf	2023-24 Called to Mercy	2	Irma Arvizo	0	2023-11-27	2023-11-28	2024-11-28	Underway
<a href="#">Section 3 Called to Mercy</a>	2bmnh6tp	2023-24 Called to Mercy	3	Kristy Barse	0	2023-11-27	2023-11-28	2024-11-28	Underway

← Previous 1 Next →

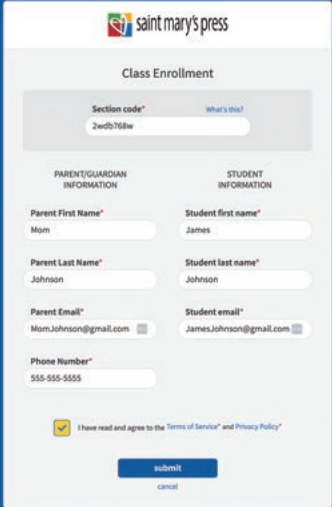
**Step 5:** This is the screen you will see next. From here you can manage the enrollment of each young person in the program. You can move individuals from one section to another, change their enrollment status, or unenroll a young person from the program by clicking “Suspended.”

Enrollments					
Name	Enabled?	Suspended?	Assign to Section:	<input type="radio"/> Suspended <input checked="" type="radio"/> Not Suspended	Update
Samuel Aernson	Yes	No	Section 1 Called to Mercy	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Not Suspended	Update
Tiffany Benson	Yes	Yes	Section 1 Called to Mercy	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Suspended	Update
Arrey Chen	Yes	No	Section 1 Called to Mercy	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Not Suspended	Update
Derek Hugh	Yes	No	Section 1 Called to Mercy	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Not Suspended	Update
Jane Johnson	Yes	No	Section 1 Called to Mercy	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Not Suspended	Update
James Johnson	Yes	No	Section 1 Called to Mercy	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Not Suspended	Update
Isaac Kumar	Yes	No	Section 1 Called to Mercy	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Not Suspended	Update



If you have any questions about managing a course or section, we are delighted to assist you. Just call our Care Team at 800-533-8095. Our team is available weekdays from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. CST.

# Young People Logging in for the First Time

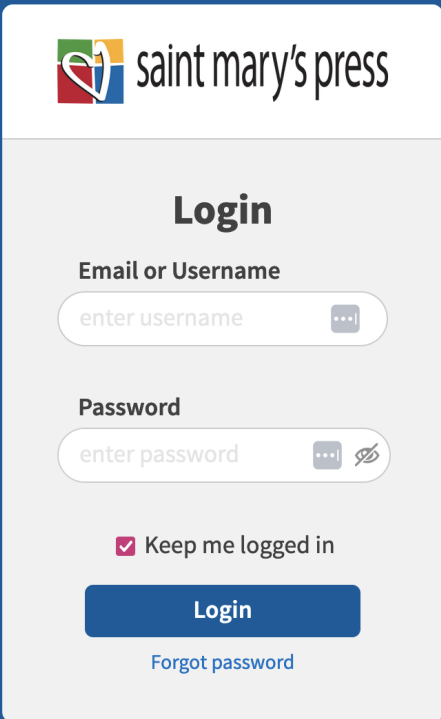


The screenshot shows the 'Class Enrollment' form for Saint Mary's Press. At the top is the logo and the title 'Class Enrollment'. Below this is a 'Section code\*' field with the value '2wds768w' and a 'What's this?' link. The form is divided into two columns: 'PARENT/GUARDIAN INFORMATION' and 'STUDENT INFORMATION'. The parent/guardian section includes fields for 'Parent First Name\*' (Mom), 'Parent Last Name\*' (Johnson), 'Parent Email\*' (Mom.Johnson@gmail.com), and 'Phone Number\*' (555-555-5555). The student section includes fields for 'Student first name\*' (James), 'Student last name\*' (Johnson), and 'Student email\*' (James.Johnson@gmail.com). At the bottom, there is a checkbox for 'I have read and agree to the Terms of Service\* and Privacy Policy\*' which is checked, and two buttons: 'submit' and 'cancel'.

**Step 1:** The young people will receive an access code from you to register for their section. Then they will go to [mlearn.smp.org/enroll](https://mlearn.smp.org/enroll) and enter the access code to enroll.

**Step 2:** Once the young people have enrolled, they will receive a confirmation email with a link to reset their password.

**Step 3:** Once their password is reset, they will be taken to the log-in page to enter their email or username and password and then begin the course!



The screenshot shows the 'Login' page for Saint Mary's Press. At the top is the logo and the text 'saint mary's press'. Below this is the title 'Login'. There are two input fields: 'Email or Username' with the placeholder 'enter username' and a dropdown arrow, and 'Password' with the placeholder 'enter password', a dropdown arrow, and an eye icon. Below the password field is a checkbox labeled 'Keep me logged in' which is checked. At the bottom are two buttons: 'Login' and 'Forgot password'.



# Introductory Session

## Setting the Stage

We know you are excited to start *Called to Mercy* in your parish, and we recognize the importance of helping parents/caregivers and young people understand how the program works. This session provides an outline for an introductory session you can hold with the parents/caregivers and the young people to explain the goals and unique approach of the program, the tools each young person will need in order to participate, and the calendar of dates you have created for the program's gathered sessions, retreat, and post-Confirmation session. We suggest holding this introductory session at least two weeks before the date you want the young people to begin the online learning modules. That way they have time to log in for the first time and confirm that their accounts are properly set up.

## Materials Needed

- two Bibles
- copies of the handout "Program Structure" (fillable), on page 24, one for each pair (parent/caregiver and young person)
- copies of the handout "Program Overview," on pages 25–28, one for each pair (parent/caregiver and young person)
- copies of the handout "Log-in and Access Code Information," on page 29, one for each pair (parent/caregiver and young person)
- the *Called to Mercy* access code for your program
- internet and projection capabilities (*optional*)



If your parish has internet access, consider inviting those gathering to bring their devices to the introductory session so they can complete registration during the session.

## Called to Gather (10 minutes)

### Welcome

1. **Welcome** the group with comments like the following:
  - Welcome to our *Called to Mercy* introductory session. The purpose of this session is to introduce you to our Confirmation preparation program and to provide you with all the information you need to sign up and begin the program.
  - We will also provide you with a handout that includes important dates for this program.
2. **Invite** the group members to take a few minutes to introduce themselves to the people around them.

### Opening Prayer

1. **Prepare** by placing a bookmark in two Bibles and recruiting two volunteers to each read a passage. In one Bible, mark Acts of the Apostles 2:1–4, ending with “and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit.” In the other Bible, mark Romans 15:13.
2. **Begin** with the Sign of the Cross.
3. **Invite** the first volunteer to read aloud the marked passage from the Acts of the Apostles.
4. **Allow** for a moment of silence. Then invite the second volunteer to read aloud the marked passage from Romans.
5. **Read** aloud the following prayer:
  - “Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created. And you will renew the face of the earth. Amen” (*Catholic Household Blessings and Prayers*, p. 157).
6. **Close** with the Sign of the Cross.

## Called to Engage (10 minutes)

### *Called to Mercy* Foundations

1. **Begin** by asking the group to consider what they think the goal of a Confirmation preparation program should be. Take a few answers.
2. **Provide** a big-picture view of the program by sharing the following:
  - At the heart of the formation experience of this program are Jesus’ teachings and the Church’s call to live as people of mercy.

- *Called to Mercy* creates a path to understanding what it means to be a person of mercy and to commit our lives to living mercifully toward others.
  - Pope Francis affirms our call to becoming people of mercy by saying, “This is the Lord’s most powerful message: mercy” (Homily, March 17, 2013). He has also said, “I have often thought of how the Church may render more clearly her mission to be a witness to mercy. . . . It is a journey which begins with spiritual conversion” (Homily, March 13, 2015).
3. **Share** a brief description of the program’s approach:
- *Called to Mercy* combines online learning modules that the young people complete on their own with gathered sessions that take place as a group.
  - The online modules are accessed through a website, using any device that can connect to the internet.
  - Each of the ten gathered sessions, including a day of service, takes place after the young people have completed an online module.
  - The program also includes a retreat and a post-Confirmation (*Mystagogia*) session.

## Called to Explore (20 minutes)

### Program Structure, Needs, and Logistics

1. **Distribute** to each pair (parent/caregiver and young person) the handout “Program Structure” (fillable) with the important dates for your program filled in.
2. **Walk** the participants through the program structure and schedule. Point out that there are ten online modules that the young people complete on their own by the dates indicated on the schedule. Also highlight the dates of the gathered sessions, retreat, and post-Confirmation session.



This is an opportune time to ask for volunteers to assist with the retreat or other gatherings if that is a need for your program.

3. **Distribute** the handout “Program Overview” to each pair (parent/caregiver and young person). Review the content, highlighting that this handout offers an overview of the areas of focus throughout the program.
4. **Share** that each young person needs a web-enabled device and internet access to complete the online modules.
5. **Invite** and address any questions the participants might have regarding technology needs.
6. **Distribute** the handout “Log-in and Access Code Information” to each pair (parent/caregiver and young person), and walk through each step.



If possible, arrange for internet access and projection to demonstrate as you walk through the log-in process. Invite everyone to join in the process and complete their enrollment during the introductory session. A complete visual walk-through can be found at <https://mlearn-faqs.smp.org/how-to/enroll/>.

7. **Explain** that the young people do not have to enter any payment information if the parish is paying for their registration. They simply enter the access code provided by the parish and follow the log-in instructions. If parents/caregivers are paying for the young people's registration directly, explain that after they agree to the terms of service they will be prompted to enter their personal information. Then they will then be directed to a payment page, where they can pay using any major credit card.

## Called to Go Forth (10 minutes)

### Questions and Answers

1. **Ask** the participants if they have any questions or need further clarification before the session concludes.
2. **Address** any questions raised, and let the participants know that they can always reach out later if further questions arise.
3. **Thank** everyone for coming, and assure them that this will be a wonderfully rich and rewarding time of preparation.



Refer to the "Frequently Asked Questions" section of this manual for answers to commonly asked questions. You may even want to have a printed copy handy.

### Closing Prayer

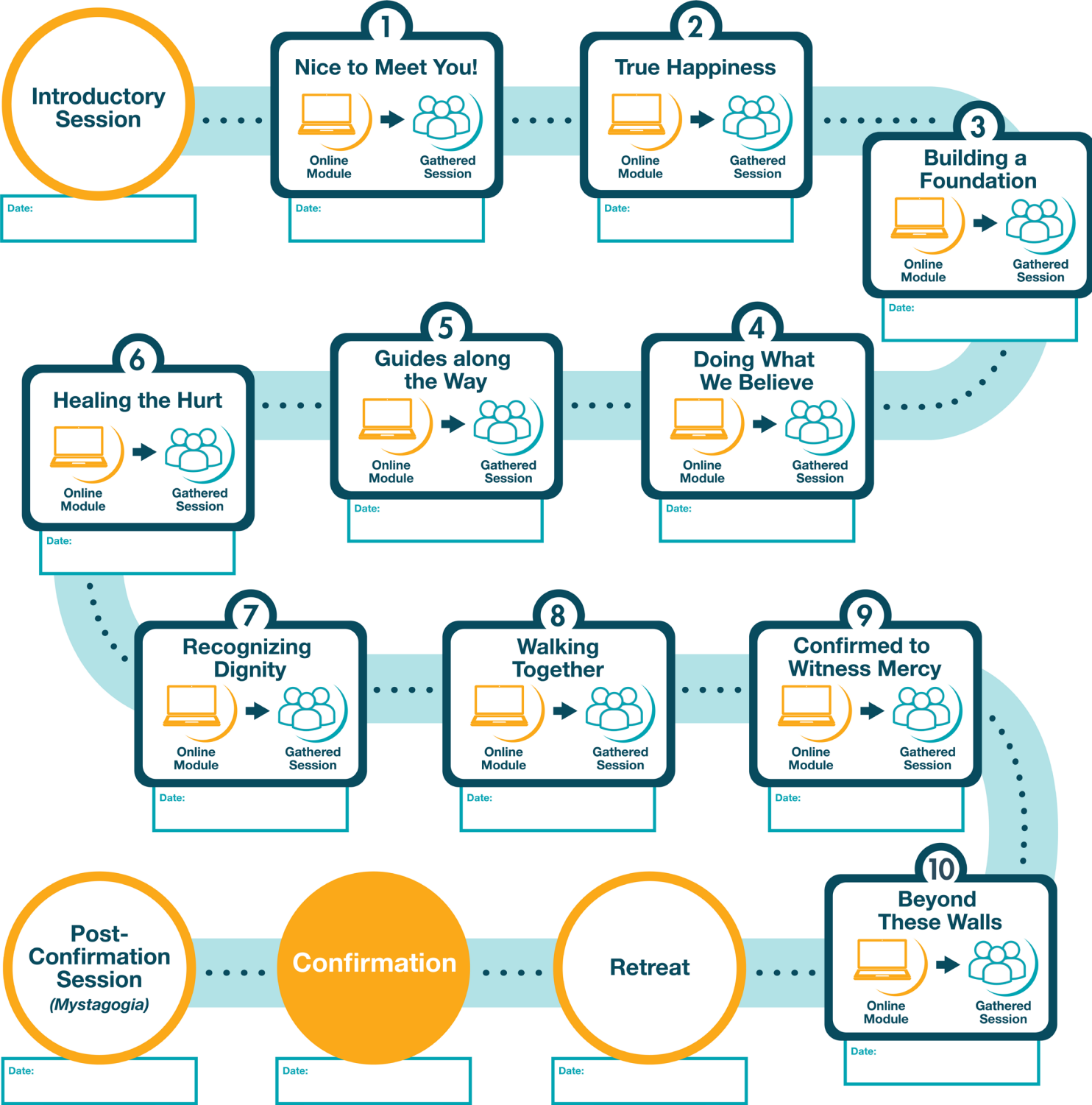
1. **Begin** the prayer with the Sign of the Cross.
2. **Invite** everyone to take a moment of silence. Then continue with the following prayer:
  - God, we ask for your grace, your blessing, and your guidance as these young people begin their preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation.
  - May this be a time of true openness of minds and hearts to the Great Commandment of Jesus: To love God with all our heart, all our mind, all our soul; and to love our neighbors as ourselves.

- The greatest message of Jesus is the call to mercy—to bring healing, compassion, hope, charity, and justice to a broken and hurting world; to bring kindness and goodness to our relationships each day at home, at school, at work, and in our neighborhood.
- May we all take up this call and the invitation of Pope Francis to be a “witness of mercy” for the world.
- For this we pray in the name of Jesus, the one who showed mercy to all he encountered, the one who calls us to do the same. Amen.





# Program Structure





# Program Overview

The program begins with an introductory session of orientation. Then the young people complete an online learning module on their own. This is followed by a gathered session that explores the topic more deeply as a group. This pattern of self-directed module followed by a gathered session continues for the ten core parts of the program. A retreat and a post-Confirmation gathered session are also included.

## 1 Nice to Meet You

### Online Module

The young people will:

- learn how to navigate through an online module
- create a personal profile that expresses who they are
- reflect on the important relationships in their life as a foundation for meaning

### Gathered Session

The young people will:

- get to know one another face-to-face in order to build community
- reflect on the Holy Spirit as presented in Scripture and as active in their own lives
- examine human dignity as brought about by the Holy Spirit

## 2 True Happiness

### Online Module

The young people will:

- discern the meaning of true happiness
- consider where love is most needed in the world today
- explore how their Confirmation is a calling to be witnesses of God's love in the world

### Gathered Session

The young people will:

- become familiar with the Great Commandment as a path to true happiness
- distinguish between loving and nonloving thoughts and actions
- examine statistics around global and national poverty, and see the need for love and service on local, national, and global levels

### 3 Building a Foundation

#### Online Module

The young people will:

- identify the Gifts of the Holy Spirit as foundations for happiness
- reflect on the Gifts of the Holy Spirit in their own lives
- consider how they are called to bring the gift of happiness to others

#### Gathered Session

The young people will:

- identify the Holy Spirit as the gift of God
- review the seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit and their meaning
- recognize how they currently serve others

### 4 Doing What We Believe

#### Online Module

The young people will:

- experience inspirational stories of peers practicing acts of mercy
- explore the fruits of the Holy Spirit through the stories of Jesus in Scripture
- consider adults in their lives who inspire them

#### Gathered Session

The young people will:

- recognize the name of each of the fruits of the Holy Spirit
- demonstrate an understanding of the fruits of the Holy Spirit
- brainstorm ways to serve others in their community

### 5 Guides along the Way

#### Online Module

The young people will:

- understand that the saints can be seen as friends
- research a saint's life and the implications for personal faith
- choose a saint who can serve as a spiritual friend and guide in their life

#### Gathered Session

The young people will:

- understand the saints as guides to the Christian way of life
- explore the concept of the Communion of Saints as a communion of friendship
- become aware of their own blessings and their call to serve others

## 6 Healing the Hurt

### Online Module

The young people will:

- learn how forgiveness can motivate us to act with courage and love
- understand how forgiveness can help us when we fail to act with love
- consider practical ways to heal others' hurts

### Gathered Session

The young people will:

- understand the importance of forgiving and being forgiven
- recall that we celebrate God's love and mercy in the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation
- be encouraged to imitate the love and mercy of God through service to others

## 7 Recognizing Dignity

### Online Module

The young people will:

- reflect on ways human dignity can be supported
- explore the Great Commandment and Jesus' call to mercy as being tied to human dignity
- realize that everyone shares equally in human dignity

### Gathered Session

The young people will:

- identify the meaning of human dignity in their everyday lives
- examine the intersection of the Great Commandment and the Ten Commandments
- understand the significance of the Parable of the Good Samaritan as a call to radical love

## 8 Walking Together

### Online Module

The young people will:

- identify ways that community is present in their lives
- explore models of the Church as a way to support the authentic spiritual search for God
- examine their own place in the Church and in their individual parish

### Gathered Session

The young people will:

- review the basic facts about the Seven Sacraments
- express the meaning of one of the sacraments in art
- connect the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist to a life of service

## 9 Confirmed to Witness Mercy

### Online Module

The young people will:

- learn what to expect during the celebration of Confirmation
- become familiar with their own role in the celebration of Confirmation
- reflect on the meaning of the various liturgical components of the Sacrament of Confirmation

### Gathered Session

The young people will:

- better understand the various parts of the Sacrament of Confirmation
- see Confirmation through the eyes of someone who has already celebrated the sacrament
- review a pledge of service to consider part of what they are committing to in Confirmation

## 10 Beyond These Walls

### Online Module

The young people will:

- identify one small step they can take to make the world better
- explore stories of people who have lived the call to mercy
- reflect on the call to mercy in their own lives

### Gathered Session

The young people will:

- engage in service together in their community
- reflect on their understanding and experience of service
- be challenged to take one small step to serve others in the future

## Retreat

The young people will:

- engage in a contemplative and reflective period, free of day-to-day distractions and busyness
- reflect on the theme of mercy as it is found in Scripture, in the words of Pope Francis, and in daily life
- explore their own stories of encounters of mercy

## Post-Confirmation Session (*Mystagogia*)

The young people will:

- deepen their understanding of the Sacrament of Confirmation by reflecting on their experience of it
- express gratitude for the guidance and community they have experienced with the Confirmation leader(s), their sponsors, and their peers
- affirm the commitment they have made by making a service pledge



## Log-in and Access Code Information

A complete visual walkthrough of enrollment can be found at <https://mlearn-faqs.smp.org/how-to/enroll/>.

1. Go to [mlearn.smp.org/enroll](https://mlearn.smp.org/enroll).
2. Enter access code: \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Enter parent/caregiver information and young person information.
4. Read and agree to the terms of service. If the young person is under age 13, a parent/caregiver must agree to the terms.
5. Receive a confirmation email. (Both the parent/caregiver and the young person will receive one.)
6. Open the email and click on the link to reset your password. Create a new password and save changes. Then click "Continue."
7. Log in with your email address and password.
8. Select your course and begin with learning module 1.
9. Move through the ten modules sequentially, completing them by the assigned dates.



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9. Move through the ten modules sequentially, completing them by the assigned dates.



# Frequently Asked Questions

## What is the role of the director?

The director oversees the whole program. The director has full access to the parish's administrative site for *Called to Mercy*, allowing them to enroll young people, unenroll young people, access section codes to provide to the young people, move young people to different sections, and manage the program overall. The director also ensures that the retreat, service day, and gathered sessions are planned and organized well in advance and implemented successfully.

## Do I need catechists?

You will need a leader or various leaders to assist with the gathered sessions, the retreat, and the post-Confirmation session. A leader guide with step-by-step instructions for leading all of the sessions is part of the *Called to Mercy* program.

## What is the role of the sponsor?

In module 4, the young people are led through a process to discern who might serve as their Confirmation sponsor. They are directed to invite that person to serve as their sponsor and to submit their sponsor's name to the Confirmation program director. The *Called to Mercy* program also includes a Sponsor Experience as an optional add-on. This online resource allows sponsors to understand the key points the candidates are learning, to reflect on their own lives, and to get practical suggestions for connecting with the candidates in intentional and meaningful ways.

## What kind of device do the young people or their families need?

Access to the online modules requires a device with an internet connection. The application is designed to work on just about any device that can connect to the web, including smartphones, tablets, iPads, laptops, and desktop computers. The access code assigned to your parish is needed to log in.

## How do the young people connect to the rest of the group?

The young people connect to the group in two primary ways during the program. First, each online module has an activity that allows the young people to see the responses and posts of others in the program. Second, the young people connect face-to-face during the gathered sessions, retreat, and post-Confirmation session.

We have taken great care to ensure that the sharing and posting functions in the online modules comply with the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act. No personal information is solicited, posted, or shared as part of the program. Although the program is accessed through a website, only individuals enrolled in your parish program (young people and anyone assigned administrative rights) can access posted and shared content. The program does not allow users to chat with other users online. Many of the post functions are anonymous and show aggregate responses, not individual responses.

### **What if a young person posts something inappropriate in the online course?**

There are safeguards for this situation. All posts have a "flag" feature. If a user sees a post they feel is inappropriate, they can flag it. The program director or anyone assigned administrative rights is then notified that content has been flagged, and they can review the content and delete it if necessary.

### **How do the gathered sessions and online modules relate?**

The program has ten online modules that the young people complete in order, on their own. Each online module is followed by a gathered session that builds on the content from the online module. At the introductory session, you need to provide dates by which each online module is to be completed, based on the dates for your gathered sessions. For example, if your first gathered session is scheduled for October 15, you will want to direct the young people to have online module 1 completed by that date. The retreat can be done at any time and is not connected to any specific module. The post-Confirmation session is also not tied to any specific module.

### **How are the young people held accountable for completing the online modules?**

The program director and others assigned administrative rights can track the completion record of each young person. Those with administrative rights are able to see if a young person has completed a module. They can also see anything a young person has posted or shared as part of each module. The director may wish to send periodic reminders of dates by which the young people are to have certain modules completed.

### **How is the program paced? How long does it take for a young person to complete a module?**

The beauty of online learning is that the young people can complete the modules at their own pace, whenever they wish, as long as they complete them by the assigned due dates. They can begin a module, leave it, and come back to complete it at a later time. Any work done before logging out is always saved. The length of time it takes to work through any given module varies, but on average a young person can complete one in 20 to 30 minutes.



## **How are the young people grouped and organized? Does this differ if a parish has 10 or 150 candidates?**

You have the option to set up your program with all the young people enrolled in one section or to enroll them in distinct and separate sections. If you choose to organize the young people into multiple sections, you can also assign a unique “administrator” to each section. The gathered sessions and retreat are designed to be large-group gatherings of all the young people enrolled in the program.

## **How is the program ordered? Does the parish pay for the online portion, or does each young person pay?**

To order the program and to complete the registration, call our Care Team at 800-533-8095. We will set up an account for you and provide a unique program access code for your parish. You will then distribute that access code to each young person in the program so they can use it to log in and begin the program.

We can help you set up the online part of the program so that either the parish pays for all the young people enrolled or each young person (or parent/caregiver) pays for the program individually. If parents/caregivers are paying individually, they do so by credit card through an automated secure process when they first log in, using the access code you provide them. The system is designed to know if an individual needs to pay or if the parish has already paid for access.

The leader guide, which provides step-by-step instructions for the ten gathered sessions, retreat, and post-Confirmation session is included in the purchase of *Called to Mercy* and is mailed to your parish. It is also offered online as part of the online resources.

## **What about traditional elements (diocesan-required) like saint reports, service projects, letters to the bishop, and retreats?**

Because dioceses have so many different practices, this program incorporates the most common practices and elements of Confirmation preparation. The program does include, in module 5, research and selection of a saint name. Gathered session 10 is a day of service, and suggested times for writing letters to the bishop are included in the gathered sessions. A Confirmation retreat plan is included and can be done at any point during the program.

**Is there one place I can go for all of my “how-to” questions regarding the responsive website?**

Step-by-step instructions for all functions of the website can be found at <https://mlearn-faqs.smp.org/how-to/>.

**What if something is not working on the website or if a young person is having trouble logging in?**

Support service for any problem you encounter is available by calling our Care Team at 800-533-8095 on weekdays between 7:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. CST. We are delighted to assist you or your young people.

# Acknowledgments

The quotation from Pope Francis's Homily on the Year of Mercy, March 13, 2015, on pages 4 and 21, can be found at [https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/homilies/2015/documents/papa-francesco\\_20150313\\_omelia-liturgia-penitenziale.html](https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/homilies/2015/documents/papa-francesco_20150313_omelia-liturgia-penitenziale.html). Copyright © Libreria Editrice Vaticana (LEV).

The quotation from Pope Francis's Homily on March 17, 2013, on pages 4 and 21, can be found at [http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/homilies/2013/documents/papa-francesco\\_20130317\\_omelia-santa-anna.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/homilies/2013/documents/papa-francesco_20130317_omelia-santa-anna.html). Copyright © LEV.

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