

ALL SAINTS CATHOLIC CHURCH

2443 Mount Vernon Road
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ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP

ON

THE JOURNEY of FAITH

We are all embarked on a great journey – the journey of Life and Faith. It is a great comfort to know that others are on the same road as we are. When we register with a parish we are saying that it is our wish to travel down this road of Life and Faith with a particular community of people by our becoming active in the community and supporting it. In fact the word parish comes from the Greek word “paroikia” meaning “a pilgrim people,” a people on a journey in this case a journey of faith; a journey that we hope one day will lead to the fullness of life in God’s Kingdom.

Living in a culture that no longer supports a religious way of life, much less a Catholic way of life, the parish plays an integral role in helping to guide and support us on our journey. The parish does this through its educational programs, Bible study, prayer groups, spiritual development and its celebrations of the Word and Sacraments. By these means, the parish empowers and enables us to grow in wisdom and grace before God and our world.

In our study of the Bible we are reminded from the very beginning that the Mass played a central role in the life of the early Christians. “They devoted themselves to the teaching of the Apostles, to communal life, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.” Acts 2:42.

The second Vatican Council reiterates this central role of the Mass in its decree on the ministry and life of priests when it states, “The Eucharistic action is the very heartbeat of the congregation of the faithful . . . no Christian community, however, can be built up unless it has its basis and center in the celebration of the Eucharist.”

We recognize that no community can exist as a separate entity from the members that compose it, neither can the parish. When registering with a parish a person is entering into a faith community, and like any other relationship, if it is to be viable and healthy there must be a mutual commitment. Today, we live in a very mobile society. More than any other period in history we live in a time of shopping and surfing, the malls, the Internet, multi-channel TV, etc. The church is not immune from this reality. Continually we meet people shopping for churches and parishes, people who for a variety of reasons never think of establishing a home parish until they plan to get married or have a child baptized, etc.

The Church, for its part, requires pastors to have a founded hope that those seeking the sacraments are practicing Catholics in good standing. The same is true when parents present their children for the sacraments. Pastors are to have a founded hope that the children will be raised in the Catholic faith. We therefore invite you to become an active member of the church and establish a home parish.

We offer the following criteria to becoming an active member of All Saints Catholic Church. These criteria are in accordance with the guidelines set forth by the Archdioceses of Atlanta.

(OVER)

1. We invite you to register with us.
2. To celebrate the Sunday Liturgy (Mass) with us on a regular basis.
3. Each registered family is provided with parish envelopes. These envelopes are provided for your convenience. Your use of them verifies your presence at the Sunday Liturgy and your financial support. Even if you contribute on a monthly or quarterly basis we ask you to use the empty envelope to verify your participation in the Sunday Eucharist. All envelopes are recorded and provide the pastor with the founded hope that you are an active member of the Church.
4. You are invited to have a current stewardship card on file indicating a sincere effort to tithe (5% to parish, 1% to Archbishop's Annual Appeal and 4% to other charities), and to participate in some of our Ministries.
5. Finally Twenty One Years. When you reach the age of 21 the Church considers you as an adult whether your parents think you are or not. In this case we invite you to register and become active under your own name.

Establishing a Home Parish by Active Membership has many benefits:

- First of all, it identifies your wish to take ownership and become a partner of this great community.
- Secondly, you and your family have an identity that helps us as a staff team to reach out to you and your loved ones in a variety of ways.
- Baptisms and Confirmation Sponsors: If you are asked to become a Godparent or Sponsor by a family member or a friend, the majority of Catholic dioceses in the United States will ask for a letter from your pastor stating that you are a responsible, active member. Establishing All Saints as a home parish enables us to honestly verify your good standing and practice in the faith.
- Catholic Schools: We get many applications for Catholic Schools from people who state they are active members of All Saints. The pastor is asked to honestly respond in writing to each of these requests as the response impacts the schools decision. Only persons who are active members by the above criteria receive a positive response.
- Sacraments outside of our parish: If you decide to have your sacrament performed outside of your parish, your pastor is required to honestly state in writing that you are an active registered member. Your active membership enables us to write such a letter.

I started off by saying that we are all embarked on the great journey of life and have decided to accompany others along the way, thus forming a relationship. In order to keep this relationship viable and healthy we must ever be aware that it is a two way street of giving and receiving and visa versa. Should anyone try to make it otherwise, such action becomes both unhealthy and destructive, just like in all relationships. On this journey then let us make sure that whatever we do will be for the greater glory and honor of God and not for the glory of self. Ever conscious of God's blessing toward us, may we continually strive to love and serve Him in a spirit of gratitude. Let the words of the Psalmist be in our hearts and ever on our lips.

"What can I offer the Lord for all his goodness to me." Ps 116:12

"Give thanks to the Lord for He is good, His mercy endures forever."

1Chr 16:34