

April 29, 2016

Dear Confirmation Candidates and Parents,

It is with great excitement and anticipation that I welcome you to Confirmation Preparation here at Sacred Heart. Confirmation is the third and final Sacrament of Initiation into the Catholic Church (the first two being Baptism and Holy Eucharist). According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church, "Confirmation is a sacramental outpouring of the Holy Spirit that leaves a permanent imprint on the soul, completes Christian initiation, and empowers us to be witnesses to Christ." In order to adequately prepare for this outpouring of grace, a certain level of commitment is required from you, part of which is listed below.

- The **Confirmation Orientation Meeting** will be on **September 11th, 2016 from 6:30-7:30 pm** in the church. Parents, candidates and sponsors should attend.
- **Our 2016-17 Confirmation curriculum** is Decision Point, from *Dynamic Catholic*. We feel that it is the most effective way we can support you, as parents and primary catechists, in this endeavor. Together, we will educate the candidates in accordance with the Confirmation Outcomes set forth by the Archdiocese, which include:
 - Students will be able to list and define the Gifts of the Holy Spirit and the cardinal virtues and describe the effects of these on their Christian living.
 - Students will identify the Sacraments of Initiation as personal encounters with Christ and as signs of welcoming and commissioning Jesus' followers.
 - Students will propose a plan of personal service based on the call to sanctity as celebrated in the Sacrament of Confirmation.
 - Students will explore the purpose of Confirmation in preparation for their commitment at Confirmation.
- **Discerning your Confirmation Sponsor** - According to Canon Law (Can 892), the role of the sponsor is "to take care that the confirmed person behaves as a true witness of Christ and faithfully fulfills the obligations inherent in this sacrament." Some things to consider while discerning a sponsor:
 - A sponsor should be someone with whom the candidate can talk freely and preferably is able to meet with regularly.
 - This person must be a confirmed Catholic who is practicing the faith.
 - He/she must be at least 16 years of age and not a parent of the candidate.
 - To deepen the connection with Baptism it is recommended, but not required, that a godparent serve as the sponsor.

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Please have sponsors determined by the Orientation Meeting on September 11th. A sponsor eligibility form is included in this packet and must be completed and signed by the sponsor.

- **Choosing your Confirmation Saint** – Patron saints are chosen as special protectors or guardians over areas of our lives. This saint can help us when we follow the example of that saint's life and ask for his/her intercessory prayers to God. Candidates will research three saints that interest them, ultimately choosing one saint whose name they will take as their Confirmation name. You will find a Saint Project outline in this packet, which is **due in October**. *This would be a great summer project!*
- **Service Hours** - As the hands and feet of Christ, each Confirmation student is to complete a minimum of **30 hours of service by March**. Ten (10) of these hours of service must be done in the parish and 20 hours of service outside of the parish. Please see the Service Hour Log and information page enclosed for more details. *Don't wait to get started, summertime is a great time to complete your service hours!*
- **In addition to weekly participation in the Eucharist (attending Mass), candidates must participate in ongoing religious education** in order to have a greater understanding of our faith. Parochial school attendance or School of Religion (SOR) classes fulfill this requirement.
- **Confirmation Date** -The date of the Confirmation Mass is determined by the Archbishop's office and announced in October.

Preparation for Confirmation is a beautiful time of growth for everyone involved. During this time, the Holy Spirit strengthens individuals, as well as families and entire parish communities. Please know that you are in my prayers as you and your family continue to grow in holiness. If there is anything that I can help you with, or any questions that you might have, please don't hesitate to contact me.

In Him through Mary,

Kelly Kmiecik

Sacramental Coordinator
Sacred Heart of Jesus Catholic Church
kelly.kmiecik@shoj.org
(913) 422-5520 ext. 242