

April 10, 2019

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 8, 2019 from 6:30-7:30 pm** in the church. Parents, candidates and sponsors should attend.
- **Our Confirmation Preparation** is based on the Confirmation Outcomes set forth by the Archdiocese, which include:
 - Students will learn about the role of the Holy Spirit, His gifts and His fruits.
 - Students will learn that Confirmation strengthens the baptismal conferral of the Holy Spirit on those Confirmed in order to incorporate them more firmly in Christ, strengthen their bond with the Church, associate them more closely with the Church's mission, increase them in the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and help them bear witness to the Christian faith in words and deeds through service to prepare for the sacrament.
 - Students will learn that Confirmation increases and deepens the grace of baptism, imprinting an indelible character on the soul.
 - Students will be instructed on the rite of Confirmation and its basic symbols: imposition of hands, anointing with the sacred chrism and words of the sacramental formula. Students will also learn that the bishop is the ordinary minister of the sacrament of Confirmation.
 - Students will be instructed in a developmentally appropriate manner that includes prayer, meditation and retreat experiences. Parents and sponsors will be involved in the catechetical preparation of the students for 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.
- **Please have sponsors determined by the Orientation Meeting on September 8th.** A sponsor eligibility form is included in this packet and must be completed and signed by the sponsor.

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- **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 September**. *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 April 5th**. 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 weekly participation in Sacred Heart's Youth Ministry 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,

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