

# THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION

## For Sponsors and Parents/Guardians

CONFIRMATION IS NOT AN END OR A GRADUATION, but a deepening of what was given at Baptism. It is a transition of our faith - from having a passive faith to having an *active* faith. The Confirmation Candidate is being called to a greater public witness of faith in Christ. Confirmation will enable him or her to fulfill this call.

- † Those who want to be confirmed (Confirmandi) need to recognize the seriousness of their call and be committed to this time of formation. They are to be committed to daily prayer, attending Sunday Mass, and living by the Ten Commandments.
- † As part of the Confirmation Mass Liturgy, the Confirmandi will renew their Baptismal Promises and must, therefore, know the Apostles' Creed by heart.
- † The preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation is to include the individual reception of the Sacrament of Penance (Confession).

### What happens in Confirmation?

In the Sacrament of Confirmation, the virtues and gifts we received in Baptism are strengthened by the Holy Spirit so that we can be faithful witnesses of Jesus Christ; so that we have the courage to live our faith "out loud."

The virtues of Faith, Hope, and Charity allow us to believe in God (*Faith*), to trust in His promises (*Hope*), and to love God and our neighbor (*Charity*). The gifts of the Holy Spirit (*Wisdom, Knowledge, Understanding, Fortitude, Counsel, Piety, and Fear of the Lord*) aid us in making decisions that conform to the will of God and that lead to a life of interior joy and peace.

The graces that are received in Confirmation allow us to grow in goodness through the moral virtues of **prudence** (making good decisions), **justice** (giving to God and others what is due), **fortitude** (courage), and **temperance** (providing balance with desires).

### Why is the Sacrament of Confirmation necessary?

Young people face a society that is indifferent to God; a society that focuses on self. Young people are bombarded with the lie that their value as a human being is based on how they look, what college they get into, what material things they possess.

The truth is, however, that their dignity as a human being *comes from being a child of God*, created in His image and likeness, and destined for eternal life with Him in Heaven. *We were created by God and for God, and our joy lies in knowing, loving, and serving God and our neighbor through self-giving love.* Selfishness only leads to hopelessness and despair. Wealth, beauty, position, power is valuable only in so far as they are used in the service of God and assist us in achieving the final goal - which is being with God in Heaven.

### How will being confirmed help?

The virtues and gifts that are strengthened in Confirmation will be critical for young adults to know who they are in Christ, to protect their dignity, and to be faithful in following Him.

### Parents' Duties and Responsibilities

As a parent, you have *the primary role* in the sacramental preparation process for your child. You will help your child grow in the faith as you prepare him/her for the reception of the Sacrament of

Confirmation. **Your attendance at Sunday Mass is vital.** Your interest, example, witness, and prayers make a difference in your child's decision to receive the Sacrament.

- Prepare your child for the decision to be confirmed through instruction, example, and prayer.
- Assist your son/daughter in preparing the requirements which must be completed by their respective due dates.
- Once confirmed, make sure that your son/daughter receive valuable and **ongoing** faith formation.

Advanced studies in the Faith will stimulate intellectual curiosity about the Faith. Young adults should take advantage of classes in apologetics so that they can defend what they believe while having the confidence to inspire in others the faith that comes with discipleship. Taking classes and participating in Parish activities will provide them with opportunities to form relationships with like-minded Catholic peers.

Finally, it is important that you encourage the ongoing development of the habit of daily prayer which will enable your young adults to make good decisions while recognizing the consequences of their choices.

### **Confirmation Candidates Duties and Responsibilities**

"A candidate for Confirmation who has attained the age of reason must profess the Faith, be in a state of grace, have the intention of receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation, and be prepared to assume the role of disciple and witness to Christ, both within the ecclesial (Church) community and in temporal affairs." (1319 CCC)

Confirmation is necessary for the perfection of Baptismal grace (CCC 1285). The Confirmed are expected to worship God by taking part in the Mass on Sundays and Holy Days, to receive the Sacrament of Confession as often as needed and to receive the Eucharist as often as possible. A confirmed member of the Church is expected to strengthen and support the Body of Christ, the Church, by prayers and good works.

**Only practicing Catholics in a state of grace should receive the sacrament of Confirmation.** ("Practicing" includes that you fulfill the obligation to go to Mass each Sunday.)

As a Confirmation Candidate, you can begin to take ownership of your faith life with the help of your parents, family, and the Church. The most important thing you can begin to do is to pray. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you in these months leading up to your Confirmation and for the gifts you would like Him to bestow on you which you will use for the rest of your life and for the service of the Church and the world.

- Pray every day especially for your Confirmation
- Read your Bible. If you do not have a personal Bible, please ask your parents or grandparents to take you to a Catholic shop or bookstore and pick one out. Or go online and do so.
- Continue to learn about your faith outside of school or Religious Education classes; especially with your Sponsor.

### **Sponsors**

- Must be practicing Catholics.
- Must have been confirmed and able to fulfill their duties as spiritual guardians.
  - Duties: Sponsors should take a permanent interest in their spiritual children and should see that they receive a Christian education whenever the parents fail in this duty.

There should be one sponsor for each candidate. It is recommended that, if possible, one of the Baptismal sponsors be the Confirmation sponsor. This choice would express clearly the relationship between Baptism and Confirmation and would make the function of the sponsor more effective.