

Sacred Heart Catholic Church

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September 15, 2014

Feast of Our Lady of Sorrows

Dear Parents and Confirmation candidates,

Greetings in the Lord Jesus to you all! One special moment for you in the coming year will be the celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation. The Confirmation program requires a spirit of prayer and an involvement of the candidate with family, friends, and the Church. Please read this letter carefully, discuss its contents as a family, and begin your preparations for the Sacrament of Confirmation. **Our first of three Parent Sessions will be held on Sunday, October 12th at 7 p.m. in the McCann Center!** Please put that date on your calendar, and plan for at least one parent to attend. At that meeting we will discuss the program in more detail! **Confirmation candidates should also attend with their parent(s)!**

<p>The Rite of Enrollment for Confirmation will be on Sunday, October 26th at the 9 a.m. Mass. It is our hope that all students will be there to be enrolled and that the parents are there to support them.</p>
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The main reason for this letter is to give you some background information about the sacrament. Also, those of you who were not baptized at Sacred Heart, must submit a copy of your baptismal certificate, so if you do not have it, you have time to locate it. If baptized here we will have the information and no certificate will be necessary!

What Is the Sacrament of Confirmation?

Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist are called the Sacraments of Initiation. Through these sacraments we become full members of the Catholic Church, a community of Spirit-filled people who have been saved by Christ and who witness Christ's love in the world.

As one of the Sacraments of Initiation, Confirmation impresses the candidates with a special character. Through this sacrament the candidates are enriched by the gift of the Holy Spirit, are bound more perfectly to the Church, and are strengthened in faith. They are enabled to witness more courageously for Christ and to spread and defend the faith.

The Role of Those to Be Confirmed

Those to be confirmed must be suitably instructed and properly disposed. They must be willing to be involved in the preparation program with the intention of remaining faithful to Christ and his Church. They must attend regular Faith Formation classes for Junior High students, and attend all sessions for Confirmation, the retreat, and also be involved in Service Ministry and complete all other assignments that are given.

The Role of Parents

As parents, you play a primary role in the sacramental preparation program. You help your son or daughter grow in faith as you prepare him or her for fruitful reception of the sacrament. Your attendance at the Sunday parish celebrations of the Eucharist is vital, as you give witness to your children of our obligations and responsibilities. There is, and can be, no substitute for your

actual presence at such moments. Your interest, involvement, and concern make a difference in your son's or daughter's perception of what this sacrament and the Christian life are all about. Encouraging regular attendance at Faith Formation classes and the Confirmation sessions is vital, as well as overseeing completion of all assignments and service projects. More details will be given at the meeting.

The Role of the Sponsor

Each candidate, with the help of his or her parents, is responsible for choosing a sponsor. There is no regulation stating that men must be sponsors for boys and women must be sponsors for girls. Church law states, however, that the sponsor must be at least sixteen years of age. He or she must be a committed Catholic who has received the Sacraments of Initiation and is living according to the Catholic faith. The sponsor may not be the mother or father of the one to be confirmed. **(Note: This is a rule of the Roman Catholic Church!)** It is the responsibility of the sponsor to give assurance of his or her qualifications.

Sponsors take on a lifelong commitment to help their candidates fulfill the obligations of this sacrament. During the time of preparation, the sponsors are expected to take an active role in the Confirmation program and meet with their candidates on a regular basis. Sponsors must be present at the Confirmation practice and the ceremony itself. Their immediate role demands time, commitment, and willingness to engage in faith-sharing activities with their candidates. Persons who are too young, who live too far away, or who are too busy to devote proper time and care to the candidates would not be able to fulfill this role well.

Service Projects

A successful Confirmation candidate is one who participates in service opportunities and, when fully initiated into the community of faith, goes on to continue to serve God and the People of God.

Each Confirmation candidate must be involved in Service Ministry as a requirement to be confirmed. Opportunities will be scheduled throughout the year.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call me. May God be with you and prepare you as a family for the blessings of the Spirit in the sacrament.

In Christ,

Joseph E. Fey
Director of Lifelong Faith Formation