

Confirmation Preparation

Confirmation is the sacrament in which a person is fully initiated into the life of the Church. They are given a full share of the Holy Spirit and are now full members of Christ's Body on earth. To express this the Church "seals" the confirmandi with Chrism-the holy oil used to anoint us at our baptism and used to anoint priests and bishops. This visible sign is showing that our soul is also sealed. Like a letter we are now a messenger from God. At Confirmation, our faith becomes public and we work to spread the Gospel of Christ.

Your child is entering into this sacramental preparation and so is taking the next step in their faith. Their faith is the one that you as parents have given them and so it is a good reminder for all of us to look at what the Church expects of all her members. These expectations are called the "precepts of the Church". These precepts are the bare minimum our Church asks of us to be considered full and active members of the Catholic Church. Unlike the 10 Commandments that tell us what not to do in our attempt to live a holy life these precepts tell us what we should do in order to grow in holiness.

1. You shall attend Mass on Sundays and on holy days of obligation and rest from labor.
2. You shall confess your sins at least once a year.
3. You shall receive the sacrament of the Eucharist at least once during the Easter season.
4. You shall observe the days of fasting and abstinence established by the Church.
5. You shall provide for the needs of the Church.

These precepts are the bare minimum for us as Catholics. Anything less than these tell us that we are not living up to the responsibility we took on when we were confirmed. When your child is confirmed they will be taking this responsibility on as well. Confirmation fully initiates them into the Church but it is not the end. In fact once we receive confirmation we are expected to work for Christ. Being fully initiated into the Church now means that we have graduated but similarly after graduation we will have further training so that we can better do our job to live the Christian life and better do our job as a missionaries for Jesus Christ. Graduation means that we have completed a part of our training it never means we are done with learning and growing and this true of our faith.

- Confirmation is your child's choice not yours. If your child comes to me and does not want to be confirmed then I cannot confirm them.

Confirmation is not the most important sacrament, but it is a sacrament that gives us God's grace and brings with it responsibility. A person does not need to be completely secure in their faith but a person should be actively pursuing their faith. If you and your family do not attend Church regularly, then please make an effort to do that so you can give a good witness to your child. If you are unable, or not willing to do so, then please consider thoughtfully and with prayer whether or not this is the best time to enter into this sacramental preparation.

There are only two requirements for confirmation at St. Michael's this year.

- Attend at least 8 confirmation classes. We hope that you can do more.
- Attend the Passiontide retreat over March 17th and 18th
- We also ask that parents volunteer once a semester to help with food, volunteer in the classroom, or help with the Passiontide retreat.

If these requirements are not met then your child will not be confirmed.

We do not yet know when confirmation will take place. Most likely in the spring and it will most likely be held at the Cathedral downtown.