



Confirmation Handbook 2019-2020

St. Alphonsus Liguori Parish
Prospect Heights, Illinois

ST. ALPHONSUS LIGUORI PARISH

411 North Wheeling Road
Prospect Heights, Illinois 60070
(847) 255-9490

September 24, 2019

“...confirmed by the gift of the Spirit, that they give witness to Christ by lives built on faith and love...”

General Intercession for the Rite of Confirmation

Dear Parents,

Congratulations! Your child has chosen to prepare for the sacrament of confirmation. This is an important part of the road you all are traveling—a chance to stop and view where you have been, where you are, and where you are going in your faith lives. As a parish community, we strive to support you and your family as you share your life and your faith with us.

This guide is a resource, a “trail guide” for your continuing journey. Many of the questions you may have will be answered by its contents. We offer religious-education sessions for the sacrament of confirmation that are based on the Catechism of the Catholic Church. Confirmation celebrates neither the beginning nor the end of Christian initiation for your child, but rather a gradual and continuing growth into the Eucharistic community. We are not celebrating a graduation, but growth in the baptismal way of life, which is meant to lead us all into the Eucharistic way of life throughout your life. Your child’s growth into the living body of Christ is not finished by Confirmation—it is only getting started.

In this handbook, we provide a list of general guidelines and other important information for you and your family. We also include a guide on the Sacrament of Confirmation, plus a guide in helping your child choose a sponsor for confirmation. We hope that this information is helpful and enlightening. Please feel free to contact me at the Religious Education Office with any questions or thoughts that you may have. Please pray for all of our Confirmation candidates.

Sincerely yours,

Mrs. Anne M. Balzanto, M.Ed.
Coordinator of Religious Education
St. Alphonsus Liguori Parish

What Is Confirmation?

The Sacrament of Confirmation...

- Welcomes us and deepens our belonging to the faith community
- Deepens our relationship with God, as the Creator, Redeemer, and Spirit
- Strengthens us as disciples

A Sacrament is part of the way that God loves us and calls us...

- The Gift within confirmation is that of strengthening us for discipleship and deepening our belonging to the faith community through the Trinity.

God uses visible signs to communicate invisible love...

- To communicate God's love, God uses our senses: eyes, ears, touch, smell, taste, and all elements within our world.
- In confirmation, the symbols we will celebrate include being anointed with oil and the laying of hands by Bishop Rassas as we remember the water of baptism and the nourishment of the Eucharist.

God calls and invites; we respond...

- An attitude of openness communicates a "yes" to God's invitation to a deeper relationship. This "yes" does not mean we know that we will always be faithful or that we are worthy of the gift. "Yes" means we are open to being strengthened by God who calls and loves us.
- In confirmation, we have the opportunity to say "yes" though the various responses in the prayers.

The community witnesses to and celebrates the sacraments...

- A sacrament is a powerful sign that God is alive and present in the world. As a Church, we are called to be sacraments, that is, to be God's hand and healing touch in the world. At the same time, we celebrate the sacraments as our most important prayers. This community that celebrates sacraments is global, reaching to other faith communities throughout the world and joined in a common bond. The community is also local, such as a diocese or archdiocese, a parish, and as a community of faith in families.
- In confirmation, the community witnesses our celebration and provides a sponsor who represents the love of the community for us.

Confirmation welcomes us as a Sacrament of Initiation...

- Confirmation is linked to baptism and the Eucharist.
- Confirmation is part of our initiation into the faith community.
- Confirmation honors the spiritual maturity of the individual.

We are confirmed in the name of God the Creator, the Redeemer, and the Holy Spirit...

- Confirmation is part of the welcoming initiative of God the Creator.
- Confirmation unites us more firmly to Christ.
- Confirmation strengthens us with the Holy Spirit.

Confirmation strengthens us for discipleship, mission, and witness to our faith...

- Confirmation empowers us to be a witness for our faith.
- Confirmation links us to the ministry of Christ and mission of the Church.
- Confirmation initiates us into the adventure of discipleship.

- Preparation for Confirmation is a time of conversion, which includes celebrating the sacrament of reconciliation.

Confirmation is a celebration of the community of faith...

- Confirmation joins us to the ministering community.
- Confirmation is received by individuals and celebrated by the community.
- Preparation awakens a sense of belonging to the universal Church and local parish.
- Preparation includes choosing a sponsor who represents the wider faith community.
- Preparation provides an opportunity to partner with families as communities of faith.

Helping Your Child Choose a Sponsor

Your child’s sponsor is a special person chosen by them to represent the faith community at the Rite of Confirmation.

At baptism, the Church community shares the responsibility for the development and the safeguarding of the grace given to your child. So too, are we challenged to safeguard the grace given to us at Confirmation. The sponsor will journey with your child throughout the preparation for Confirmation while supporting and nurturing their faith together. We offer a Sponsor-Candidate Reflection Retreat on January 24th or 25th, 2020 to help strengthen that bond.

The sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation are intimately connected. *Because of this, the Church encourages candidates for confirmation to choose one of their baptismal godparents as a sponsor.* At baptism the godparents were witnesses and celebrated your child being welcomed into a spiritual family. The presence of godparents ritualized and symbolized the presence of the community and their promise to support the newly baptized in a life of faith. Now, your child is preparing for confirmation and they are taking a journey of spiritual remembering—knowing and recognizing the presence of a God who has been, who is, and who always will be in their lives. This is a gift given at baptism, celebrated at Eucharist, and now revisited in its completeness at confirmation, the third Sacrament of Initiation.

The sacred ground in your child’s lives is marked by the footsteps of loving community—parents, godparents, nurturers of faith, and challengers to discipleship. It seems fitting that those who held them as an infant through the pouring forth of sacred water and the sealing with blessed oil should once again stand as reminders to them and their community of richness of belonging to the Body of Christ. However, if they have developed a close and nurturing relationship with another person, they may certainly choose that person as a sponsor.

The following are some guidelines/requirements for choosing a confirmation sponsor that you should use to discuss this important decision with your child:

- Has the person been close and supportive to you?
- Does the person live near enough to support and guide you?
- Is this person willing and able to be a sponsor and to take an active role in your life?
- Is this person a baptized Catholic who has received the Eucharist and has been confirmed?
- Is this person a practicing Catholic who has participated in the Eucharistic celebration every Sunday?
- Does the person live a good Catholic life in good standing with the Church?
- Is the person at least 16 years of age?

Confirmation Guidelines Code of Canon Law

Choosing a Confirmation Name:

Canon 855: Parents, sponsors and the pastor are to take care that a name foreign to Christian sensibility is not given.

Requirements for Sponsors:

Canon Law 892: Insofar as possible, there is to be a sponsor for the person to be confirmed: 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.

The sponsors must be Confirmed, practicing Catholic, 16 years of age, no canonical penalties, such as invalid marriage, having committed a crime, etc.

Proxy must also be Confirmed, practicing Catholic at least 16 years of age, no canonical penalties.

Canon Law 893-2: It is desirable to choose as sponsor the one who undertook the same function in baptism. The confirmandi may choose someone else.

Canon Law 894: Parents are not allowed to be sponsors.

The Function of a Sponsor

The two following statements from the *Rite of Confirmation* illuminate the sponsor's function:

- As a rule, there should be a sponsor for each confirmation candidate. The sponsors present the candidates to Bishop Rassas for the anointing, and later help them to fulfill their baptismal promises faithfully under the influence of the Holy Spirit whom they have received.
- Pastors will see that the sponsors, chosen by the candidates or their families, are spiritually qualified to take on this responsibility and have these qualities:
 - a) Sufficient maturity to fulfill their functions and are at least 16 years of age.
 - b) Membership in the Catholic Church and their own reception of Christian initiation through baptism, confirmation, and Eucharist.
 - c) Freedom from any impediment of law to their fulfilling the office of sponsor and are in good standing with the Church.

General Guidelines

As you read through the handbook, please be aware of the several due dates that have been presented. Your child is greatly encouraged to submit documents, letters and reports timely and ahead of schedule.

Attendance (for Religious Education Students)

Regular attendance at class is essential for the continuity and reinforcement of Catholic teaching and spiritual formation. This includes arriving on time and staying for the duration of the class session. Regular, consecutive attendance is expected of all students. Class sessions are from 9:35 a.m. to 10:50 a.m. on Sunday morning and 6:00 p.m. to 7:15 p.m. on Monday evening.

If a student is unable to attend a session, the following attendance rules apply:

- A parent must place a telephone call or send an e-mail to the Religious Education Office as soon as possible to report the class absence.
- If a student cannot attend the regular scheduled class day, they may attend the alternate class day. Example: If a student cannot attend their Sunday class, they can attend the Monday class session, but only if a parent has called or emailed the Religious Education Coordinator (Mrs. Anne Balzanto). The same is true for Monday students to attend the Sunday class of that same week. Students are not allowed to miss more than three class sessions or they will not make their Confirmation with the class.

If your family is faced with an unforeseen crisis due to illness or extenuating family circumstances, please contact the Religious Education Office directly and we will work with your family.

Baptismal Records

We must have a photocopy of your child's baptismal certificate on file. Please note that your child will not be able to receive the sacrament of confirmation if a copy of the baptismal certificate is not on file in the Religious Education Office. If you have not submitted the certificate, our office will contact you and we ask that you comply with our request as quickly as possible.

The parish of baptism is responsible for maintaining all sacramental records. Once the child has been confirmed, the necessary documentation is forwarded to the parish of baptism to be entered into the records as well as recording it in the St. Alphonsus Liguori Parish register.

If a child was baptized in a church other than the Roman Catholic tradition, their records will be reviewed to determine if any steps need to be taken in order to complete the sacraments of initiation. In this case, please contact the Religious Education Office immediately.

Eucharist and Reconciliation

If your child has not received either of these sacraments, additional formation sessions are required. Please contact the Religious Education Office immediately if your child falls into this category.

Confirmation Due Dates

Confirmation Information Sheet Due Date: Monday, October 28

We have a comprehensive information sheet to gather all the information necessary to ensure that your child's information is properly documented and the Confirmation evening goes as smoothly as possible. Additionally, we are requesting your Church seating reservation information early.

Please indicate on the information sheet, any special seating arrangements (elderly, wheelchairs, handicapped guests) you need and we will make our best effort to accommodate your request. You are also asked to be reasonable about the number of seats you are requesting for the Confirmation Mass. We ask that you keep your total count of guests at approximately twelve people, more or less, per family. All family members and guests will be seated together in the Church.

Parents and/or siblings who are trained Eucharistic Ministers at St. Alphonsus Liguori Parish are encouraged to be Eucharistic Ministers at the Confirmation Mass. Please indicate your interest on the Confirmation Information Sheet.

Please note: We cannot process your child's confirmation paperwork until we have a baptismal certificate and the Confirmation Information Sheet on file in the Religious Education Office.

Certificate Name

Each child will receive a Confirmation certificate at the end of the school year. Your child's, first, Confirmation name and last name will be printed on the certificate. Please print the name clearly and neatly on all requested forms. Your child's name will appear on the certificate exactly as it is on the information forms you provide to the Religious Education Office. We will request this information in October 2019 and again in March 2020.

Confirmation Sponsor

We need to have the proper, formal and legal name of the sponsor, printed very clearly and neatly. This information is required for our sacramental records and to complete the paperwork for the parish of baptism.

Remember that the sponsor should be confirmed, be at least 16 years of age, be a practicing Roman Catholic and in good standing with the Church. Please feel free to contact the Religious Education Office if you have any questions.

Saint Reports

Due Date: Monday, February 3, 2020

It is important that each candidate learn about their chosen patron saint. Your child is asking this saint to be a mentor and an advocate for them for the rest of their life. When our children play sports or a musical instrument, we encourage them to observe the very best in the given field. The same is true with our saints. They can first serve as sources of great inspiration and, secondly, it is important to study the techniques of the masters. Our saints are great women and men who have trained tirelessly and perfected the art of living virtuous and holy lives. **The saint report must be written about the saint the candidate has chosen for their confirmation name.**

The report should include the following information:

- A short biography and/or history of the saint, i.e., when and where the saint lived, and what the saint did to become a saint.
- Why the child chose this saint as their patron for confirmation.
- List at least 3 reasons why the child finds the saint's life interesting and inspiring.

The saint reports must be typed using a 12-point font, single spaced, and be one to two pages in length. We have resources available in the Religious Education office. If you need additional assistance in locating resources, please let us know and we will be happy to assist you. Also provided is a list of internet resources and you may inquire with your local public library. A sample saint report is provided on page 13 of this handbook.

The student's saint choice is to be approved by the Catechist/teacher and Religious Education Coordinator at the beginning of the selection process in November 2019 and no later than December 2, 2019

Bishop's Letter

Due Date: Monday, February 3, 2020

Each candidate is required to write a formal letter to Bishop George J. Rassas who will preside at the Confirmation Mass. A sample Bishop letter is provided on page 14 of this handbook.

The letter should contain at least five paragraphs and include the following information:

- A formal request is written to Bishop Rassas to receive the sacrament of confirmation in the faith of the Catholic Church
- A statement that your child is making their own decision about becoming a confirmed Catholic
- A brief personal history; they can include information about themselves, their family, i.e., where they originate from, where they attend school, what might be their hobbies or dreams for the future, etc.
- Information about how they prepared for confirmation
- Information about the various service projects they participated in and how they plan to continue to serve the community and the Church after confirmation

The Bishop's formal letter serves as your child's request for full initiation into the Catholic faith. The letter should be written thoughtfully and be respectful in tone. The letter should be typed and checked for spelling and grammar errors. Bishop Rassas, Fr. Joseph Le and Mrs. Balzanto will read each letter. The Bishop uses the letters as part of his homily. Please make sure the letter is unfolded, appropriate in content, professional in appearance and delivered to the Religious Education Office by Monday February 3, 2020.

Service Hours

Due Date: Monday, December 02, 2019 – First half of service hours are due and reflection sheets must be submitted (10 hours required).

Due Date: Monday, March 02, 2020 – Second half of service hours must be completed with reflection sheets handed in (10 hours = 20 total required hours).

Candidates are required to fulfill twenty hours of service. Ideally, service hours should be divided between service to the family, parish, and to the community at large. Only five hours per semester and ten hours of the twenty total hours due, may be generated from service within St. Alphonsus Liguori Church. In other words, assisting as an altar server or cantor at Saturday or Sunday Masses can only account for half five (5) of a child's service hours. We will have forms for service hours outside the Religious Education office and available online on the parish website. For more information or clarification, contact the Religious Education Office.

Students are required to keep a record (copies) of the service hour forms and should document all future community service during their high school careers and develop a Service Portfolio which could be used later to apply for service-based college scholarships. The service record forms are also an excellent resource for writing their letter to Bishop Rassas.

The Religious Education Office is not responsible for scheduling or providing service hours. We recognize the scheduling demands that many parents and children face and we aim to provide as many service opportunities as possible. We will also notify the candidates when service opportunities present themselves. Please check the Sunday bulletin for available service opportunities and the Youth Ministry bulletin board in the East wing of the school building. Also, consider the following options:

Bessie's Table, 668 Graceland Avenue, Des Plaines, IL

<http://www.fumcdp.org/Bessie>

--Each Monday night, this local group feeds all individuals. Close to the parish, this establishment could make for a great opportunity for a family outing.

Feed My Starving Children, 1072 National Parkway, Schaumburg, IL

<http://www.fmssc.org/locations/Schaumburg>

--Always in need of help, Feed My Starving Children allows you to volunteer throughout the week to package food that will go to places in need around the world. After packing, you find out where the food will go, what the nutritional value of the food really is, and even how the food tastes to have a better idea of the impact of the service.

Catholic Charities, 1717 Rand Road, Des Plaines, IL

http://www.catholiccharities.net/about/support_services/regional_offices

--This nearby location offers a variety of services while also connecting volunteers to the greater network of Catholics fulfilling our responsibility to each other and the rest of the world.

Reconciliation

All Religious Education students will have the opportunity to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation during a regular Religious Education class session.

The St. Alphonsus Liguori School 8th-grade confirmation candidates will also have the opportunity to receive the sacrament, during regular class hours.

One Candidate & Sponsor Reflection Event - Mandatory

This event is mandatory for the confirmation candidates to attend and all students are to attend in their entirety. If a candidate is unable to attend the St. Alphonsus Liguori Retreat, they will need to contact another parish and attend their Retreat. Verification of attendance must be provided to the Religious Education Office. The Religious Education Office will provide families with any available Retreat information. However, you will be responsible for making your child's arrangements with the other parish. If you do not make arrangements with another nearby parish for an alternate retreat, those candidates will not expect to be presented for the Sacrament of Confirmation. We ask that you understand that months of planning go into these retreats to prepare these candidates for this significant spiritual step in their lives.

1. Sponsor-Candidate Reflection Retreat - Mandatory

The sponsor and candidate have a choice of two Reflection dates to attend.

Friday January 24, 2020 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

OR

Saturday January 25, 2020 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon

The Reflection will be held in meeting rooms A–B–C off the Church Narthex, the school dining hall and church at St. Alphonsus Liguori Parish. This is a wonderful opportunity for the candidates and sponsors to have time to reflect, share stories of faith, pray, and set the tone for Confirmation Day. The candidates and sponsors should come dressed comfortably. Snacks and light refreshments will be served. **The Sponsor-Candidate Reflection Retreat is mandatory.**

2. Holy Fire Retreat Event - Optional

Only the candidates attend the Holy Fire Retreat.

Saturday October 19, 2019 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Our new Youth Minister, Matthew Benitez, will coordinate the Holy Fire Event located at the University of Illinois at Chicago's East campus. Additional information and details will be forthcoming and posted on the St. Alphonsus Liguori Parish Youth Ministry webpage. An information sheet and permission slip will be sent home with all candidates. **Holy Fire is a national Catholic one-day faith experience for middle school youths. The Holy Fire Event is encouraged but not mandatory.**

Confirmation Liturgy

Confirmation Rehearsal Date: Wednesday April 22, 2020 7:00 p.m.

The Confirmation rehearsal will be held in the church. We start on time, so please be timely. The rehearsal is approximately one hour and 15 minutes in length. **The confirmation rehearsal is mandatory for the candidate and sponsor.**

If the sponsor cannot attend the rehearsal, **a parent or another adult may substitute.** As your child arrives, she or he should sit with their sponsor in their assigned seat in the church. Please check your name sheet carefully. If there are any mistakes, make any necessary corrections directly on the name sheet and give it to a member of the staff at the end of the rehearsal so Mrs. Balzanto can make the necessary corrections before Confirmation night.

Seating Chart - On the day of confirmation, each usher will have a copy of the seating chart if anyone needs assistance finding their seats.

Confirmation Day Date: Sunday April 26, 2020 2:00 p.m.

The candidates will sit with their family as they are the “first teachers of faith.” The seating order in the church pew is as follows: candidate, sponsor, parents, and remainder of family. Candidates and their sponsors should arrive by 1:20 p.m. and all family and guests should be in their church pew no later than 1:45 p.m., 15 minutes before Mass begins. Please inform a church usher if you need assistance.

Name Tags: The candidates will receive a name tag with their chosen Confirmation name the afternoon of the Confirmation. The name tag should be placed on the **left-hand side** over the candidate’s heart.

Confirmation Mass

Mass starts with a fundamental respect and understanding of the sacredness of the Mass. It is a time to gather together in God’s presence, to be nourished in a special way by God and one another. We listen to the Word of God, we pray together, and we share the ultimate food for the soul—the Body and Blood of Christ. What does this mean for Catholics and guests? It asks that the presence and behavior of those present throughout the service not detract in any way from the reverence accorded to the Mass.

As Bishop Rassas anoints each of the candidates, it is important that those gathered remain prayerful and reverent during this time. Please turn off your cell phones prior to the start of Mass. You may wish to reflect, pray the rosary or read a prayer book during this time.

Length of Ceremony

Anticipate the Mass to last approximately 2 hours.

Prayer and Singing

All who participate in the liturgy are encouraged to respond to the prayers and to sing. No doubt some of us feel we have not been blessed with beautiful voices or may feel uncomfortable singing. But the voices we have are gifts from God. Remember, God is tone deaf and doesn't hold auditions for song or prayer. God simply asks that each of us use the voice given us. When we all pray and sing, we can truly feel the power of the liturgy embracing the assembly.

We owe it to ourselves and to the others around us to participate as fully as we can to make our experience of worship as rich as it can be. As St. Augustine said, "Singing is like praying twice!"

Mass Dismissal

Everyone is encouraged to sing and remain seated in the pews until the Mass procession and Bishop Rassas and the students have exited the Church reached the Narthex. **Please do not exit church after Communion.**

Pictures

Please do not take pictures during Mass. We request that all who are in attendance remain seated during the Rite of Confirmation. So often when you are the photographer, you become an observer and are no longer a participant. We encourage you to be fully present at this very special time. You are welcome to take pictures anywhere in the church **after** Mass.

Remember not to place personal items on the altar when posing for pictures. Bishop Rassas will be most generous with his time about posing for pictures with the candidates after Mass. He will pose for pictures in front of the Church altar steps. We ask that families are respectful of the Bishop and have their group together and cameras ready before getting in line for pictures.

Small Children

Due to the length of the Mass it may be difficult for smaller children to sit still. Please feel free to take your small children out of Mass and utilize the Narthex.

Food

A reminder that the Church teaches that you should fast for one hour before receiving Communion, which means that you have to stop eating solid food and drinking all liquids except water. Please do not chew gum or eat candy during Mass. Additionally, any other "dining" is inappropriate.

Clothing & Confirmation Gowns

In order to ensure a sense of uniformity in dress code but also to help symbolize the significance of the event, we will be providing gowns to all of the candidates to wear during the Confirmation Mass. We ask that dress be appropriate and modest. Clothing items such as T-shirts, jeans, or tennis shoes are not appropriate attire for confirmation. We ask that young women wear clothing that covers their shoulders and skirts that are appropriate in length. Young men should wear dress slacks and a long-sleeve shirt and tie. Suits, sport coats, or vests are optional.

Confirmation Certificate

All confirmandi will receive a special Confirmation certificate. The Religious Education students will receive their certificate on the last day of class, Confirmation Day, April 26, 2020. The school students will receive their certificate at the End of the School Year Mass.

Saints Websites & Resources

www.catholic.org

Click the Saints link in the top-left corner

www.cin.org

Scroll down looking in the blue bar at left to click the Saints link

www.catholic-forum.com

Look in the red bar at the left to click the Patron Saints Index link

<http://www.shc.edu/theoloibrary/saints.htm>

www.catholic-pages.com

Click the Truth link, then scroll down to click the Saint link

www.domestic-church.com

Look at the yellow bar at the top to click the Saints link

[Insert date]

[Candidate Name]
Saint Report

**Saint Joan of Arc
Patron Saint of Members of the Military**

Feast Day—May 30

I have chosen Saint Joan of Arc as my confirmation name because I believe she is a wonderful role model for young women. My grandmother's name is Joan, and since she is my sponsor, I thought it was a good name for me to choose. My dad is also in the Navy and Saint Joan of Arc is the patron saint of the members of the military.

Joan of Arc was born on January 6, 1412, in Domremy, France. She was just an ordinary girl. She could not read nor write. She had to help with the household chores, take care of all the animals in the fields, help bring in the harvest, and she was "very good with a needle."

She heard voices when she was thirteen years old that called her to save France from the English during the 100 Years War. She also had visions and she believed they were of St. Michael, St. Margaret, and St. Catherine of Alexandria. France was at war with England, and they were losing the war. The empire of England occupied much of France. She was given troops to command. She wore armor and carried a white banner that represented God blessing the French royal emblem. She stood up to all the people who doubted her and she was very successful in leading her troops to victory.

She was captured by some soldiers and was sold to the English allies. She was charged with heresy and sorcery. After fourteen months, she was condemned to death. She was burned at the stake. As she was dying, she asked an English soldier to hold up a cross made out of two pieces of wood so she could see it and she kept repeating the name of Jesus. The only thing that remained untouched by the fire was her heart. Her ashes were thrown into the River Seine in case people came to worship her at her grave and treat her as a saint.

The reason I think Joan of Arc is a good patron saint for me is that I want to join the navy after I finish college. I want to become a nurse and work on a hospital ship taking care of all of the sick and injured sailors and soldiers. I think they are all very brave to leave their families and defend our country. I miss my dad very much when he is away on duty, but he always tells us we need to be brave for him so that he can be brave when he does his job. I also think Joan of Arc is good because even though she couldn't read or write, she didn't let that get in her way of doing what God called her to do. Sometimes I have a hard time with my schoolwork and I sometimes thought that maybe I couldn't become a nurse as a result. Yet Joan of Arc did really great things even though she could not read and people made fun of her. She believed in herself and all the gifts the God gave her and she did really great things. My grandma always calls me her "little cookie" because she says I always give even the bad things in life good taste. I think it is important to make sick people feel better and not just by using medicine, but by being nice to them and to talk to them to make them feel human.

[Insert date]

[Candidate Name]

St. Alphonsus Liguori Parish

Dear Bishop George J. Rassas,

My name is [Candidate's Name]. I am formally requesting to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation on Sunday, April 26, 2020 at St. Alphonsus Liguori Parish in Prospect Heights.

I am thirteen years old and I go to [Name of School]. I am the youngest of four children. My oldest sister, Karen, is in college, and my two brothers are in high school. My dad is an engineer at Great Lakes Naval Base, and my mom is a teacher. We have lived here in the Prospect Heights area for all of my life.

I asked my grandma to be my sponsor. She is always really nice to me and I love her very much. She calls me her "little cookie" because she says I can always look on the bright side of things. She goes to Mass everyday even though she doesn't have to. She told me that when she starts off each day with God, it makes the rest of the day seem special. She is very holy and she talks about God all the time. She misses my grandpa, who died last year, but she told me that he is helping Jesus get things ready for her when she goes to heaven. She even prays at McDonald's when she eats there. In all those ways, my grandma has been an incredible inspiration in my life.

In order to prepare for confirmation, I made an effort to do service projects with my family. Besides taking a more active role at church on Sundays, we went to the Catholic Charity Soup Kitchen in Des Plaines to serve the homeless and less fortunate. Getting to know the needy really moved me to contribute more to those in need. The little work we put in made such a difference, and that was really heartwarming.

I chose Joan of Arc for my confirmation name because my grandma's name is Joan, and she is my sponsor, and because my dad is in the navy and Joan of Arc is the patron saint of the military. She was a really great soldier and God gave her many special gifts. I thought she was an ideal person for me to look up to as a role model. I am looking forward to my Confirmation Day.

Respectfully yours,

[Actual Signature]

[Candidate's Name, typed]