

RITE OF CONFIRMATION

FALL 2023



Confirmation Packet

For Students & Parents

ST. MARK CATHOLIC CHURCH

6500 CRAWFORD RD.

ARGYLE, TX 76226

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FAITH FORMATION OFFICE: 940-222-6703

Charlie Berneche – Coordinator High School & Middle School Youth Ministry
cberneche@stmarkdenton.org

**BE SURE TO WATCH THE WEBSITE, TEXTS OR EMAIL FOR UPDATES OR
CHANGES IN CONFIRMATION EVENTS**

*Parents & teens: Sign up for Flocknote by going to <https://StMark10.flocknote.com> and
choosing the correct confirmation session group to receive information via text and
email.*

Dear Candidates & Parents,

Welcome to the Rite of Confirmation! I am very excited that you have chosen to receive this sacrament! I pray that this semester will show your whole family what it is to receive this amazing sacrament. According to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, “Preparation for Confirmation should aim at leading the Christian toward a **more intimate union with Christ** and a more lively familiarity with the Holy Spirit...[and] strive to awaken a sense of belonging to the Church of Jesus Christ, the universal Church as well as the parish community.” - CCC 1309

Our goal is to be true to this statement of preparation for Confirmation. **PLEASE UNDERSTAND THAT BY THE END OF THIS PROCESS YOU WILL NOT KNOW EVERYTHING THERE IS TO KNOW ABOUT THE CATHOLIC CHURCH**, but it is our hope that you will know more about your faith, feel a sense of belonging, and be closer to Christ.

Parents, we expect that through the course of this process you will actively participate in your son(s) & daughter(s) Confirmation journey. You are invited to attend the confirmation preparation sessions with your teen. You can continue to encourage your son(s) & daughter(s) in his or her faith by reading/viewing/discussing the content from the preparation sessions with them, asking them about the different events they attend, by volunteering for High School Youth Ministry events and most importantly... pray often alone and together. This can be as much a life-changing process for you, as it can be for your child!

Candidates, receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation will complete your Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Eucharist, and Confirmation) but it is far from the end of your spiritual growth! This journey is a chance for you to continue to grow, to go deeper into the beauty of the Catholic Church and the love of Christ. **The Confirmation Team:** Fr. George, the catechists, the retreat team, and church staff are all here for you. God bless you in this coming year and throughout the Confirmation process and throughout the rest of your life!

Peace be with you,

Charlie Berneche
Coordinator of High School Youth Ministry

*PS – Communication for Confirmation events will happen mainly through **email and text**. Please make sure to check your email regularly for updated information. The website will also be updated.*

Checklist for Completion of the Candidate's Confirmation Process

Candidates will need to complete all the following requirements and assignments.

REQUIREMENTS FOR CANDIDATES' REGISTRATION

- ☐ Submitted Faith Formation Registration Packet (*if not already turned in*)
 - Form A
 - Form B/Code of Conduct
- ☐ Full Payment of Fees (Done during Initial Meeting)
 - Registration Fee - \$50 per student
 - Cash, check, or credit
- ☐ Copy of Birth Certificate
- ☐ Copy of Baptism Certificate
- ☐ First Communion Certificate
- ☐ Completed the Initial Meeting Evaluation Google Form

***NOTE: All of these items must be turned in at the time of Initial Meeting. An Initial Meeting will be unable to take place if any one of these items is missing and the candidate will be asked to come back at a later date for the Initial Meeting when he/she can produce these documents.**

CANDIDATE REQUIREMENTS TO BE COMPLETED

- ☐ Attendance at ALL eight Confirmation Sessions
- ☐ Completion of the Initial Meeting & Concluding Meeting
- ☐ Choose a Confirmation sponsor
- ☐ Completion of the 4 Sponsor/Candidate meeting worksheets
- ☐ Completion of the Saint Report
- ☐ Attendance of a Confirmation Retreat
- ☐ Active participation in Sunday Eucharistic Liturgies & Reconciliation
- ☐ Active participation in some ministry of the life of the Church (preferably Life Teen)

All Information, Forms, Papers and Money must be turned into the Faith Formation Office.

Forms and Papers may also be sent to Charlie Berneche via email:

cberneche@stmarkdenton.org

Calendar of Confirmation Events

Date:

September 17, 2023

September 24, 2023

October 8, 2023

October 15, 2023

October 22, 2023

October 29, 2023

November 5, 2023

November 12, 2023

April 20, 2024

TBD

TBD

Focus:

Why am I here?

The Kerygma & Understanding the Sacraments

Pentecost: The First Confirmation

The Holy Spirit: Spirit of Truth

Patron Saints

Confirmation: Our Pentecost & Strength

The Fruits/Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Confirmation: The Sacrament of Spiritual Combat

The Rite of Confirmation: Matter & Form

Confirmation: One Day Retreat

Confirmation Rehearsal

Confirmation Mass

IMPORTANT DATES SPRING 2024

April 20, 2024

Confirmation Day Retreat at St. Mark

Time: 9:00am-4:00pm

TBD

Confirmation Mass Rehearsal

Time: 6:30pm-7:30pm

TBD

Confirmation Mass

Time: TBD

DUE DATES FALL 2023

September 24th

Sponsor Form

October 15th

Sponsor Meeting # 1

October 22nd

Sponsor Meeting # 2

October 29th

Sponsor Meeting # 3

November 5th

Sponsor Meeting # 4

November 12th

Saint Report

****ALL CLASSES ARE HELD ON SUNDAY'S FROM 1:30PM-3:30PM IN THE RE BUILDING****

Initial & Concluding Meetings

Confirmation preparation aims to lead the candidate into a more intimate union with Christ and a more lively familiarity with the Holy Spirit in order to be more capable of assuming the apostolic responsibilities of the Christian Life. It is not a “list of hoops to jump through” but an intensive period of spiritual maturation. However, we cannot confuse adult faith with the adult age of natural growth for “age of body does not determine age of soul” (CCC 1308).

These meetings are not a test by which unsatisfactory answers would result in dismissal from the preparation process nor is the candidate being asked to “prove” their worthiness to receive the sacrament. Rather **this is a dialogue** between the candidate, the parents, and the confirmation coordinator.

Initial Meeting

The initial conversation is an important step in laying out an individualized plan for each candidate based on their spiritual needs. This initial meeting will help us understand your teen’s readiness to be confirmed. This is more about gauging the candidate’s understanding of the Catholic faith and how they are currently living in accordance with Christ and His Church.

Initial meetings will be conducted in the months prior to the start of the Confirmation classes. The meeting will be an informal 20-30 minute meeting with the Confirmation Coordinator. At least one parent is expected to be present for this conversation. What we are looking for here is “has the candidate been properly evangelized?” The following criteria will be used to determine the candidate’s level of evangelization:

1) Belief

- Does the candidate believe in a personal and triune God?
- What, if any, doubts or misunderstanding does the candidate have about God or the Catholic Church that he/she would like answered?

2) Knowledge of God, Jesus, and the Church

- Can the candidate demonstrate an adequate understanding of the person of Jesus, his saving mission, his humanity and divinity, etc.?
- Can the candidate demonstrate an adequate understanding of the Eucharist and other sacraments?

3) Discipleship

- Does the candidate attend Mass every Sunday?
- Is the candidate willing to grow in holiness through a deep and intimate relationship with Christ and His Church?
- How consistent and deep is the candidate’s prayer life?

4) Desire

- What are the motivations for the candidate's desire to be confirmed?
- Is the candidate too busy or at a point in life of the individual or family that is too hectic or strenuous to prepare for Confirmation?
- Has the candidate had an initial conversion of heart and turned their life over to Christ?

Concluding Meeting

"To receive Confirmation one must be in a state of grace. One should receive the sacrament of Penance in order to be cleansed for the gift of the Holy Spirit. More intense prayer should prepare one to receive the strength and graces of the Holy Spirit with docility and readiness to act." (CCC 1310)

Once a teen has completed the Confirmation Prep class there will be a Concluding Meeting in the last month of the preparation course. This meeting will be held between the candidate and the Confirmation Coordinator to help the candidate make an informed decision to receive or not receive the sacrament of Confirmation; therefore, the purpose of this concluding meeting is to determine the candidate's readiness to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. The candidate needs to be able to demonstrate a sincere conversion of heart and a satisfactory understanding of the Catholic Faith. If the candidate heavily participates in the Confirmation Prep class he/she will be adequately prepared to demonstrate this faith. However, should a candidate not be able to demonstrate a satisfactory understanding of the Catholic Faith along with a genuine desire to continue a relationship with Jesus Christ through the Catholic Church, a meeting with the parents will be called to discuss further preparation and determine if the candidate needs to be confirmed at a later date.

Parents:

- Please remember that choosing to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation is left to the choice of the candidate.
- There is nothing that says a teen is required to receive the Sacrament. It must be chosen freely and fully by the candidate without the coercion or manipulation of an outside party. Loving encouragement by the parents, sponsor, and greater parish community are recommended and highly encouraged.
- If at the end of this process a teen decides they do not want to be confirmed, or do not feel they are ready then a conversation will be held between the confirmation coordinator, the candidate and the parents to discuss delaying the reception of the sacrament until a later date.

****PLEASE NOTE: No teen will be sent away if they are not ready to receive the Sacrament at the end of the Confirmation Prep. Each candidate is important to the St. Mark staff; We are dedicated to preparing each person for the Sacrament of Confirmation in the time they need to be adequately prepared to join in with the Mission of the Church. ****

Evangelization Phase

What if a candidate is not ready to begin confirmation prep?

If at the initial meeting the candidate cannot express an adequate understanding of God and/or is not currently participating in the Mass and the sacraments it will be determined that the candidate is not yet ready to begin to prepare for confirmation; thus, the candidate will enter the Evangelization Phase. The purpose of this phase is to strengthen/develop the candidate's relationship with Jesus Christ through devout prayer to catechize and help them move towards a full conversion of heart. As part of this phase the parents are expected to participate with their candidate and walk with them as the primary catechist so as to engage them in the joy of the Gospel of Christ.

This Evangelization phase is an inquiry period for the candidate and designed to satisfy the needs of each individual candidate. This process allows the parent and the church to walk step by step with the candidate to teach them how to pray, how to read scripture, and how to have a relationship with Jesus Christ as well as strengthen these disciplines if the candidate has already been introduced to them. During this phase, candidates are asked to attend Life Teen and/or BoB & WoW, to participate in Mass each week and to develop a personal prayer life.

Q. How long will I need to be in the Evangelization Phase?

There is no set time frame for the Evangelization process. Since a conversion of heart is determined by the timing of the Holy Spirit a candidate may need to be in the evangelization phase for several weeks, several months, or longer. Typically the Evangelization Phase occurs over a few months.

Q. Am I a lesser Christian if I need the Evangelization Phase?

No, not at all! You are exactly where Jesus wants you to be. What He wants is for you to seek him above all else. But in order for the candidate to fully embrace the sacrament of Confirmation he/she must have a relationship with Christ that is committed to daily prayer, going to weekly mass, and seeking God's will for their life through the sacraments of the Church and devotion to Sacred Scripture. The Evangelization Phase is an opportunity to learn how to develop consistent prayer life and relationship with Christ.

Q. How do my parents need to be a part of this phase?

The parents are called to be the primary catechist for their children and teach the faith in the home. The primary role of the Church in the education of children is to empower the parents in their role and continue the education from the home to the parish. We want to give the parents the necessary tools and support to continue to live the faith out in the home whether their teen is hearing the Gospel for the first time or continuing to develop their basic understanding of Christ.

Q. Who decides when I'm ready to move into the Confirmation Prep Phase?

This is a joint decision between the candidate, the parents and the Confirmation Coordinator. If the candidate takes this phase to heart and is encouraged by their parents example to live out their Christian faith, then they will be more likely to be ready to move into the Confirmation Prep phase sooner rather than later.

Qualifications for Sponsors

In order for a person to be qualified as a Sponsor for Confirmation, all the following requirements MUST be met:

- The sponsor must have been Confirmed for over one year;
 - The sponsor must be ***A Practicing Catholic** who has been Confirmed and has already received the Sacrament of the Most Holy Eucharist; (* see page 10 for more details)
- If the sponsor is married, he/she must be in a valid Catholic marriage
- The sponsor **cannot** be the parent or guardian of the candidate
- The sponsor is expected to meet with the candidate throughout and after the confirmation process

It is desirable that one of those who took the role of Godparent at Baptism be your sponsor for Confirmation. Please involve your parents in the decision of whom you should choose to be your sponsor.

Confirmation Sponsor - FAQs

Q. Who should I choose as my Confirmation Sponsor?

Someone whom you know that is **a Practicing Catholic (see pg. 10)**. If the person you are going to choose is married, he/she must be in a valid Catholic marriage. A valid Catholic marriage is one that is sacramentally recognized by the Catholic Church. The candidate's Baptismal Godparent may be a good choice for a sponsor.

Q. What qualities should I look for in a sponsor?

Someone that you feel is trying to be close to God, someone that you admire for one or more of their virtues (i.e. goodness, kindness, patience, peace, perseverance). Someone you feel will support you by their presence in your life, by their prayers, spiritual support, and by interest in your life in various experiences or events. Someone you can continue to learn from after Confirmation.

Q. Why do I need a Confirmation Sponsor?

You need a sponsor to be a role model, an example, someone who will be in your corner, caring about you and praying for you. The way the saints became saints were by learning from other holy people, namely other saints. They were individuals that wanted to be good, please God, and someday go to heaven. Your sponsor is your guide. When you go on a journey, you have to plan where to go, what to take, who to go with, and how you're going to get there. Your sponsor should be the person who will help you to grow in your Faith, guide you in what steps you need to take, make suggestions to help you in the right direction for your life, discuss spiritual difficulties, pray for you and with you during all phases of your life, and ultimately be with you and God in heaven.

Q. What is a valid Catholic Marriage?

A valid Catholic marriage is one in which a man & a woman have been married in the Catholic Church or have been married outside the Catholic Church recognized as valid thru the process of Sanation. For further information contact Tammy Miller at tmiller@stmarkdenton.org or (940) 222-8290.

What is meant by the phrase: "A Practicing Catholic?"

A practicing Catholic is:

- one who has received all the sacraments of initiation (Baptism, First Communion, & Confirmation)
- one who weekly receives Holy Communion at Mass and goes to Confession on a regular basis
- one who sincerely tries to live a life of faith in communion with the Church
- one who always tries to form their conscience according to the authentic teaching of the Church expressed by the Pope and the bishops in union with the Pope.
- one who belongs and participates in the life and activity of their parish church and supports that community to the best of their ability with their time, talent, and treasure.
- A practicing Catholic is one who lives a chaste life according to their state in life whether single or married

A more accurate definition of "A Practicing Catholic" then is not one who seeks to fulfill the minimum required, but rather, one who always tries to love God and neighbor and fulfill one's duties in the faith to the best of their ability.

****NOTE: *A practicing Catholic is one who lives to please Christ, not to please self.*****

Sponsor Meeting Expectations

Every candidate is expected to meet with his/her sponsor at least **four times** throughout the confirmation process. These meeting can be held in person, over the phone, or through a video communication app. During these meetings the candidate must discuss the recent class material with their sponsor and fill out a work sheet to be turned into the Confirmation Coordinator.

The purpose of these meetings is for the candidate to develop and strengthen a relationship with their sponsor through meaningful conversations about the Christian Faith. The candidate and the sponsor are expected to continue these conversations beyond the confirmation date. The Sponsor Meeting Worksheets can be found in the back of this packet and on the Confirmation website.

St. Mark Confirmation Expectations

Parents, we only have a short time to prepare your son/daughter for this once in a lifetime Sacrament of Confirmation. Because of this, every event and class is vital to your child's formation and attendance is *extremely* important.

We suggest that your son/daughter arrive 5-10 minutes prior to the start time of class to sign in and get settled.

- ❖ **Attendance at all Confirmation Sessions is required.**
- ❖ If your son/daughter must miss a class or other event, please call the Confirmation Coordinator to let him know.
 - A message on voicemail or email is sufficient.
- ❖ If your child misses more than 30 minutes of a class he or she will be considered absent.
- ❖ If your son/daughter must miss multiple events for whatever reason, please let the Confirmation Coordinator know so he can discuss your son/daughter's options.
- ❖ If the candidate desires, a necessary option may be to wait until the next Confirmation Prep Class.

Confirmation Day Retreat

Our retreats are incredible events that allow you to encounter the Lord in a very real way. At this retreat, the St. Mark Confirmation Team will use talks, small group discussions, prayer activities, and more to develop the candidate's understanding that Confirmation is not just a one-time event but the beginning of a becoming a life-long disciple of Jesus Christ with the Catholic Church.

Every candidate is expected to participate in all opportunities given to them in preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation. As part of their Confirmation journey St. Mark will host a one day Confirmation retreat for all candidates as a day of reflection to pray deeply about what they are saying "yes" to on the day of Confirmation. The purpose for this one day retreat is to take what has been discussed in the classes and practice applying what has been learned to their everyday lives to better prepare them to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Retreat Details: **Date:** April 20, 2024 **Time:** 9:00am-4:00pm **Place:** St. Mark Parish Hall

Q. What if I cannot make the Confirmation Day Retreat?

Failure to attend the Confirmation Day Retreat **will not** result in the candidate's eligibility to be confirmed; however, the retreat is part of the Confirmation journey and should be seen as such. If the candidate is unable to attend the one day retreat they need to meet with the Confirmation Coordinator to discuss alternative solutions.

Saint Report

Return this assignment no later than November 12, 2023

A part of your Confirmation process is choosing a saint you admire and writing a mini-report on that saint. You may decide to choose a saint based upon what they are the patron (protector or supporter) of, but whatever saint you choose they become *your* patron. This means they will be looking out for you in a special way for your entire life until one day when you meet them in Heaven! But how can you strive to live like someone if you know nothing about them? This is why we require a saint report. It is recommended that you use your baptismal saint name, if you have one. **Remember: there is already a saint praying specifically for you! Every candidate should take the time to pray about which saint they will choose as their patron.**

Why is it even important to feel a connection with a saint? As Catholics, we know the power of having Mary and the saints pray (or intercede) for us. Each candidate should pick a saint whose life inspires them and who they want to model their Christian walk. Candidates **should NOT** pick a saint solely based on their patronage. For example, just because St. Francis of Assisi is the patron saint of animals and you are a huge dog lover should not be the primary reason he is your patron saint. The Saints have many gifts to offer and patronage is only one of those gifts.

IMPORTANT NOTE:

The name of the saint you choose is the name that you will take at Confirmation. So if you choose St. Anthony, the Bishop will say, “Anthony, be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit” as you’re Confirmed. This name will also take the place of your birth given middle name on the Confirmation certificate. Take some time to find a saint you really have a connection with. If you have any trouble deciding on a saint, just ask and we will be happy to help!

Suggestions for where to do research: www.catholic.org/saints; www.catholic-forum.com/saints/indexsnt.htm; www.newadvent.org/cathen/index.html; Your local library - Sanctioned Catholic Saint Books

*****Do not copy your paper directly from the website – You will be asked to rewrite your paper if you do*****

1. Two Options

a. A written saint report

i. Paper should include:

1. Factual information about the saint
 - a. Who the saint is
 - b. When he or she was born and died
 - c. Where the saint was from
 - d. What his or her life was like
 - e. Why this person is a saint
2. Why you chose the saint
 - a. What about the saint’s life inspires you
 - b. How do you want your life to look that this saint’s life
3. Where you found your information – Includes websites, books, magazines, and/or any other media used (this does not have to be in a formal outline – just for my information)

b. Complete the attached Saint Packet with complete information about your saint.

Confirmation Dress Attire

The Confirmation date is TBD

The attire for the day of Confirmation will be semi-formal attire, meaning that the teens will be a little more dressed up than what they are probably used to for mass. Teens **are not** required to dress in a certain color for this celebration. While this is a celebration, it is a celebration in the Lord's house; therefore, all attire must be modest and reverent.

*****A good rule of thumb:** if there is a question of whether your attire may be seen as immodest or inappropriate, **don't wear it.**

Attire for guys:

- ☐ Black or Brown slacks & Belt
- ☐ Dress shoes
- ☐ Button up shirt
- ☐ Ties highly preferred but NOT required
- ☐ No jeans!

Attire for Ladies:

- ☐ Dress with at least two inch straps. No spaghetti straps!
- ☐ Flats or heels
- ☐ No strapless dresses unless a cardigan is worn to cover the shoulders
- ☐ No low cut dresses!
- ☐ *Dresses need to reach to the middle finger when your hands are down by your side (fingertip length) or longer.

*****There is NOT a specific color that is required to be worn for the ceremony; however, the traditional colors to be worn are red or white: red symbolizing the fire of Pentecost and blood of the martyrs who gave their life for their faith
white to symbolize purity *****

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)

Q. What happens if I miss a Confirmation class?

Since there are only 8 classes it is essential that the candidate attend ALL the offered classes. If there is another commitment that conflicts with the Confirmation sessions the Confirmation Team will do its best to work with your prior commitments; however, if all other possible options are expunged then the candidate will need to assess their priorities and discern if the current time is the best time to prepare for the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Q. What if my sponsor cannot make the Confirmation Mass?

If a sponsor is unable to make the Confirmation Mass then a proxy will be allowed to stand in for the sponsor (this can be a parent). A sponsor should not be picked based on their availability for the Confirmation Mass but on the quality of their faith and character.

Q. What if I cannot make the Confirmation Mass at St. Mark?

If you are unable to make the Confirmation Mass you can ask to join the Confirmation Mass at another parish. You will need a letter of Good Standing from Father George giving you permission to receive the Sacrament at a surrounding parish.

Q. Can I have more than one sponsor?

Yes, you can have up to two sponsors; however, only one of them will be able to stand up at the altar to present you to the Bishop during the Confirmation Mass.

Q. Does my Patron Saint need to be the same gender as me?

Yes, the diocese of Fort Worth requires all candidates to choose a patron saint of the same gender. More details as to why this is will be addressed in the class on "Patron Saints."

Q. When is the Confirmation Mass?

The date and time for our Confirmation Mass is determined by the diocese. At this time the Confirmation Mass is still to be determined. As soon as St. Mark is given the Confirmation Mass time and date it will be posted on the website and sent out in an email.

Q. Am I required to be involved in a St. Mark Ministry?

Yes, every candidate must be involved in some other ministry of the Catholic Church outside of Confirmation class. It is highly recommended that this ministry be Life Teen since it is a place for the candidate to further their knowledge of Christ and the teachings of the Catholic Church. If you have further questions on what qualifies for another ministry of the Church ask the Confirmation Coordinator. Life Teen is held on Sunday evenings from 5:15-7:00pm in the Main Worship Space.

Confirmation Sponsor Form

Please complete this form and return it to the Religious Education Office, St. Mark Catholic Church, 6500 Crawford Road, Argyle, TX 76226. You may also scan the form and email it to **cberneche@stmarkdenton.org**. Please call **940-222-8081** if you have any questions.

PLEASE PRINT LEGIBLY. INCLUDE AREA CODE WITH ALL PHONE NUMBERS.

NAME OF THE PERSON RECEIVING SACRAMENT:

RELATIONSHIP TO THE CANDIDATE: _____

SPONSOR INFORMATION:

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____
Street Name

City/State/Zip _____

Home Phone: () _____ E-mail Address: _____

Cell Phone: () _____ Other E-mail: _____

Religion: _____ Baptized on: _____
Date

at _____
Name and of the church where sponsor/godparent was baptized

I received 1st Eucharist on _____ at _____
Date Name of church

I was Confirmed on _____ at _____
Date Name of church

I am a registered member of _____
Parish name & mailing address

Are you married? (Check one)

☐ Yes, I was married in the Catholic Church on _____ at _____
Date Name of church

☐ I was married outside the Catholic Church on _____ at _____
Date Name of church

** A conversation with the Confirmation Coordinator is required if this box is checked*

☐ I am single living a chaste life

Confirmation sponsors must be confirmed Catholics and currently living out a Sacramental Life according to **ALL** the Catholic Church's teachings.

Sponsor Meeting #1

Due by: October 15th, 2023

Candidates are asked to meet with their sponsors regularly throughout the preparation process to discuss the faith and in order that they might be more aware of what God is doing throughout the process.

--- BEGIN WITH PRAYER ---

*Read this passage **twice** together and discuss using the questions below. Keeping in mind that the Word of God is “living and effective”- the actual voice of God reaching out to you to speak into your life, think about why that word/phrase is standing out. How is God speaking to you in the circumstances of life?*

“If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will pray the Father, and he will give you another Counselor, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him; you know him, for he dwells with you, and will be in you.

I will not leave you desolate; I will come to you. Yet a little while, and the world will see me no more, but you will see me; because I live, you will live also. In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. He who has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me; and he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.” - John 14:15-21

Questions to discuss together - You'll share some of your discussion on the following page

- What does this passage reveal to you about God?
- What does this teaching from Jesus have to do with the sacraments?
- Why would Christ give us the sacraments? Are they just some hollow ritual or do they actually do something in us?

--- LESSON REVIEW: THE HOLY SPIRIT: THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH ---

Discuss the following questions with your sponsor. With each question talk not only about the answers to the questions taught in the lesson, but also about if you buy into that answer or if you struggle with what was taught. Formulate questions for the priest or DRE if you come up against a roadblock.

- What are the sacraments? What do we need in order to receive them properly?
- What effect do the sacraments have on our lives?
- How did Christ prepare his disciples to lead the Church after his Ascension?
- Who is the Holy Spirit? What titles do we give him and what do these titles tell us about him?
- What are some examples from Scripture of the Holy Spirit working in the lives of people?
- How do I allow the Holy Spirit to lead me in my life?

--- RELATING TO THE SACRAMENTS ---

- Ask your sponsor - Which sacraments have the most power in your life? The least? Why?
- Discuss - How can we believe that the sacraments have such profound power in our souls when they don't feel or look that powerful? What can we do to better prepare ourselves to receive the sacraments?

NAME _____

Meeting #1 Turn-In Sheet

After each meeting with your sponsor please respond to the questions below and turn this sheet in to the parish.

Please respond in at least 2-3 full sentences for each question.

1. What are a few things that you and your sponsor shared or talked about as you went through the scripture passage and questions following?

2. What is something you learned about your sponsor or something that your sponsor said that helped you see your faith a little differently?

3. How would you respond to someone who says that they think the sacraments are just hollow rituals that don't actually have any meaningful impact on us? How would you share with them God's grace and presence in your own life?

4. Do you have any other questions or final thoughts that you would like to share with us?

Sponsor Meeting #2

Due by: October 22nd, 2023

Candidates are asked to meet with their sponsors regularly throughout the preparation process to discuss the faith and in order that they might be more aware of what God is doing throughout the process.

--- PRIOR TO MEETING ---

Fill out the life graph sheet. Share a copy with your sponsor. You can do this by mail or email. Make sure to send it to them with enough time to look through it before you meet to discuss it.

--- BEGIN WITH PRAYER ---

*Read this passage **twice** together and discuss using the questions below. Keeping in mind that the Word of God is “living and effective”- the actual voice of God reaching out to you to speak into your life, think about why that word/phrase is standing out. How is God speaking to you in the circumstances of life?*

So Jesus again said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. All who came before me are thieves and robbers; but the sheep did not heed them. I am the door; if any one enters by me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. He who is a hireling and not a shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. He flees because he is a hireling and cares nothing for the sheep. I am the good shepherd; I know my own and my own know me, as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep.” - John 10:7-15

Questions to discuss together - You’ll share some of your discussion on the following page

- What does this passage reveal to you about God?
- What does it mean that Jesus is the “Good Shepherd”?

--- LESSON REVIEW: PATRON SAINTS---

Discuss the following questions with your sponsor. With each question talk not only about the answers to the questions taught in the lesson, but also about if you understand the answer or if you struggle with what was taught. Formulate questions for the priest or DRE if you come up against a roadblock.

- How does Jesus protect the mission that He gave to the apostles at the Ascension? What happened to the mission after the apostles died?
- What are the three levels of the Communion of Saints and how are the three levels connected?
- What makes one a saint?
- What is the role of a patron saint?

--- LIFE GRAPH ---

Share your life graph with your sponsor and discuss the following questions

- Ask your sponsor - when in your life have you felt closest to God?
- Discuss together - How do we know that we are close to God and how do we get close to God? Is feeling the best way to gauge our closeness to God?

NAME _____

Meeting #2 Turn-In Sheet

After each meeting with your sponsor please respond to the questions below and turn this sheet in to the parish.

Please respond in at least 2-3 full sentences for each question.

1. In a few sentences, what are a few things that you and your sponsor shared or talked about as you went through the scripture passage and questions following?

2. What is something you learned about your sponsor or something that your sponsor said that helped you see your faith a little differently?

3. In regard to the life graph how would you respond to someone who says that they do not believe that you can be close to God? How would you share with them God's grace and presence in your own life?

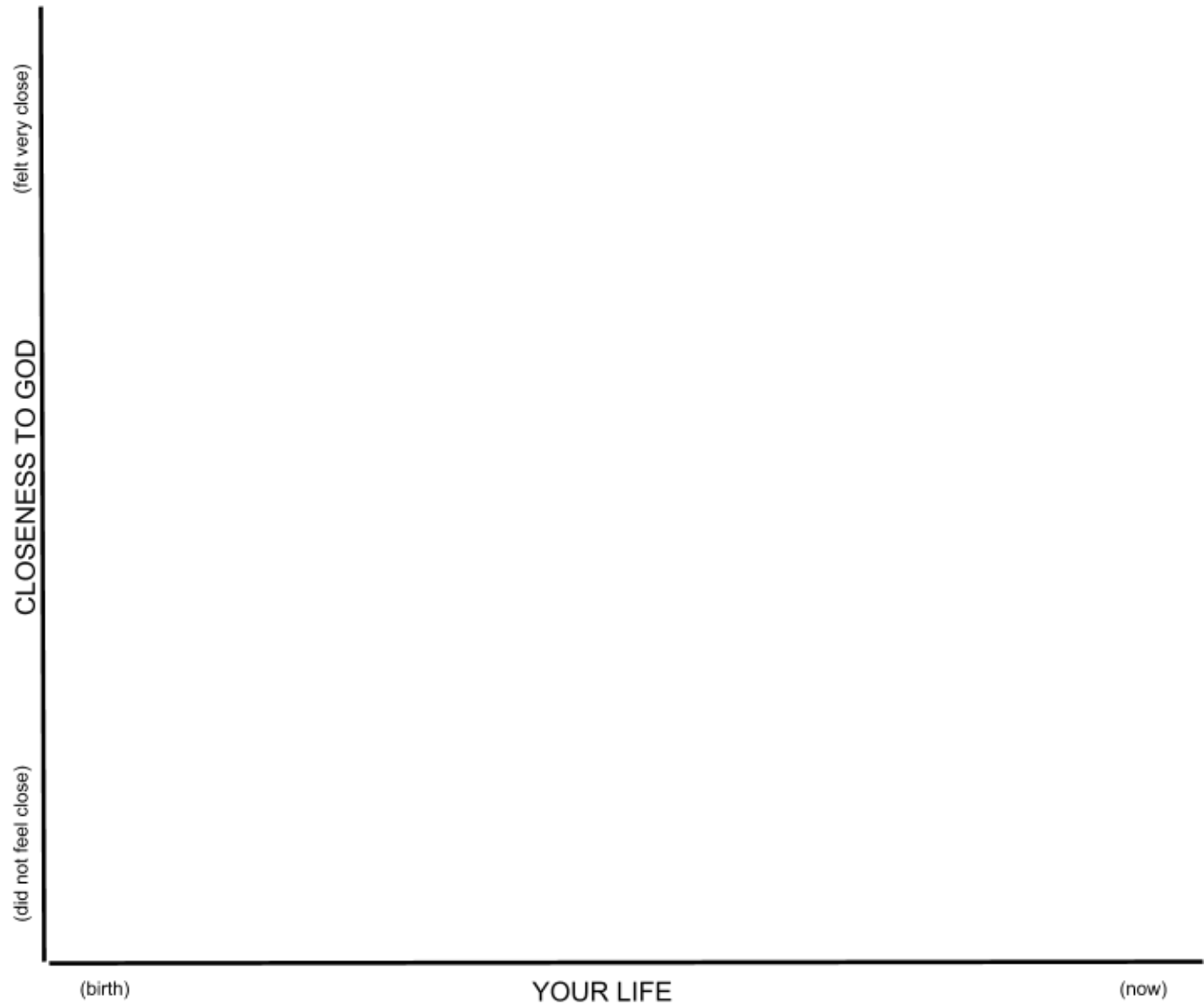
4. St. Teresa of Calcutta, the famous Mother Teresa herself, didn't feel the closeness of God for the majority of her life. Yet, when we look at her life we see that she loved God profoundly and lived a deep life of prayer. How can we remain close to God even if we don't feel close to him?

5. Do you have any other questions or final thoughts that you would like to share with us?

Life Graph

Instructions:

- Using the graph below go back as far as you can remember and chart out different important moments in your life.
- You can place a dot that represents how close or far away from God you felt at these moments in your life and a couple of notes about what happened.
- Connect all the dots with lines so you can chart out the highs and lows of your spiritual life.
- Go through the chart with your sponsor (and vice versa), looking for how God’s grace was working in your lives.



Sponsor Meeting #3

Due by: October 29th, 2023

Candidates are asked to meet with their sponsors regularly throughout the preparation process to discuss the faith and in order that they might be more aware of what God is doing throughout the process.

--- BEGIN WITH PRAYER ---

Read each passage **twice** together and discuss using the questions below. Keeping in mind that the Word of God is “living and effective”- the actual voice of God reaching out to you to speak into your life, think about why that word/phrase is standing out. How is God speaking to you in the circumstances of life?

[Jesus said]: “I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. And when he comes, he will convince the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment: concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no more; concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.

I have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.”
- John 16:7-15

“Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent to them Peter and John, who came down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit; for it had not yet fallen on any of them, but they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit.”- Acts 8:14-17

Questions to discuss together - You'll share some of your discussion on the following page

- What does this passage reveal to you about the Holy Spirit?
- What does it mean when Jesus says that it is to our advantage that he goes away so we can receive the Holy Spirit?
- Why did the apostles need to lay hands on the Samaritans who had been baptized? What does it mean that they received the Holy Spirit?

--- LESSON REVIEW: CONFIRMATION ---

Discuss the following questions with your sponsor. With each question talk not only about the answers to the questions taught in the lesson, but also about if you buy into that answer or if you struggle with what was taught. Formulate questions for the priest or DRE if you come up against a roadblock.

- Why has the Church established the sacrament of Confirmation? What does it do? Why is it necessary?
- What are the effects of the sacrament? What will happen to you when you are confirmed?
- How can you prepare yourself to fully receive the grace of the sacrament?
- Read over and discuss the sheet on the Gifts of the Holy Spirit. (see next 3 pages) What are the gifts of the Holy Spirit? When did you initially receive them? What does the sacrament of Confirmation have to do with them? How does it affect them?
- Discuss how you would use these gifts to think through and act on several real-life situations and current hot button issues.

Gifts of the Holy Spirit

(According to Archbishop Luis Martinez from his book “The Sanctifier”)

What are the gifts of the Holy Spirit? *The gifts of the Holy Spirit are bestowed on us at baptism. Picture it this way: a sailboat is fairly useless without opening its sails. It can't move, but is constantly thrown about on the waters, completely hopeless and at the mercy of the elements. At baptism the sails of our hearts were opened for the wind of the Holy Spirit to guide us towards our ultimate happiness- union with God our Father. We can't do this on our own, but Jesus has given us his very life in order for us to come back to the Father. This is a great grace. As St. Athanasius said: “For the Son of God became man so that we might become God.” Jesus lived a life of faith, hope, and love. Due to sin, we need supernatural help to live this way as well. We're given the gifts of the Spirit to perfect our minds so we can know the truth and our wills so that we can love what we've come to know. We in a way live Jesus' life (or as the theologians say participate in the divine nature of Christ)! Here is a short summary of the gifts and how they perfect us. It is important to note that we are supposed to grow in these gifts. Take note of how each “level” of the gift makes us look more and more like Christ.*



Gifts perfecting our will

This picture gives us a good image of this category of gifts. Notice how the heart at the center looks like it belongs to both Jesus and the priest. His heart has become one with Jesus. Also notice how the arm of Christ sort of fuses to the priest, so the priest becomes an extension of Jesus himself.

Fear of the Lord^[L]_[SEP]

Repugnance at separation from God

Level 1: Horror of sin- conquering temptation and sin with many struggles and failures

Level 2: Soul stays away from sin and begins to cling to God, avoiding even insignificant failures and grows a profound respect for everything sacred

Level 3: Total detachment from the things of the world. They all lose their fascination

Fortitude^[L]_[SEP]

The ability to overcome dangers and struggles through various virtues moved by the Holy Spirit

Level 1: We can do all necessary for salvation, even extraordinary or heroic things

Level 2: We can do more than what is necessary but what the Spirit counsels us to do

Level 3: We can conquer ourselves and have “boundless confidence and unchanging peace” in our hearts, nothing will sway us

Piety

Put all of our relationships (God, friends, family) in place, guides them, makes them more perfect and more profound

Level 1: When we regard others, the soul gives generously to them what they need

Level 2: When we regard others, we desire to give to them even from what we need

Level 3: Gladly giving self without reserve

Counsel

Divine prudence, not only rightly-ordered thought about what we should do, but God’s rightly-ordered thought

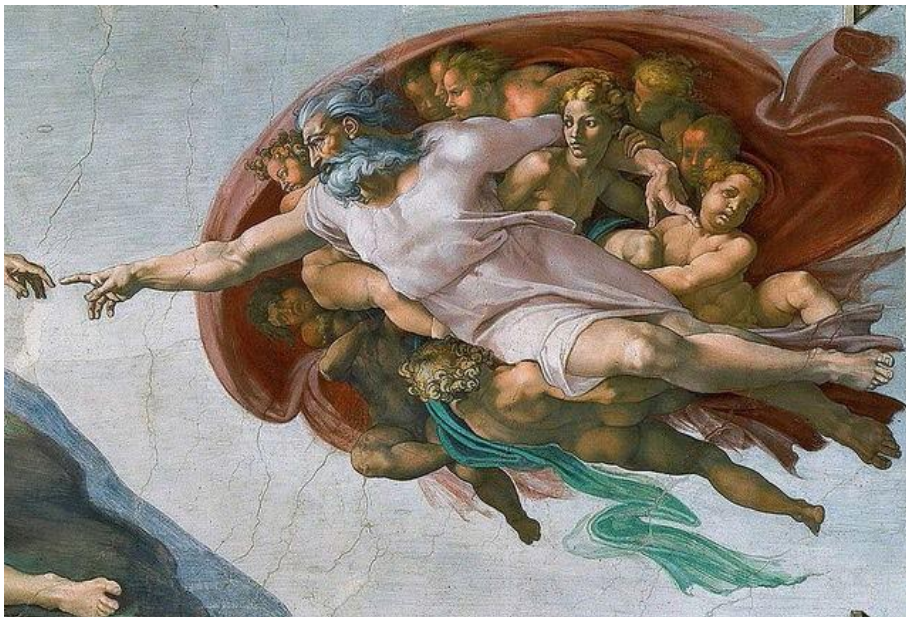
Level 1: We succeed rapidly in doing the will of God, what’s necessary in the spiritual life

Level 2: Shows us the will of God beyond just the necessary but what is beneficial and useful in growing closer to God

Level 3: Soul rises from earth and lives in a different plane, guided completely by the hand of God (prudence & boldness complete and ordered)

Gifts perfecting our intellect

Many don't notice that the cape and the angels surrounding Michelangelo's famous depiction of God creating Adam is shaped like a brain. This is supposed to symbolize creation coming forth from the mind of God. It also shows how we're made in His image. This is a good visual for this second type of gift. These gifts are the divine mind reaching out to touch ours so we can think like Him.



Knowledge

Divine wisdom, theologizing, ability to scrutinize the world (spiritual and material), probe the depths of all phenomena and recognizes what God has/is doing

Level 1: Can see the vanity of worldly things and the reflection of God's goodness

Level 2: Enjoy a vision of the world similar to how Adam and Eve saw it before the Fall

Level 3: Complete detachment, most can't relate with how these souls see the world- even loving suffering and humiliation

Understanding

Ability to ponder and penetrate lofty truths, our soul transforms, gift of meditation (ability to pray)

Each degree advances like a person climbing a mountain, the higher the degree the more the soul can take in the larger, more beautiful scene.

Wisdom

Divine knowledge, obtained from a deep intimacy with God, experiencing all the things the theologize and talk about and meditate on

Level 1: We cling to God

Level 2: We feel delight in the things of God & start to scorn human satisfactions & even start to love suffering

Level 3: We live as if in Heaven, no longer seeking the things of earth at all

NAME_____

Meeting #3 Turn-In Sheet

After each meeting with your sponsor please respond to the questions below and turn this sheet in to the parish.

Please respond in at least 2-3 full sentences for each question.

1. What are a few things that you and your sponsor shared or talked about as you went through the scripture passage and questions following?

2. What is something you learned about your sponsor or something that your sponsor said that helped you see your faith a little differently?

3. Which Gifts of the Holy Spirit did you and your sponsor speak about the most and what sorts of conversation did you have about them?

4. What Gifts of the Holy Spirit do you desire more of? Why?

5. Do you have any other questions or final thoughts that you would like to share with us?

Sponsor Meeting #4

Due by: November 5th, 2023

Candidates are asked to meet with their sponsors regularly throughout the preparation process to discuss the faith and in order that they might be more aware of what God is doing throughout the process.

--- BEGIN WITH PRAYER ---

*Read each passage **twice** together and discuss using the questions below. Keeping in mind that the Word of God is “living and effective”- the actual voice of God reaching out to you to speak into your life, think about why that word/phrase is standing out. How is God speaking to you in the circumstances of life?*

“For freedom Christ has set us free; stand fast therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.

For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love be servants of one another. For the whole law is fulfilled in one word, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." But if you bite and devour one another take heed that you are not consumed by one another. But I say, walk by the Spirit, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you would. But if you are led by the Spirit you are not under the law. ***Now the works of the flesh are plain: fornication, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, anger, selfishness, dissension, party spirit, envy, drunkenness, carousing, and the like.*** I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. ***But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control;*** against such there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. Let us have no self-conceit, no provoking of one another, no envy of one another.” -Galatians 5:1, 13-26 (emphasis added)

Questions to discuss together - You'll share some of your discussion on the following page

- Why does St. Paul list these fruits of the Spirit?
- Do you see the fruits of the Spirit or the fruits of the flesh mentioned in this passage more in your life?
- How is God asking you to “live by the Spirit”? What does that even mean?

--- LESSON REVIEW: CONFIRMATION ---

Discuss the following questions with your sponsor. With each question talk not only about the answers to the questions taught in the lesson, but also about if you buy into that answer or if you struggle with what was taught. Formulate questions for the priest or DRE if you come up against a roadblock.

- Review the gifts of the Holy Spirit. What effect do they have on our lives?
- What does it look like to follow the Spirit? How can we tell the Holy Spirit from our own imagination or even the temptations of the devil?
- What are the fruits of the Spirit? Do you see the fruits of the Spirit present in *your* life?
- Discuss people in your life who exhibit the fruits of the Spirit.

NAME_____

Meeting #4 Turn-In Sheet

After each meeting with your sponsor please respond to the questions below and turn this sheet in to the parish.

Please respond in at least 2-3 full sentences for each question.

1. What are a few things that you and your sponsor shared or talked about as you went through the scripture passage and questions following?

2. What is something you learned about your sponsor or something that your sponsor said that helped you see your faith a little differently?

3. Some may look at the list of the fruits of the Spirit and works of the flesh and think the list of the works of the flesh look much more fun. Why do you think sometimes sin looks more fun than sanctity?

4. We are taught that sanctity, friendship with God, and a life filled with the fruits of the Spirit are actually the things that will bring us greater happiness. How can that be?

5. Do you have any other questions or final thoughts that you would like to share with us?

Patron Saint Report

You may choose one of the following options

1. A written saint report
 - a. Paper should include:
 - i. Factual information about the saint
 1. Who is this saint?
 2. When did s/he live?
 3. Describe her/his life.
 4. Why is s/he a saint?
 - ii. Why you chose this saint as your patron saint
 1. What about this saint's life inspires you?
 2. How do you want your life to look like this saint's life?
 - iii. Where you found your information – includes websites, books, magazines, and/or any other media used. This does not need to be a formal bibliography – just for the information.
2. Complete the Patron Saint packet with detailed answers (next four pages)
 - a. Confirmation Saint Bio
 - b. The Gifts of the Holy Spirit and Your Patron Saint
 - i. Describe how your saint showed the Gifts of the Holy Spirit in their life. Be specific and give examples.
 - c. The Fruits of the Holy Spirit and Your Patron Saint
 - i. Choose four (4) specific Fruits of the Holy Spirit that were evident in your patron saint's life and describe the evidence. Be sure to label each box with the fruit that you are describing.
 - d. Saintly Service
 - i. Examine the life of your patron saint for evidence that they lived out the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy. Choose one of each to describe and example of how they demonstrated it.