

July 8,2009

Dear Parents of Confirmands;

Traditionally at St. Mary Parish the Sacrament of Confirmation celebrated by the Bishop of the Diocese is done in the eighth grade year depending on the readiness of the child. The students have a full, busy year of preparation before receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Students learn the definition of Confirmation and what it means to be a participant Catholic in the church. They realize that at their baptism their parents made a promise to rear them in the Catholic faith until they were old enough to take responsibility for their own growth. They know that Confirmation is the commitment they themselves make by putting their signature on what their parents promise long ago at their baptism to be active participants in the Catholic Church, living those morals and values that every good Catholic should live.

During their eighth grade year each student is required 30 hours of service performed in the city community, the church community and in their family.

All service hours are done free of charge in the hope that each student learns the importance of helping others and what it means to give back to their community, their church and their family. Service hours can range from helping with the programs at church, working as a volunteer at the local hospital, helping around the neighborhood, babysitting and any other service the eighth grader can find to do to serve others.

Each 8th grader chooses a name of a saint or respected person in the Catholic Community to remind them of the role model they are to be for those around them.

Each eighth grader is required to do a project entitled "Festival of the Spirit". This project is a creative way for each student to reflect on their faith life throughout their fourteen years. This project can range from a scrapbook, a shadow box, A CD or videotape or any other creative way to show their growth these last fourteen years.

Each candidate for Confirmation chooses a sponsor; someone sixteen years old or older, a full practicing Catholic in good standing with the church and must have received all of the Sacraments of Initiation. It is desirable that the one who undertook the role of godparent at Baptism be the sponsor for Confirmation. The sponsor will help guide them to prepare for the Sacrament of Confirmation. Sponsors are required to come to a meeting in order to know what their responsibilities are for the year. If possible we ask that every sponsor work side by side with their candidate in completing their service hours throughout the year.

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Parents also attend a meeting in order to know their responsibility for the year of operation all involved were not what it means to be a responsible, mature, participating Catholic Christian. This year if you have had a child go through the program in the past three (3) years there will be an advanced parent/sponsor meeting on Monday, October 26th. Where you will still get the details for the upcoming year but the session will be different from the first time parent/sponsor meeting. So please plan on attending one of the meeting times. [See calendar]

The eighth graders participate in a day of retreat in which they set aside to concentrate on their spiritual life and their relationship with God. This year we will be going to Sorrowful Mother Shrine in Bellevue for a day of prayer and reflection. We will go by bus on Saturday, November 7th. More information to come.

Please complete the Information sheet (*include your email address so I may contact you about reminders of meetings etc.*) and return with the sacramental fee of \$40.00 which helps pay for the retreat, bibles, pins etc. for Confirmation.

PLEASE RETURN BY WED., SEPTEMBER 16th. [Some of the PSR students have already paid this check with me if you are not sure] **I NEED THE NAMES OF THEIR SPONSOR BY THIS DATE: Sept. 16th.**

As their Confirmation day approaches each student is interviewed by one of the members of the Parish staff to check their readiness to be that responsible Catholic they are committing themselves to be on Confirmation day. This interview includes questions about what Confirmation is, why they choose to be confirmed, what they've been doing to prepare for the Sacrament of Confirmation and how they will stay active in the future. Each student needs to commit themselves to the sacraments and to live out the Catholic faith. It needs to be their decision with the help and guidance of their parents, sponsors, teachers and Parish team members.

The day of Confirmation is not the end of their faith life but the very beginning of taken responsibility for who they wish to be in the church it is our prayer that each student remains a full participating active member of the Catholic Church and has a closer relationship with the Lord God.

Any questions or if you loose any forms, papers etc. you can go to the website www.stmarysandusky.org click on Learning Our Faith and obtain copies of these forms offline.

In Faith,

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