



**SAINT MICHAEL RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OFFICE**  
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Dear Grade 9 Students and Families,

I hope this note finds you well, and enjoying the start of a fruitful, peaceful week. Now that we've fallen into a new rhythm within the program, I thought it would be a good time to update you on the year ahead, and the journey toward Confirmation.

Though our methods this year are out of the ordinary, the Religious Ed Staff—Pat Marks, Beth Santaella and myself—are here to serve and accompany you as the students delve deeper into their faith remotely. The program we're using to teach our Confirmation candidates—which our Grade 9 students now are—is *Chosen* by Ascension Press, which is educational but also quite engaging. We ask the students to commit themselves to active participation within this Confirmation program, to attend Mass regularly, and to uncover ways in which they can safely serve their community and those in need. The most important piece of advice I could give you, the parents, as you work with your child during this important year, is to take the time to WATCH the videos and learn alongside them. Our own journey with the faith should be ongoing, and you might be surprised by what new things you discover.

**Students in Grade 9 will be making their Confirmation in the fall of 2021 (exact date to be confirmed soon).** Their formal Religious Education will end in April, which means they'll be preparing for the Sacrament alongside our current Grade 10 students. Key dates that precede the reception of the Sacrament are listed below. Please know that you will receive updates and instructions from the Religious Ed office as each of these dates approaches, and you will be guided through each "step" toward Confirmation. This is just to get the dates on your calendar!

- Confirmation Name Form..... due December 6, 2020
- Sponsor's Name Form ..... due January 24, 2021
- Letter to the Bishop..... due March 14, 2021
- Ceremony Rehearsal..... TBD – Fall 2021
- Sacrament of Confirmation ..... TBD – Fall 2021

While lessons will remain remote throughout the year, our hope is that at some point in Summer 2021, we *might* have an opportunity for community activities such as the traditional Retreat, Candidate + Sponsor Brunch, and Reconciliation Service. We will wait and see!

Also attached to the email you received today is the “Choosing Your Confirmation Name” Assignment for Grade 9 students. Please be sure your child receives the worksheet and begins their research to choose a Confirmation Name. Further instructions are included on the form itself.

In closing, I’d like to share with you a quote from Saint Pope John Paull II, from a January 1999 address to the youth of St. Louis, Missouri. It’s a timeless rallying cry for our Grade 9 students!

“Each one of you belongs to Christ, and Christ belongs to you. At Baptism you were claimed for Christ with the Sign of the Cross; you received the Catholic faith as a treasure to be shared with others. In Confirmation, you were sealed with the gifts of the Holy Spirit and strengthened for your Christian mission and vocation. In the Eucharist, you receive the food that nourishes you for the spiritual challenges of each day.

Your challenge: live in the light and truth of Jesus Christ.

This is the time of your "training," of your physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual development. But this does not mean that you can put off until later your meeting with Christ and your sharing in the Church's mission. Even though you are young, the time for action is now! Jesus does not ... set you aside for a later time when you will be older and your training will be complete. Your training will never be finished. Christians are always in training. You are ready for what Christ wants of you now. He wants you—all of you—to be light to the world, as only young people can be light. It is time to let your light shine!

In all my travels I tell the world about your youthful energies, your gifts and your readiness to love and serve. And wherever I go I challenge young people as a friend to live in the light and truth of Jesus Christ.

I urge you to let his word enter your hearts, and then from the bottom of your hearts to tell him: "Here I am Lord, I come to do your will!" (cf. Heb 10: 7).

The Holy Father’s words were quite powerful: students, I urge you to read the address in its entirety at <https://bit.ly/2HrTOjS> and be empowered for your Christian mission!

With JOY in Christ,

*Michelle*

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