

## CATHOLIC COMMUNITIES OF CHEROKEE AND HOLSTEIN

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION PARISH    OUR LADY OF GOOD COUNSEL PARISH

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15 August 2020

Solemnity of the Assumption of Mary

To Confirmation candidates, parents\*, and sponsors\*:

I hope your summer has been going well despite the challenges the COVID pandemic has presented us since we closed our Faith Formation programs in mid-March to prevent the spread of the virus.

I hope you have continued to grow in your faith and prepare to celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Originally, Bishop Nickless planned to be here on Sunday October 12 to celebrate your Confirmation. However, due to COVID, the last celebration of Confirmation by the bishop was done on March 15.

Between that March 16 and June 27, our parishes were closed for public Masses and the bishop and his advisors have been busy planning who to celebrate the Sacraments safely.

Regarding, the Sacrament of Confirmation, because the Bishop's Confirmation schedule was disrupted by the pandemic and due to the current protocols that include safe physical [social] distancing, the bishop is not able to do all of the confirmations he was planning including. Thus, he is delegating pastors to confirm their own candidates when the candidates are ready.

Thus, diocesan and parish protocols for the safe celebration of Confirmation have been issued that abide with the primary protocols for the celebration of public Mass. The protocols for the celebration of Confirmation in our parishes, that follow diocesan protocols are listed below and I have attached a copy of all the protocols for special liturgies including Confirmation.

The celebration of Confirmation will be done on a candidate by candidate basis. That is, when a candidate or group of candidates are ready to celebrate Confirmation, the candidate's parents are to contact me to schedule a date and time for the celebration that is to be at least two [2] weeks away in order to allow time for me to request delegation from the bishop.

In the meantime, I encourage candidates to:

1. continue with reviewing the materials your study guides [CHOSEN or DECISION POINT] and videos
2. speaking with your sponsor [I have the names of all sponsors]
3. send to me:
  - a. a report on the saint you have chosen for Confirmation
  - b. a one [1] page letter expressing why you wish to be confirmed

When you are ready to move forward to be confirmed, please contact me. I will offer the opportunity to meet via phone call, or ZOOM, or in person [at a safe physical distance] to address any questions or concerns you might have and to go over the Rite of Confirmation including the fact that the sponsor

needs to be present [or a proxy (substitute)] but does not need to place his/her hand on your right shoulder and that I will be applying the Chrism with a Q-tip. In other words, there will be no rehearsal in the church. Yet, we will go over the Rite before you celebrate the Rite.

I look forward to hearing from you, addressing any questions you might have, and scheduling Confirmation with you.

You continue to be in my prayers and thoughts.

Thank you for your understanding, patience, and cooperation during this difficult time.

Peace,

Very Rev. Mark J. Stoll, JCL, VF  
Pastor

Attachments

**CONFIRMATION:** when a Confirmation Candidate is ready [at the discretion of the pastor, parent, and sponsor]:

1. This may be scheduled at a Sunday morning or Saturday evening Mass or a weekday Mass.
2. It may be the case there is only one [1] or two [2] of the Candidates present at a particular Mass as this will not be done as a class group.
3. A pew will be reserved for each Candidate, Sponsor, and his/her immediate family [parents and siblings] near the front of the church/worship space.
4. Other relatives of the Candidate [grandparents, godparents, uncles/aunts, cousins, etc.] will be seated on a first come/first serve basis.
5. The Candidate will be recognized and announced as being present during the Mass.
6. Candidates will be confirmed at the normal time of the liturgy using contactless conferral of the Chrism by the pastor who will have been delegated by the Bishop to do this.
7. The newly Confirmed and his/her sponsor and his/her family will be the first to be communicated after Mass for the Rite of Communion and then depart the church building.
8. After all Mass attendees have had a chance to receive Holy Communion and depart the Confirmandi and his/her sponsor and family may return inside the church building for photos.
9. When circumstances allow for this, the Confirmandi may be invited on a later date to gather for a group celebration and photo.

\*to those for whom I have a valid email address. Please check with your sponsor that he/she has received this letter and if not, please share this letter with them. Thank you.