

Dear parents and Confirmation candidates,

This year we will be studying and preparing for the sacrament of Confirmation. This is a very vital step in achieving full union with our Lord. Confirmation is a sacrament in which people receive the fullness of the gifts of the Holy Spirit to make them stronger in their faith and to become more Christ-like as they live out God's will and take His message of salvation to the world. It is a sacrament of our complete initiation into the Church which began a baptism and continues through the Eucharist. As the candidates come forward to be confirmed, they profess their faith in the teachings of the Catholic church and personally take on the responsibility for continuing their own faith journey by participating weekly in the Sunday Mass, by serving the needs of others, and by spreading and defending our faith by word and by deed.

Given the extreme significance of this sacrament, it is crucial that some ground rules be laid down and followed, so that students will be fully prepared to receive all the graces and blessings that are offered through this sacrament.

**Rule 1: Students will attend Sunday Mass weekly.** Since Confirmation is meant to coincide with a time when one takes personal responsibility for their own faith, I expect that the candidates will be regular communicants at the Sunday Eucharist. (This isn't my rule. God directly handed this command to Moses- -Thou shall keep holy the Sabbath. It is a **command**, not a suggestion. And whatever God commands is what is best for us. Following God's commands will bring us His precious Body and Blood. If you haven't been going to Sunday Mass, you need to go to confession before you receive communion. Not attending Mass on Sundays is a mortal sin.)

**Rule 2: Students will behave respectfully in the classroom.** i.e. They will sit quietly during instruction and will wait to be called on during discussions. They will listen respectfully to their peers. Students will resist the temptation to check their phones for texts so that they can give their full attention to the topics being taught, or the phone will be confiscated and returned at the parent's request.

**Rule 3: Students will serve the Church and their community.** As baptized Catholics, we are called to love and serve the Lord and one another. Attached is a log sheet to record your service hours. Here are a few suggestions: serving at Mass in any capacity, cleaning the church or church grounds, working at the parish picnics or bazaars, praying with the Legion of Mary at a nursing home, helping with Vacation Bible School, etc.

**Rule 4: Schedule time each day to pray.** Candidates for Confirmation are expected to deepen their relationship with God and become more Christ-like daily. You should spend time in a regularly scheduled form of prayer each day whether it be reading the Bible, praying the rosary or Chaplet of Divine Mercy, spending time in Eucharistic Adoration or just meditating on God's goodness as David did in the Psalms. Schedule time each day to pray.

**Rule 5: Students should fully learn what this sacrament involves by attending every class.** Any class that is missed **MUST** be made up. The make-up classes will be held after the regular class—from 8 to

9pm on Wednesday.

**Rule 6: Students must attend a Confirmation retreat.** This retreat allows students to “retreat” from the “busy” ness of the world and contemplate, in a quiet place, what God is calling them to do and be. Jesus did this before He began His ministry. I’ll make information about upcoming retreats available when I receive it. **The retreat will be held at SSCM on April 22 starting at 9:00am.**

**For ninth grades only:** Attached are some assignments that must be completed. I wrote the due date on each assignment. The papers can be turned in before the due date. (Mark your calendars now. Be responsible and keep up with these papers—PLEASE).

Confirmation is an extremely important event in the life of the Church and in the life of the individual. I hope that you will give this preparation the time, energy, cooperation, and sense of priority that preparing for a sacrament requires. I am already praying that each candidate will receive all the graces and blessings about to be bestowed on them. Parents, sponsors, I invite you to do the same. I look forward to sharing this journey of faith with you.

Yours in Christ,

Theresa Valdez, Confirmation teacher

(FYI—The sponsor the candidate chooses must be prepared to fully participate in the Eucharist. i.e. They must be Catholic. They must be in a state of grace to be able to receive communion. If they are from another parish, they must have a letter from their pastor stating that they are in good standing with the Church. Please talk to the Virginia Loza-Lee the DRE if you have any questions. Sticky issues that have come up are cohabitation and being married without an annulment from a previous marriage or just not attending Sunday Mass weekly.)

Please sign and return this portion and keep the letter for reference. Thank you.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have read the

(Student's Signature)

rules and agree to follow them so that I may be fully prepared to receive the sacrament of Confirmation.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have read

(Parent's Signature)

the rules and discussed them with my child and will do my part to ensure that my child will be prepared to receive all the graces and blessings given in the sacrament of Confirmation.