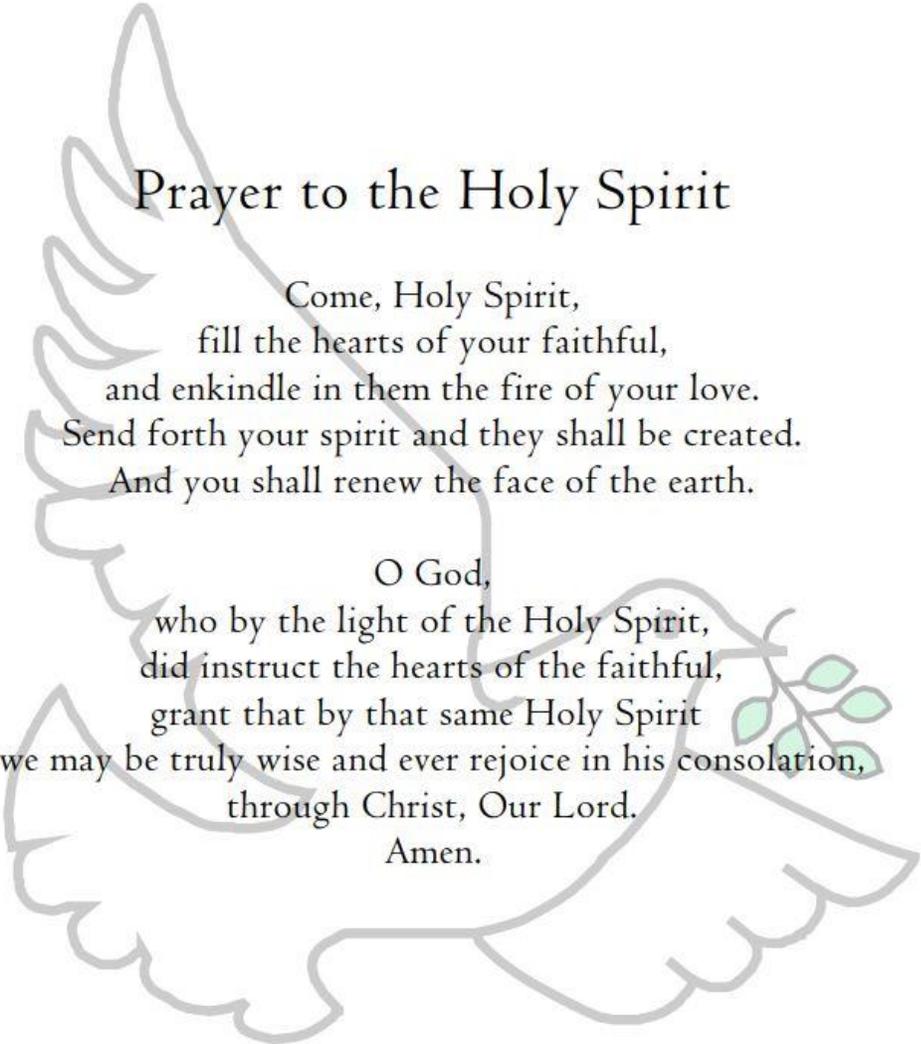


## **FOREWORD**

This booklet has been prepared for you by the staff of Saints Joseph and Francis Xavier Parish. Aware of your goodness and your desire to grow closer to God and our parish community, we have designed this booklet to aid you in the process. This is a very important time for you. It is also a very important time for our parish. The time of preparation and celebration are moments of pride and joy for our parish community. The staff as well as the parish-at-large supports you with prayer and example during this preparation process. Should any needs or concerns arise, please know we are here to serve you.



## Prayer to the Holy Spirit

Come, Holy Spirit,  
fill the hearts of your faithful,  
and enkindle in them the fire of your love.  
Send forth your spirit and they shall be created.  
And you shall renew the face of the earth.

O God,  
who by the light of the Holy Spirit,  
did instruct the hearts of the faithful,  
grant that by that same Holy Spirit  
we may be truly wise and ever rejoice in his consolation,  
through Christ, Our Lord.

Amen.

## **PREFACE**

The purpose of this booklet is twofold. The first is to give direction and format to the candidate/sponsor faith-sharing sessions. This is covered in Part A of the booklet. The sponsor booklet contains the same material as Part A. It has four sessions outlined. Each session includes an introduction, opening prayer, scripture references, reflection/discussion questions, and closing prayer. During the time together you may begin by reading one of the Scripture references and discussing what it says both literally and in relationship to your life. Then you may turn to the reflection/discussion questions as a means to cover the topic of the session. Conversation demands that we both listen and talk. Honest sharing and respectful listening are tools to use. The session can be given closure by prayer offered by either. *(You may wish to write down your thoughts on the reflection/discussion questions. These questions are meant to guide the conversations between you and your sponsor. **We do not ask that you hand in this section** of the booklet but **you may find it helpful to review your notes before you write your letter to the bishop.**)*

Part B of this booklet contains all the additional information you need in order to complete the Confirmation program of Saints Joseph and Francis Xavier Parish. It is there to support you and direct you through the various steps of your confirmation preparation. You are responsible for recording your service hours and for handing in the "Information for Confirmation Record." Please check the Important Dates for Confirmation for all dates regarding important events and to know when material is due.

There will be additional written material to be completed. It will be done in class at the direction of your catechist/teacher. It includes the letter to the bishop, and the saint report.

## **Role Of Sponsors**

When Jesus began his public ministry, he called to himself a group of people who were known as his disciples. They lived with him, shared his joys and sorrows, and learned from him to seek to do the will of the Father. Like any community, the Apostles had their problems. But Jesus taught them to be loving, caring persons who lived a life of service. Today, the Church is that community. We who belong to it share in that same mission. We also share in the same life—the life of Jesus himself.

Through their special witness when working with Confirmation candidates, sponsors model the faith. They help the candidate know the community in a deeper way. Sponsors help the candidate to see the action of the Holy Spirit within themselves, within the Christian community, and within the world around them.

The sponsors also speak in the name of the candidates to the parish community. They testify that the candidate is truly ready to make a commitment to the Church. They testify that the candidate has demonstrated that the Holy Spirit is alive and active within the candidate who is beginning to live a life for others.

### **Who is a sponsor?**

A sponsor is first and foremost a witness to the teachings of Jesus in the candidate's life. He/she should be an active member of his/her parish community and should know the candidate very well. The sponsor helps the candidate to see the action of the Holy Spirit, not only in their own life, but also in the sponsor's life, in the church of Jesus, and in the world.

### **Duties of the sponsor**

They set up times to meet with the candidate to discuss the candidate's growth in faith and service. These meetings are set up at the mutual convenience of candidate and sponsor. A recommended guide is included here in case they should need it. They **send a special letter to the pastor** concerning the candidate's readiness for Confirmation. They present the candidate to the bishop for Confirmation.

### **Who may be chosen?**

1. The Godparents at Baptism. This is a choice which most clearly expresses the relationship between Baptism and Confirmation.
2. Any other confirmed Catholic, 16 years or older, who is an active member of the Catholic faith and is an important witness in the candidate's own spiritual development.
3. According to current Church law, parents may not be sponsors. They may however fill in for the sponsor when necessary. Parents may be a proxy at the celebration.

# **SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION**

## Preparation Booklet

Saints Joseph and Francis Xavier Parish  
Wilmette, IL 60091  
847-251-0771 (SJ) 847/256-4250 (FX)

Part A - A Faith Sharing Format for Candidates and Sponsors

Session I - What does it mean to be a Christian?

Session II - Prayer

Session III - The Church

Session IV - Affirming My Belief

Part B - Confirmation Requirements

1. Criteria for Evaluation of Candidates
2. Enrollment/Retreat/Interview Information
3. Basic Prayers & Tenets of the Faith
4. Saint Report \*
5. **Letter to Bishop \***
6. Candidate Expectations
7. Record of Service Opportunities \*\*
8. Confirmation Record Form \*\*

\* first draft will be done in class & final copy may need to be done at home

\*\* candidates and parents are responsible for completing and handing in by due date

## Session I - What does it mean to be a Christian?

Being a Christian means being a follower of Jesus and a believer in His resurrection. Such a commitment has an influence on our lives and is reflected in our actions. A follower of Jesus observes that He gave us a great commandment: to love. The call to love and our manner of doing so makes us Christian. Although the Gospel stories all speak of Jesus' life of love, the following are some specific places where love is spoken about. Read them carefully and pray for an understanding of Jesus' command and example to love.

John 15: 12-17	(Jesus' love for us as friends)
1 John 3: 18-24	(Love requires actions)
1 Corinthians 13: 1-8	(Characteristics of love)

### Opening Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank you for giving us your word and teaching us about love. I thank you for the people who love me and I ask for the strength to show my love in return. I want to see the needs of others and touch them with love. Your example shows me the way. Jesus, be with me as I think about your message and learn the message of love. Amen.

### Questions for Reflection & Discussion

1. Name three ways Jesus showed love to others.
2. What do the readings say?
3. Name three values that are present in these Scripture passages.
4. How do I include these values in my life?

5. How do I show God's love to others?
6. Who loves me and how do I know it?
7. Am I being faithful to personal prayer and participating at Mass on weekends?
8. How am I doing with my service project? What am I learning about myself and about others from this experience?

### **Closing Prayer**

Re-read 1 Corinthians 13:1-8.

Replace the word "love" with Jesus.

Re-read once more and replace the word "love" with your name.

Talk to Jesus about how this makes you feel.

## Session II - Prayer

In the first session, we reflected upon what it means to be Christian and how that challenges us into action. This session is concerned with our relationship with God. Just as we are in relationship with others, so, too, are we in relationship with God. The communication with God we call prayer. While on earth, Jesus taught about prayer in action and in word. The following Scripture readings are about prayer. The psalm is an example of a prayer from the Hebrew Scripture. Read them carefully seeking to understand how prayer affects our relationship with God.

### Scripture References

Luke 6:12-16, Mark 1:35, Mark 6:45-46	(Jesus at prayer)
Luke 11: 1-13	(Jesus teaches the disciples how to pray)
Matthew 6: 5-8	(Praying in secret)
Psalms 23	(The Lord is my shepherd)

### Opening Prayer

God, my creator, you are always in my presence. You are most high and full of glory, but you never leave my side. You want to speak with me and share the gift of your Holy Spirit with me. For these gifts, I say "thank you." Open my heart and teach me how to pray so that I may grow in my awareness of your constant friendship. Amen.

### Questions for Reflection & Discussion

1. After reading Psalm 23 what do you know about the relationship between the psalm writer and God?
2. After reading the Scripture passages about Jesus what did you learn about Jesus' prayer life?
3. Why did Jesus teach the "Our Father"? What is the message?
4. Name one prayerful person you know. Why do you think he/she is prayerful? What can you learn from him/her?
5. Can you think of one time when God spoke clearly to you?
6. Think about your experience of prayer

...where do you pray  
...when do you pray  
...who taught you to pray  
...how do you listen to God  
...how do you pray in church  
...how do you feel when you pray

7. Am I being faithful to personal prayer and participating at Mass on weekends?
8. How am I doing with my service project? What am I learning about myself and about others from this experience?

### **Closing Prayer**

Pray the "Our Father" slowly. Think about each phrase. Pick your favorite part and tell God why you like it.

## Session III - The Church

Although our relationship with God is very important, we do not go to God alone. As Catholic Christians, we claim membership in the Roman Catholic Church. Through our baptism and profession of faith we become members. As a member you have both rights and responsibilities. You have a right to support on your faith journey as you explore what it means to be a Catholic Christian; you have a right to the sacraments of the church as befits your age and position. In turn you have a responsibility to learn about your faith and to be an active member of the Christian community we call church. The following readings speak of the establishment of the Christian community, and a model St. Paul gives us for the church.

### Scripture References

Acts 1, 1-11	(Jesus gives a command to teach all nations before He ascends - the Ascension Event)
Acts 2, 1-11	(The coming of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles - the Pentecost Event)
1 Cor 12, 12-26	(St. Paul speaks of the body as a model for church)

### Opening Prayer

Come, Spirit of Truth and Love; fill me with an understanding of this Church I call my own. I thank you for the gift of baptism and hear your call to put my calling into action. You are the Holy Spirit that goes before me to show me the way. You are the Holy Spirit that I hear in the quiet of my heart. Give me the fullness of your Spirit so that I may know my gifts and share them with my church. Amen.

### Questions for Reflection & Discussion

1. How do I fit into the Saints Joseph and Francis Xavier parish community?
2. What does membership mean for me? How do I experience it?
3. The readings speak of the apostles being sent forth, as a follower of Jesus. What am I sent forth to do?
4. What gifts do I bring to the church?

5. What does the church need from me?
6. What do I need from the church?
7. Am I being faithful to personal prayer and participating in Mass on weekends?
8. How do I relate what happens at Sunday Mass with the rest of my week?
9. How am I doing with my service project? What am I learning about myself and about others from this experience?

### **Closing Prayer**

Think of all the people you know who are a part of our church--the leaders of the parish, your family members, neighbors and friends. Pray for them by name saying, "Come, Holy Spirit, to (name)." When you've prayed for all those who come to mind, talk to God about these people and tell God what it means to you to be part of our church.

## Session IV - **Affirming My Belief**

In these preparation sessions you have examined Christian living, prayer and the church. These three are central to your desire to be confirmed. Confirmation in the Catholic Christian church says these three will influence your decisions in life. In this session you will reflect on how you use these values when making decisions about relationships, activities, and ways to use your time and talent. You have been called to a way of life that has many blessings, but it also requires much faith. Our beliefs make demands upon our everyday living. You have been challenged by your God. The church is counting on you.

### **Scripture References**

Jeremiah 1, 4-10	(The call of Jeremiah)
Matthew 4, 18-22	(The call of the apostles)
John 6, 60-70	(Many disciples desert Jesus)

### **Opening Prayer**

My God, I know you as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. I also know you as the One who calls me. You call me to live by my convictions and values. You call me to serve other people and to be close to you. You call me to deepen my membership in the Catholic Christian church and to care about all peoples of the world. Sometimes I feel a bit overwhelmed by Your call. I find comfort in your constant love for me. Give me the courage of my convictions as I continue my journey to You through the sacrament of Confirmation. Amen.

### **Questions for Reflection & Discussion**

1. Think about your personal call from God. What is God calling you to do?
2. What are the negative and positive consequences in choosing to embrace your calling as a Christian?
3. Who are trusted people in your life who can affirm your decision and challenge you to grow? What are they saying to you?
4. If you choose to continue the journey of faith in your life, if you embrace the sacrament of Confirmation, how will your actions change?

5. Am I being faithful to personal prayer and participating at Mass on weekends?
6. How am I doing with my service project? What am I learning about myself and about others from this experience?

### **Closing Prayer**

Spend some quiet time thinking about what the sacrament of Confirmation means to you. Talk to God about your fears and your eagerness. Ask for guidance in your decision-making. Praise God for all the goodness in your life.

## CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION OF CANDIDATES

Readiness for Confirmation is exhibited by:

1. **Regular participation** in the celebration of the Eucharist (Mass) and willingness to grow in knowledge of what they celebrate.
2. Open to grow in the understanding of Catholic beliefs and traditions exhibited by regular participation in class and other related activities designed for Confirmation candidates, especially the retreat.
3. Live lives of compassion, justice, and loving service reflected by regular and ongoing acts of service toward others.
4. Show desire to grow in religious dimensions of their faith by regular sharing with their sponsor (or a proxy).
5. Can explain basic beliefs and traditions of the Catholic faith and can express these to others either verbally or in writing.
6. Give evidence of growing into being persons of integrity and responsibility.
7. Express desire in writing to celebrate the sacrament, stating reasons for personal decision not based on peer pressure or parental pressure or local custom.
8. Willing to learn how to stand up for beliefs regardless of personal cost and show evidence of growing into this.
9. All requirements for Confirmation completed.

These include:

- Record of service hours
- Letter to the bishop
- Confirmation name/reason for choice and information about the saint
- Personal interview
- Baptismal certificate on record at parish
- Mastery of basic prayers & tenets of the faith
- Attend Confirmation Retreat

## RETREAT ~ INTERVIEW

### Retreat

A retreat day will be held for all the candidates on a Saturday. We hope to provide an opportunity for teens to learn about and grow in their faith in one large, Saints Joseph and Francis Xavier community.

### Interview

Each candidate is personally interviewed by an adult member of the parish. Its purpose is to ascertain the readiness of the candidate as well as affirm the candidate for his/her knowledge and completion of the program. The interviews are scheduled in early February. The candidate will have an opportunity to receive the sacrament of Reconciliation and have time for personal and communal prayer. The candidates are together for about an hour. A Sign Up Genius will be posted on **December 9**.

## **BASIC PRAYERS AND TENETS OF THE FAITH**

The following are the main tenets of the faith and prayers that candidates will be expected to know. Information on all of these will be available in class. However, it is the candidate's responsibility to assure an understanding of this material. Members of the parish will interview the candidates to determine their knowledge of these tenets of our faith and basic prayers. They will also invite the candidates to share the place of prayer, service, and Eucharist in their lives. Candidates will also have an opportunity to voice what this time of preparation was like for them.

Sign of the Cross  
The Lord's Prayer (Our Father)  
Hail Mary  
Glory Be  
Apostle's Creed or Nicene Creed - and an explanation of the tenets of our faith presented in the Creed  
Ascension  
Assumption  
Beatitudes  
Communion of Saints  
Consubstantial  
Gifts of the Holy Spirit  
Immaculate Conception  
Important persons in salvation history (Adam & Eve, Moses, Abraham, Prophets, Mary, Joseph, Apostles, Mary Magdalene, Paul)  
Incarnation  
Liturgical Year  
Marks of the Church  
Organizational Structure of the Church  
Paschal Mystery  
Pentecost  
Redemption  
Resurrection  
Revelation  
Sacraments – Initiation, Healing, Service of communion & mission  
Sin (original, personal, social)  
Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy  
Structure of the Mass  
Ten Commandments/Two Great Commandments  
Transubstantiation  
Trinity  
Two Major Parts of the Bible/Four Books of the Gospel  
Vocation

## CONFIRMATION NAME

Your name stands for something very important—you. In the early Church, many adult converts had received names that came from pagan religions. A sign of their total rejection of that former life and their rebirth into the life of Jesus was to drop the old name and take a new one. The new name was selected for its meaning in the Christian community.

At Confirmation, you are asked to select the name by which the bishop will call you. You may choose to use the Christian name which you received at Baptism. This shows your willingness to continue to live the Christian message and ideal. You are also free to choose a second name at this time which can be a sign of a new and deeper stage in your faith life.

Deciding on the name by which the Bishop will call you is an opportunity to reflect on what Baptism and being in union with Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit in Confirmation will mean in your life. If you choose a name other than your baptismal name, look to saints and holy people who are truly witnesses of faith for you. The name you choose at Confirmation should be important in your life as a Christian. It should express something of what you hope to become as you continue to grow as a Christian.

Your choice of name is due by **Jan. 10<sup>th</sup>**. You are also asked to research the saint you have chosen and write a minimum of one page (total) on the following:

- \* why you chose this saint
- \* what you have discovered about the saint
- \* what gift of the Spirit you think this saint was blessed with
- \* what Beatitude OR Spiritual OR Corporal Work of Mercy you think this saint tried to live

Your Saint Report should be typed and turned into your Catechist by **Jan. 17<sup>th</sup>**.

## LETTER TO THE BISHOP

Each confirmation candidate is asked to write a formal letter to the bishop. The purpose of the letter is to share why you wish to be confirmed and to tell him something about how you have prepared to receive the sacrament. It should also say something about your intent to continue your faith journey as a committed Catholic Christian. You may wish to include some personal information about yourself and your family. The following is a guide you may wish to use to give direction to your writing. However, it is only a guide. The letter should be typed on 8½" x 11" white paper and follow the format for a standard letter. Please do not fold the letter or seal it in an envelope. They will all be sent together. You are encouraged to speak your mind and heart. You might find it helpful to review any notes that you might have taken before or after your meeting with you sponsor. The completed letter should either be handed in to the school office or the parish office. Because the letters are mailed to the bishop together, it is important to meet the deadline of **Jan. 11th**. This will give the bishop sufficient time to read all of them.

Date

Dear Bishop Bartosic,

- \* Introduce yourself: tell something about yourself, your parish name, your school, your family
- \* State why you wish to be confirmed and what you have done to prepare for Confirmation
- \* Mention gifts or talents that you see yourself using in service for others or how you used them in your service opportunities
- \* State how you see this as the beginning of a process for continuing to learn and grow in the Catholic Faith—this is just one step in the process: you could speak to how you see yourself continuing to be active in the Church through regular attendance of Mass, participating in ACTION, the parish high school group, working on service projects
- \* Possible ways to close your letter
  - thank the bishop for taking time to read your letter
  - mention how you are looking forward to meeting him and celebrating the sacrament with him
  - promise him your prayers and ask that he pray for you during these final days of preparation.

Sincerely,  
(Your Signature)

Your Name Typed

## Expectations of Confirmation Candidates

- \* Attend the parent and candidate informational meeting
- \* Attend and fully participate in all learning sessions
- \* Participate in the Rite of Enrollment
- \* Choose a sponsor and provide your sponsor with the sponsor materials
- \* **Set times and dates for conversations with your sponsor on the themes found in the candidate and sponsor folders**
- \* Participate in service opportunities  
(Twelve hours should be done within the parish & twelve hours should be done within the broader community.)
- \* Participate in Sunday Eucharist (Mass) and strive to develop a habit of daily personal prayer
- \* Decide on a Confirmation name
- \* Complete the "Information for Confirmation Record" form
- \* Write a saint report
- \* **Write a letter to the bishop**
- \* Prepare for your interview by reflecting on your desire to be confirmed, reviewing the basic beliefs and traditions of the Catholic faith, thinking about your service experiences, and deciding how you will continue to grow in faith and follow Christ after Confirmation
- \* Participate in an interview with an adult of the parish
- \* Celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation
- \* Attend and fully participate in the Confirmation Retreat
- \* Attend the practice for Confirmation
- \* Celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation
- \* Continue to live as a follower of Jesus and active member of the Church

## SERVICE HOURS

Confirmation calls us to a life of service for our brothers and sisters. It is important for Confirmation candidates to form a habit of service and to demonstrate this through concrete activities. Such service is not new to many candidates; however, the record keeping during the time of preparation highlights this habit in their lives. Many of you have been about service within the school community, the PREP/RE community, and the larger Saints Joseph and Francis Xavier parish community for many years. We encourage you to continue helping in areas that need your service within the various parish communities. Opportunities for service will be sent via

e-mail and we encourage you to contact the person listed in the e-mail for further information or to sign up.

Candidates are asked to do a minimum of 24 hours of service, twelve within the parish and twelve outside the parish. Please record the type of activity that you did. This helps us make new contacts with people and services that need our help. It also helps match candidates' gifts and interests with particular needs. Parents are encouraged to contact Dani Froelich or Dana McKenna if help is needed in any of the many service projects that so many of you are involved in either within or outside the parish. You are a wonderful example to the youth of our parish!

The record of service hours is due to your Catechist by **Feb. 21<sup>st</sup>**.

**SERVICE RECORD**  
**OF** \_\_\_\_\_

(Name of Candidate)

We invite you to take time after your service opportunity to reflect on what you are learning about yourself and others through this experience and to share that with your sponsor or parents.

**DATE**      **# OF HOURS**      **ACTIVITY**      **PARENT'S**  
**SIGNATURE/Initials**


**DATE**      **# OF HOURS**      **ACTIVITY**      **PARENT'S SIGNATURE/Initials**


Due in Parish or School Office by January 10, 2020

**SAINTS JOSEPH and FRANCIS XAVIER PARISH - WILMETTE**

**INFORMATION for CONFIRMATION RECORD**

CANDIDATE INFORMATION

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Name as on Baptismal Certificate**

Last \_\_\_\_\_ First \_\_\_\_\_ M/F  
(Circle one)

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
(Street) (City) (State) (Zip)

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Mother's Name (include maiden name) \_\_\_\_\_

Father's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Check One (x)

St. Francis School  St. Francis PREP (Parish Religious Education Program)

St. Joseph Religious Education  Other

**Candidate's Baptismal Certificate**

On file at Ss. Joseph and Francis Xavier Parish  Ss. Joseph and Francis Xavier Parish needs a copy.

SPONSOR INFORMATION (sponsor needs to be 16 years of age)

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
(First Name) (Last Name)

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
(Street) (City) (State) (Zip)

Cell Number \_\_\_\_\_

CONFIRMATION NAME

I have chosen the name \_\_\_\_\_ for Confirmation.

CELEBRATION: If any of the following applies please check (x) and give names.

Candidate is related to another candidate \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsor is parent of another candidate \_\_\_\_\_

Parent is sponsor of another candidate \_\_\_\_\_

Have a priest guest. \_\_\_\_\_

Need handicap seating if possible \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE USE SIGN UP GENIUS (IT WILL BE POSTED JANUARY 8)**

**TO SELECT YOUR FIRST CHOICE FOR THE CELEBRATION**

SFX Church 10:00 AM 2:00PM March 7, 2020 SJ Church 1:30 March 8

***Due in Parish or School Office by January 10, 2020***

