What is Confirmation?

*Confirmation is a sacramental outpouring of the Holy Spirit that leaves a permanent imprint on the soul, completes Christian initiation, and empowers us to be witnesses to Christ (see CCC 1302-1305).*

Sacraments, we have been taught, are “outward/visible signs of inward/invisible graces.” For the Sacrament of Confirmation:

The physical sign is that of an anointing, a sealing with the Holy Spirit, are:

- We *see* the bishop’s hand raise in anointing.
- The confirmandi feels and smells the chrism.
- We *hear* the bishop proclaim, “Be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit.”

The spiritual graces that accompany this outpouring of the Holy Spirit are:

- It affirms our identity as children of God (‘divine filiation”).
- It unites us more firmly to Christ.
- It increases in us the Gifts of the Holy Spirit (Wisdom, Understanding, Knowledge, Good Counsel/Right Judgement, Fortitude/Courage, Piety/Reverence, and Fear of the Lord/Wonder & Awe).
- It strengthens our bond with the Church.
- It strengthens us to spread and defend the Faith by our words and actions, to be fearless witnesses to Christ and the power of the cross.
What can candidates do to prepare for Confirmation?

- Attend Mass at least every Sunday and Holy Day of Obligation. Mass is both the “source and summit” and the “sum and summary” of our Faith. At Mass, Christ offers himself to us in the Eucharist in a profound and unique way. If you have not been attending Mass regularly, there is no time like the present to start. If you have, see if you can find ways to be more fully engaged.

- Pray every day. It is difficult (impossible even!) to have a relationship with someone if you never talk to them and prayer is how we talk to God. If you are not in the habit of daily prayer, start by putting aside 5-15 mins. each day for you and the Lord. If you do pray daily, consider adding preparing for Confirmation to the things you talk to God about.

- Attend Reconciliation. Confirmation students are required to go at least once a year but you certainly can and are encouraged to go more often. Reconciliation is a beautiful opportunity to experience God's mercy in your life and to grow in your faith.

- Participate in class—come prepared, pay attention, contribute to discussions, ask questions, etc. The more you are engaged in the preparation process the more you are going to get out of it.

- Get involved in the parish/collaborative. One of the goals for the Confirmation activity requirements (again, you are encouraged to do more than the minimum) is to help you find your place in our parish community.

What can families do to support their candidates?

- Model Catholic living through participating in Mass, attending Reconciliation, praying, being involved in the parish/collaborative, etc. Study after study shows that the leading indicator of the strength of teen and young adult’s faith is the faith of their parents.

- Volunteer for Confirmation Classes, Confirmation Retreats, or Youth Ministry. Being involved in faith formation is a great way to show to your teen that this important, to be aware of what they are learning, and to learn a little yourself.

- Utilize the Chosen Parent Guide. Each week the guide has an overview of what is being covered in that week’s lesson and conversation starters related to that topic. Following up at home (be it in the car ride, over the dinner table, etc.) is a wonderful way to communicate that faith is not just something that goes on at church.