

Hello Parents and Sponsors,

Thank you for your dedication to these children who are candidates for Confirmation. Thank you for your desire to raise them in the Catholic faith. Thank you for all you have done so far to form them and lead them closer to Christ. Thank you also for the ways in which you will continue to mentor them as they grow into young men and women of God. In this moment, thank you most of all for how you have encouraged them to grow as disciples of Christ over the past two years of preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation.

The Week of Preparation is the final major push of their preparation. During this week, they will learn about the meaning of sacraments and the components within a sacrament, especially symbols, which contain layers of mystery and knowledge that make Christ present and real to us in our very human lives. They will learn about the sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist, and how the symbols of bread, water, and wine teach about who God is and share God's grace through the Holy Spirit. Finally, they will learn about Confirmation, that powerful sacrament of initiation whereby they declare to the world that they are a disciple of Christ and ask the Spirit to give them the grace to become an apostle, one who shares the message of the Gospel with the whole world.

**Here are the practicals:** The Week of Preparation is made up of five days worth of activities, prayers, conversation, and lessons that are all done at home. Some involve the whole family, the sponsor, or are done on their own by the Confirmation candidate. The website [saintraphael.org/week-of-prep](http://saintraphael.org/week-of-prep) will have all the details and links for that day's activities. The content can be done in order on any five days. It is best if they are done five days in a row so that it's easier to remember and build on the previous days' learning.

**You Matter:** Your involvement as a parent or sponsor is essential to making this week a growth opportunity for your Confirmation Candidate. Some of the parts of this week are led by you with your Confirmation Candidate. Just follow along with what is written on the paper. We don't expect you to have all the answers; we just ask that you are present and engaged in the content. Your Confirmation candidate needs role models like you who are showing them what it is like to live as a Catholic adult, as messy as that can sometimes be. Your dedication, enthusiasm, curiosity, and love will inspire them (even if they roll their eyes at you quite a lot 😊).

**Supplies:** Over the course of the week, your Confirmation Candidate will need access to some basic household supplies for various activities, prayers, and lessons. This includes: pen and paper, bread, a bowl of water, oil, and a Bible or access to an electronic copy of the Bible like the Laudate app or [uscgb.org/bible](http://uscgb.org/bible)

**On Day One**, your Confirmation candidate should familiarize themselves with [saintraphael.org/week-of-prep](http://saintraphael.org/week-of-prep) so they know where to do the online lessons. There is an introductory video for them to watch on the Week of Prep page. Then they should have an initial Discussion Time with you using the discussion time handout. **On days three, four, and five, there are four components to each day:**

- Family Liturgy of the Word (15 minutes),
- Online Lesson (45 minutes),
- Individual Activity (30 minutes),
- and Discussion time (20 minutes).

**You can see the description of each of these components here:**

**Family Liturgy of the Word:** This is a prayer time for the whole family. Bilingual instructions for this are in the packet. Feel free to pray in Spanish or English or a combination of the two. Each day of this Liturgy is designed to help deepen your Confirmation candidate's experience of the Mass of Confirmation by praying with a different part of the Mass and sacrament. We encourage you to debrief this activity with your family afterwards by asking questions like: What was your favorite moment of that prayer time? What was strange about it? What was God reading saying to you with that reading? If you lose the packet, you can also find an electronic version of it at [saintraphael.org/week-of-prep](http://saintraphael.org/week-of-prep)

**Online Lesson:** There are four online lessons for days three through five. They contain a video of a speaker teaching a lesson along with questions to answer as they go along. Whenever the speaker says that it is time to pause and answer a question, they should scroll down and answer it in the space provided below. Those lessons will be available each day at: [saintraphael.org/week-of-prep](http://saintraphael.org/week-of-prep)

**Individual Activity:** In this packet is a list of individual activities that can be done entirely offline. Each day, help your Confirmation candidate pick an activity from that list to do that you think would benefit them and that they would connect with. If you lose the list of activities in this packet, you can also find an electronic version of it at [saintraphael.org/week-of-prep](http://saintraphael.org/week-of-prep)

**Discussion Time:** After learning new things and praying in new ways, discussion time is a chance for the Confirmation candidate and a trusted adult to talk about the activities of the day and process how they are growing in faith. We encourage this conversation to happen between the sponsor/padrino/madrina and the Confirmation candidate. If that is not possible, the trusted adult could be a parent, grandparent, or another practicing Catholic role model that the Confirmation candidate knows and trusts.

I know that this is a lot to do, especially in the midst of the business of preparations for the beginning of a new school year, as well as all the strangeness of the time we are living in. If you have questions about the process, the technical aspects or the more spiritual aspects of preparation, feel free to reach out to me at any time. My contact information is below.

To give you motivation and perspective on what your Confirmation candidate is about to do, remember that the sacrament of Confirmation will literally leave a mark on their soul. Confirmation is a once-in-a-lifetime sacrament. Please pray for your Confirmation candidate to be open to the grace that the Holy Spirit wants to fill them with on Saturday, September 25th.

God Bless,

Veronica Bloemeke  
St. Raphael the Archangel Catholic Church  
[vripp@saintraphael.org](mailto:vripp@saintraphael.org)  
919-865-5726  
[saintraphael.org](http://saintraphael.org)