



Dear parents,

We are excited to share with you our unique and creative approach for preparing our young people for the Sacrament of Confirmation which we call *Encountering Christ*. Through this program we hope to see a deeper participation of our students in the life of their parish in addition to a richer understanding of the commitment to Confirmation. I would like to further share this process with you below.

The Church views the sacrament of Confirmation as a person's full initiation into the Catholic Church. This means that those who celebrate this sacrament are being asked to make a commitment to living as a disciple of Christ both within their parish community as well as in their daily lives. Unfortunately, some of our youth (and even more sadly, some parents) see Confirmation as simply graduation from Church. This is so contrary to the meaning of Confirmation and it says to me that we need to do a better job in communicating what is expected of someone who desires to be Confirmed.

For your son/daughter, Confirmation will be the most important step that they will make in their lives of faith thus far. If they are to take this commitment seriously, we (you as parents and us as a Church community) need to work together to guide and support them in order to help them to make a true and lasting commitment to Christ, a relationship that will have lasting effects throughout their lives.

With this in mind, our focus for the year will be to develop and deepen their relationship with Christ and the Church through "Encountering Christ". Confirmation sessions will be held **twice a month on Sundays at St. Anthony's** beginning with Mass at **11am** (with emphasis on reaching out to youth with contemporary music ministry and technology), followed by lunch (pizza) and a general or small group session in the church basement ending at **1:15pm**. Rather than a classroom setting, adults serving as mentors will assist me in the general and small group sessions sharing not only their knowledge of the faith but, even more importantly, being an example of the faith which our youth so desperately need.

Those who participate in the Confirmation program **are also expected to participate in the "Meet You at the Altar" program** by attending Mass each week and completing the weekly Mass journals. The weekly Mass journals are a vital component to this process, so we will be monitoring students' participation with these each week. Failure to consistently complete these weekly Mass journals may result in the delay of the reception of Confirmation.

Enclosed with this letter, you will find the following: The schedule for the 2021-2022 Faith Formation year, as well as **two (2)** applications which you will need to fill out: one for the student and one for the parents. These few questions will help me to get to know you and your son/daughter better and help to learn how we can better serve you through this process. As a note, the parent and student Confirmation applications take the place of the regular Faith Formation registration.

Once you have completed both applications (student and parent) I am asking that **each student, along with their parents meet with me** so that I may personally welcome all of you into the program, answer any questions you may have and give you further information about the year. In order to set up a meeting with me, please contact our main Parish Office at **508-548-0108** and speak with the secretary as they will have

my schedule of available times. This meeting, which will take place at the parish offices at St. Anthony's rectory, will need to take place **between now and the end of August** and will last no more than 20 minutes. **Please be sure to bring the completed applications with you to this meeting.** It is important to note that *no student* will be admitted into the program without the completion of both applications and meeting with me. Please do not wait until the fall to set up this meeting!

During our first session of the year on **Sunday, September 19**, students and parents will attend the 11am Mass together, and then will have an opportunity to meet with the student's mentor and to listen to an overview of the Confirmation: Encountering Christ program.

The program registration fee will be \$50 per student which replaces the regular Faith Formation registration fee. This registration fee will go to covering the cost for Confirmation robe rentals, food (pizza) for each session, and our retreat. No one will be denied participating in our program due to financial hardship. If you have any questions, please be sure to get in touch with Jonathan. Please make all checks payable to St. Joseph, Guardian of the Holy Family Parish (include "Faith Formation" in the memo line). You may also pay via online by visiting our website at www.falmouthcatholic.org/online-giving and click on the St. Anthony logo. If you have any questions about using Online Giving, please contact Dan Cunha, our Director of Business Operations, at office@falmouthcatholic.org.

It is our goal through the Confirmation program, to guide the youth to "encounter Christ" so that they will make a lifelong commitment to their faith. I hope it will engage the youth and be of support to you as their parents. I look forward to hearing from you and meeting with you and your son/daughter sometime over the summer.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rev. Msgr. Stephen J. Avila". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial 'S'.

Rev. Msgr. Stephen J. Avila, V.F.
Pastor