

**Christ the King Catholic  
Church**

**Sponsor Meeting**

**Congratulations!**

**Thank You....**

# What Do I Do Next?

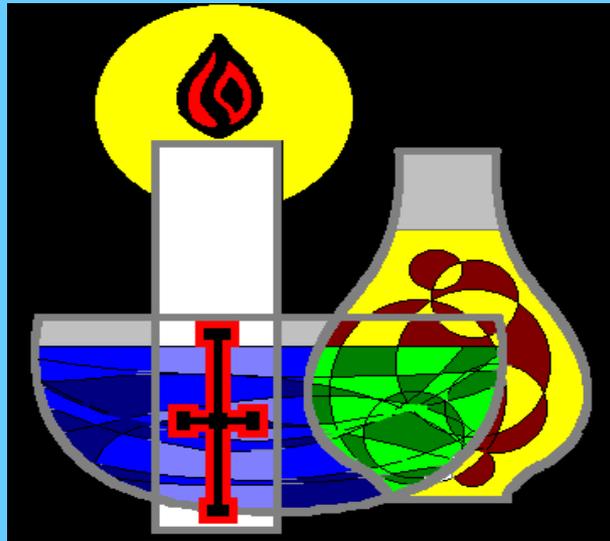
- What is the current understanding of the meaning of the Sacrament of Confirmation?
- How has it changed over the years?
- What is the Catholic teaching on faith formation and Sacramental Preparation?
- What is your role as Sponsor?
- What are the expectations of a sponsor at Christ the King Parish?
- Helpful hints in building a relationship between Candidate and Sponsor...

# Different Paradigms

The emphasis of the meaning has varied throughout history but the true meaning of Confirmation has always remained: *the graces of Baptism are deepened by the anointing of oils by the Bishop.*

# Early Christianity

- Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist were all conferred at the Easter Vigil and celebrated by the Bishop.



# Christianity Began to Spread

- The Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation were separated.
- The Bishop retained the authority of the Confirming of the Holy Spirit
- Priests were given the authority to Baptize
- The meaning of Confirmation remained the same: Confirmation strengthens and sustains the individual by the anointing of oil from the Bishop through the grace of the Holy Spirit to live a life in Christ. It was a way of deepening one's conversion.

# Through the Ages...



- The understanding of Confirmation remained constant.

# Until the Protestant Reformation



When the Protestant Reformation took place in the 1500's, the church defined the sacraments and its understanding of the meaning of the Sacraments more clearly due to the questioning of the validity of Sacraments during this period by those that split from the church.

- The importance of the role of the Sacraments in the life of a Christian needed to be defended. Remember, the general public understanding of the meaning took shape over time but the actual meaning has not changed.

# The Next 500 Years

## “Soldier of Christ” understanding

- From Baltimore Catechism to pre-Vatican II
- When we receive the Holy Spirit we get a “piece of God” that wasn’t given to us yet at baptism
- We were now ready to take on a particular role in the Church
- We were now ready to defend the Church
- Some suggest we have lost too much of this



# Rite of Passage

- We become “adult Catholics”
  - An example of this school of thought is that a person is now old enough to accept the faith for themselves.

# Journey of Faith

- Current Paradigm
- Patterned after the Rite of Christian Initiation
- There is a deeper welcoming into the larger Catholic community and a continued effort to deepen one's understanding of our faith. The Sacrament of Confirmation increases and deepens the graces of the Holy Spirit.

# Confirmation within the Context of a Lifelong Journey

- a). It is one of the three Sacraments of Initiation along with Baptism and Eucharist and was originally done following Baptism and before Eucharist in the ancient baptismal rite. This has been restored for those joining the Catholic Church in the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults
- b) It still “confirms” the reception of the Holy Spirit at Baptism. c) It has been in the Catholic Tradition since the beginning of Christianity, although the reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation has been received at different ages throughout history
- d) It marks another step in the journey of their faith life

# Role of the Sponsor

- Spokesperson and Christian role model, one who could vouch for the candidate and help the candidate on their journey
- Adult role model for children being confirmed which has through the years been somewhat reduced to an honorary title; it became simply a ceremonial event with little participation
- Today: a sponsor should be one who represents, on behalf of the greater Catholic community, in welcoming candidates into a deeper initiation. Talk about your faith and your involvement in your parish community.

# Role of the Sponsor

- A sponsor should be a companion on the journey toward a deeper initiation into the community.
- This is also recognizing that the sponsor has not yet reached Christian perfection.
- We recognize that we are weak, but through the grace of the Holy Spirit we can become stronger.
- We are able to show the Candidates that our faith sustains us.



# Adolescent Spirituality

There are three main stages in one's faith development

- Experienced –learning prayers, identifying with being Catholic through gestures, attending Mass, and religious symbols

- **Affiliative Faith-Middle to Junior High years**
  - The start of making the faith interior and perhaps asking life's big questions. i.e. Why is there suffering? Why are there many different religions?
- **Owned Faith-I am who I am because of my Catholic faith**

# Expectations of a Sponsor

*The Apostolic Constitution on the Sacrament of Confirmation* describes three activities for sponsors to perform.

- Sponsors must be full members of the Christian community and mature persons
- Help the Candidate fulfill their baptismal promises-understanding their faith

# Expectations of a Sponsor

- Present them to the bishop for the anointing



# Building A Relationship with Your Candidate

- Engage in “one-minute ministry”
- Let the Candidate lead and teach you
- Share what is, rather than create what isn't. Take advantage of what is already going on in your lives.
- Share some God-talk
- Take time with the Bible. Share with them some of the more favorite Bible verses that have helped you grow in your faith

# Helping Your Candidate Grow in Their Faith

- Pray for your Candidate
- Involve your family in praying for them even if it is a recited prayer
- Attend programs related meetings/offer rides/go to dinner or get ice-cream before
- Attend parish activities together-Mass, dinners, soup and stations
- Do service work together with them.
- Help them with the content of the material they are covering in their Catechesis

# Helping Your Candidate Grow in Their Faith

- Enrich your own faith life
  - Attend a parish Lenten opportunity

Being a Sponsor will be a challenge, but it is a gift. Look it as an opportunity to nurture the Faith of the young Candidate and by doing that, allowing our Church to grow and be the way God wants it to be.



