

A word on our 2-year Confirmation Preparation Program:

Regarding **Confirmation Preparation**, the Church insists: *Preparation for Confirmation should aim at leading the Christian toward a more intimate union with Christ and a more lively familiarity with the Holy Spirit - his actions, his gifts, and his biddings - in order to be more capable of assuming the apostolic responsibilities of Christian life. To this end catechesis for Confirmation should strive to awaken a sense of belonging to the Church of Jesus Christ, the universal Church as well as the parish community. The latter bears special responsibility for the preparation of confirmands.*¹

The Church reminds us that “one of the highest responsibilities of the people of God is to prepare the baptized for confirmation. Pastors have a special responsibility to see that all the baptized reach the completion of Christian initiation and therefore that they are carefully prepared for confirmation.”² The team here at our Sacred Heart/St. Thomas More Collaborative takes this “special responsibility” with great seriousness.

By instituting our Family Faith Formation program last year we have begun to move away from the old “religious education” model. Instead, we are striving to offer the best forms of *Catechesis* for each candidate seeking to be confirmed, as the Church asks of us. And as Pope St. John Paul II reminded us, “the definitive aim of catechesis is to put people not only in touch but in communion, in intimacy, with Jesus Christ...”³

This is even more so the case with Confirmation Preparation. The aim of every Confirmation program is to not only educate our Confirmation candidates but to *put them in touch, communion and intimacy with Christ, to lead them toward a more intimate union with Him.* In order to be prepared for the fruitful reception of the sacraments, the candidate and the whole Christian community works together so that there is proper disposition and preparation. This means both an active participation in the sacramental life and a proper period of preparation, catechesis, retreat and development of a true relationship with the Lord.

We are immensely supportive of and grateful for our families who sacrifice much to provide a Catholic school education for their children. Many of our parishioners have the extra opportunity to study religion at school. This, however, does not take the place of catechesis and sacramental retreat and preparation. Rather, it supports it.

Reflecting on the Holy Father’s call to a New Evangelization and Cardinal Seán’s pastoral letter to “Disciples in Mission,” our pastoral team has continued to grow on the good works of the past, while developing changes to move us forward with a comprehensive sacramental program. Our Confirmation program is a **two-year formation program. The program is open to those entering the 9th grade.** It is a program of forming disciples requiring active participation in the in the celebration of the sacraments.

¹ Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1309

² Rite of Confirmation (CCL), 890

³ Catechesi Tradendae, 5

If you have yet to register yourself and your 9th grader for this upcoming year, we would ask that you please do so on either the Sacred Heart or St. Thomas More website. We appreciate your cooperation and support as we strive to live up to call of disciples of Jesus Christ.