

July 1, 2022

Dear Catholic Parents/Guardians,

As we approach a new scholastic year, I assume you have registered your eighth-grade son or daughter for the Confirmation Program at St. Luke Parish. If you have not done so already, register online at <https://www.stluke.org/worship/sacraments>. However, before you register your child for the sacrament, please read this letter and review the Confirmation Handbook that is provided. It's important to note that there are certain requirements and expectations during this year of sacramental preparation.

Please note on your calendars that we have a mandatory orientation meeting for parents of eighth-grade students on **Thursday, September 8, at 6:30 p.m.**, at St. Luke Church. The location of the meeting will be publicized in August. The orientation should answer all the questions you may have regarding the Confirmation Program. This meeting is only for the parents.

As you know, the Church teaches us that baptism is the first sacrament Christians receive. As such, it is the "basis of the whole Christian life" (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1213). Baptism gives sanctifying grace, which begins the divine life within the soul (see Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1266). We know that baptism **begins** the spiritual life but we also believe that Confirmation "**brings an increase and deepening of baptismal grace.**"

The increase in the spiritual life is closely related to the special strength poured out by the Holy Spirit on the individual at Confirmation. Confirmation unites that person more firmly to Christ, increases the gifts of the Holy Spirit within him or her, and binds him or her more perfectly to the Church. In addition, it gives the baptized Catholic the grace to bear witness to the Faith and to act a witness to Jesus Christ (see Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1303).

At your child's baptism, you made a promise to God to raise your child as a Catholic. Thank you for educating your child in the Faith at home, enrolling him at St. Luke Catholic School or Sunday Morning Religious Education (SMRE). Your decision to share the richness of our Catholic faith at home and provide your child with a formal Catholic education means that you have taken your commitment seriously. We hope that your child is also beginning to live out his or her Catholic faith in practical and meaningful ways. This will help your child in making an informed choice to be confirmed in 2023.

There are a number of expectations during the Confirmation Program that will be discussed at the upcoming parent meeting. **However, one important expectation that I want to emphasize in this communication is that during this year of sacramental preparation parents need to actively encourage their children to worship at Mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation.**

From the earliest days of the Church, it was understood by believers that Catholic Christians are called to live in a community of faith. While all of us should privately worship of God during the week, our primary form of worship is public and communal, which is why Sunday Mass is so important.

Unless there are extenuating circumstances, such as illness or caring for a sick person, Catholics are obliged to go to Mass on Sundays. Note that the obligation to go to Mass is binding under the penalty of grave or mortal sin.

Apart from the obligation to worship God, I want to stress that going to Mass and receiving the Eucharist and going to confession regularly are critical to the spiritual formation of your son or daughter, especially during this year of preparation for Confirmation.

How can a Catholic adolescent bear witness to the Catholic Faith and act as a witness to Jesus Christ when Eucharistic worship, which is the soul of the Christian life, remains only a vague idea that is mentioned in religion class or in passing during a conversation?

I look forward to seeing you at the **September 8** meeting for parents. Again, if you want to register your son or daughter for Confirmation, go to <https://www.stluke.org/worship/sacraments>.

If you prefer to print off the registration sheet, please feel free to fill it out, enclose a check and send it to me at the parish office.

Have a blessed remainder of the summer!

In the Lord of Life,  
Sister Diane Carollo, S.G.L.  
Director of Religious Education  
dcarollo@stluke.org