

My Confirmation Journey

Why do a journal...?

A journal is an opportunity for reflection. For any true spiritual growth to happen in our lives, we need to carve out the time and space to reflect. Journaling is one tool to help with this process. Journaling takes time—it isn't something we merely rush through. Its value is not in merely filling the pages in as quickly as we can in order to finish a task or assignment. Nor is a journal obsessed with spelling, grammar, or formal writing technique. Above all, a journal is for you and should fit your style and habit. This journal is a gift from your parish and an opportunity for you to grow closer to God. What you do with it is your gift to yourself and God. We will ask you to bring it with you to your Confirmation Interview, but only as a tool for you to share with the IHM Parish Representative in which you will be having a conversation with. You can choose to share as much or as little as you like from your journal. No one will ever read your journal, unless prompted by you to do so. May this journal be an opportunity for honest reflection in your life, and an avenue of discovering God's grace already present with you. "And Mary kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart."—Luke 2:19



This Journal belongs to: _____

Why do I want to be Confirmed...?

There are many reasons we may want to be Confirmed—curiosity, a desire to grow in faith, parental or peer pressure, or many other reasons. It’s “okay” if you are feeling a mixture of all of these things right now. God knows our hearts and takes us where we are. All sacraments, including Confirmation, are ultimately God’s gifts to us and an invitation from God to draw closer to us, and us to God. None of us have perfect desires or motivations—God only asks for an openness in our hearts, however mixed or small that might be.

We’re including several pages in your journal for this essay, with the hope that you will stop and reflect on this question often throughout these next several months as you prepare for your Confirmation. Perhaps you could journal at the very beginning when you turn in your letter of candidacy; then again around Christmas time after you have been speaking more with your parents, Sponsor, and friends; and maybe once more sometime after your Confirmation retreat and/or shortly before you receive the sacrament. It will be interesting for you to see how your desires, thoughts, and feelings grow or change during this process. By journaling and writing down these things, it will give you more opportunity for prayer and reflection on how God is working in your heart and life. “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I dedicated you, a prophet to the nations I appointed you.”—Jeremiah 1:5

Why did I choose my Confirmation name...?

Often times throughout Scripture when God called someone, God changed their name as a symbol of their new mission or promise (Abram to Abraham—“father of many;” Jacob to Israel—“one who wrestles with God and men;” Simon to Peter—“rock;” etc.). Whether you kept your Baptismal name, or chose a new saint name for your Confirmation, why did you choose this name? What significance does it have for you? Who in Scripture or Christian tradition also held this name, and how might they be a role model for you?

As you journal on these responses, take some time to talk with your parents and ask them why they chose to name you what they did, and what significance it held for them. “I have called you by name: you are mine.”—Isaiah 43:1

Why did I choose my Sponsor...?

No one walks the life of faith alone. As the Scottish poet, John Donne famously remarked; “No [one] is an island, Entire of itself, Every [one] is a piece of the continent, A part of the main.” Spend some time reflecting on who you would like to ask to be your Confirmation Sponsor, and why. If you’ve already chosen your Sponsor, what makes them a good choice? What about this person inspires you or helps you to be a better follower of Jesus?

As you journal on these responses, consider writing your Sponsor a thank you note and including some of the things you wrote about them in your journal. “Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us rid ourselves of every burden and sin that clings to us- and persevere in running the race that lies before us while keeping our eyes fixed on Jesus, the leader and perfecter of faith.”—Hebrews 12:1-2

Which Gift of the Holy Spirit do I need most in my life right now, and why...?

By now, you have heard many times about the 7 Gifts of the Holy Spirit—Wisdom, Understanding, Right Judgment, Courage, Knowledge, Reverence, and Wonder & Awe. These 7 gifts were first described by the prophet Isaiah who was sharing with his audience that they would know God’s Messiah by these seven characteristics. (Isaiah 11:2-3) Would people recognize Christ in us by our words and actions? In Baptism, we are clothed in Christ (which comes from the Greek for the Hebrew word meaning Messiah). The Hebrew word for Messiah, literally means “anointed one.” In Confirmation, you are anointed with oil and gifted with the Holy Spirit, increasing these 7 gifts begun at your Baptism so that you can be Christ’s ongoing presence in our world today! As you prepare for your Confirmation, which gift(s) do you most need or desire? Why?

As you journal on these responses, say a prayer to the Holy Spirit asking for any and all gifts you need to better serve God and others. Consider putting a post-it note near your mirror or somewhere else you look at frequently to remind you of these gifts. “In the same way, the Spirit too comes to the aid of our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit itself intercedes with inexpressible groanings.”—Romans 8:26

What questions do I have about my Catholic faith...?

Whether you are just starting the process for your Confirmation, or whether you are looking at this journal entry 3 months after your Confirmation, you probably have a lot of questions about your Catholic Christian faith, and life in general—which is perfectly normal! In fact, authentic spirituality has more to do with asking good questions than it does in knowing simple answers. It’s okay to ask questions, and even to have some doubts. As St. Anselm encourages us, the spiritual life boils down to “faith seeking understanding.” Spend some time throughout your Confirmation journey journaling about any questions you may have about your faith. Some may be simple, and fairly easy to find the answers to. Others may not. Try to remember that God is ultimately a Mystery beyond our human comprehension to fully understand. But just because we can’t fully understand Love, doesn’t mean we can’t experience It and embrace It. Don’t forget—Confirmation is NOT Graduation from the religious life, BUT rather Initiation into a lifelong Mystery of God’s love and grace!

As you journal on these questions, say a prayer to the Holy Spirit asking for enlightenment. Consider researching your questions in the Catechism of the Catholic Church, as well as discussing them with your parents and Sponsor. “Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.”—Matthew 7:7

Let's ask ourselves:

***are we open to the Holy Spirit,
do we pray to the Holy Spirit
to enlighten us,
to make us more sensitive
to the things of God?***

***This is a prayer
we need to pray every day:***

***Holy Spirit,
may my heart be open
to the Word of God,
may my heart be open to good,
may my heart be open
to the beauty of God,
every day.***

Pope Francis

Come Holy Spirit

