

St. Theresa of the Child Jesus  
1230 Merle Hay Road  
Des Moines, IA 50311-2098

March 21, 2024

Dear Confirmation Parents and Sponsors,

Hopefully, you are all witnessing the final stages of a rewarding preparation for Confirmation. Please read all of the following information and keep it for future reference.

Confirmation takes place in the context of Mass. Mass will be said by the Bishop and proceed as normal. Bishop will deliver the homily, which is a lead-in to the celebration of Confirmation. After the homily, the congregation will join the Confirmation candidates in Renewal of Baptismal Vows. The Bishop then extends his hands over the confirmands (candidates) and prays that they will receive the Holy Spirit. Following this prayer, the confirmands and sponsors come forward before the bishop, one pew at a time. The sponsor stands behind and places his/her hand on the candidate's shoulder as the bishop anoints each candidate's forehead with sacred chrism and places his hands on the candidate's head saying, "Be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit." This is followed by a handshake. Candidates and sponsors go back to the pews via the side aisles.

After this, Mass continues as usual. Notice that the sacraments of initiation are all remembered or celebrated...Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist.

Parents, candidates and sponsors, here is some other information you need to know:

- Practice will be Sunday, April 7 12-1:30 pm in the church
- Please be in the Parish Hall (church basement) on Wednesday, April 10 at 5:30 p.m. for Confirmation. This will allow the time needed for Bishop to talk to candidates, and candidates to return to their assigned pew before Mass starts.
- The "pew assignments" will be determined in a random ("pulling names out of a hat") method. This will be communicated to families and sponsors April 1. Every family will get one pew the candidate and sponsor will be sitting on the pew. There will be additional seating around the church that will serve as overflow seating.
- Sponsors will sit next to candidates during Confirmation on the inside section of pew closest to the center aisle.
- Sponsors, you will accompany your candidate as each one, one pew at a time, presents himself/herself, to the Bishop. You will put your right hand on their right shoulder at that time. While in the pews, either before or after, remain seated so that the congregation will be able to see as much as possible.

- A cookie and lemonade type of reception will be held in the Parish Hall following Confirmation Mass.
- There will be a large group picture taken after the Confirmation Mass is over, Megs will get one group picture then allow for families to take a group picture and then we line up in the center aisle for pictures with the Bishop.
- You may take pictures of your candidate with the Bishop after Mass in the church. Please line up in an orderly fashion and be efficient with having the cameras ready as each candidate (with family or sponsor) quickly poses with the Bishop and has their picture taken. There will be a core team member to help with this process.
- No video cameras in the church during the Mass and Confirmation, please.
- Confirmation certificates will be the final April 17 session.

The following year this was added to the dress code.

- **Appropriate Attire:** Dress should always be appropriate when we are in church. We are in the presence of God in the house of the Church, God's people. Since the Rite of Confirmation is a Sacrament that occurs only once in a lifetime with the diocesan bishop as celebrant, a certain dress code should apply to all candidates, sponsors, and liturgical ministers (lectors, servers, extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion). Candidates, sponsors, and ministers should wear proper semi-formal attire similar to clothing for other important life events. Please review what acceptable dress is for both male and female candidates and sponsors with your local parish confirmation coordinator. Below is a sample list of appropriate attire:
- **Females:** A dress or suit is preferred. Dresses and skirts should extend to the knee. Tops, slacks or suits of any color are fine. Shoulders should be completely covered front and back. Tops must completely cover the stomach. Formal ethnic or cultural vesture is also appropriate.
- **Males:** A suit, or blazer and slacks, with a dress shirt, tie, and dress shoes is preferred. Dress shirt hems should be tucked in, not hanging out. Ties, dress shirts, coats and slacks of any color are okay. Pants should come to the waist and over the hips. Formal ethnic or cultural vesture is also appropriate.
- We will not be having exit interviews this year.

This letter is probably not all-encompassing. Please call me or email me if you have questions or are in need of clarity.

God Bless us all,

Megs Howes, Youth Minister