



PARISH OF OUR LADY AND THE SAINTS OF GUERNSEY

Diocese of Portsmouth Registered Charity No: 246871

22nd June 2017

Dear Parents

We warmly welcome any young people from the Parish who will be at least 13 years old on **1st September 2017** term to join the preparation course leading to them receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation in Spring 2018. We also welcome you as you join and support them on this latest stage of the faith journey together.

The Sacrament of Confirmation completes the Sacraments of Initiation, which are Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist. As it mentions in the Youth Catechism: "*Baptism joins us to Christ. Confirmation gives us his Spirit*" (YOUCAT 193).

Confirmation perfects Baptismal grace. It is the Sacrament which gives us the Holy Spirit in order to root us more deeply as children of God, incorporate us more firmly into Christ, strengthen our bond with the Church, associate us more closely with her mission, and help us to bear witness to the Christian faith in words accompanied by deeds.

As Christians, we believe that Baptism opens the life of grace within us and so is a requirement for anyone wishing to receive any of the other sacraments.

You will note on the Registration form, a copy of the Confirmation Candidate's baptismal certificate is *required to be included with your submitted registration* (unless your child was baptised in the Parish). If your child has not yet been baptised, or if they have been baptised in another Christian denomination and they still wish to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation in 2018, please contact the Parish Office to speak to set up an appointment with Father Michal to discuss the possibility and/or need for baptism.

All candidates wishing to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation in Spring 2018 must complete the full course that will be running in the Parish from September 2017. The course will be run on Thursday evening during term time in the Parish Hall between 7:00pm and 8:00pm. In addition, there will be a retreat weekend during Lent 2018 and other occasional additional days or sessions to reflect the Liturgical Year and so help your child gain a full and deep understanding of the faith they are asking to be confirmed into.

As it is essential for each young person to complete the whole course, it will not be possible for candidates to join the course part way through unless there are exceptional reasons (e.g. where a family moves to the Island and their child had already commenced a similar course in their old Parish). In such cases, you should contact Father Michal in the first instance to discuss your situation.

Candidates are required to attend the course regularly and complete any tasks set as part of their preparation and to attend Mass each Sunday and on Holy Days of Obligation. There will also be a requirement for the candidates to receive the Sacrament of Penance regularly, at least once a month. Whenever possible, one of the priests of our Parish will be available to hear confessions after the weekly session.

As in previous years, all candidates will be provided with a card which they will need to ask the priest saying the Mass they attend to sign. Please remember that if you are away on holiday, the priest saying Mass where you are visiting will be happy to sign the card. These cards will be checked periodically by either Father Michal or a member of the team delivering the programme.

As a parent or guardian your role is central to your child's preparation. You must support and encourage your child and to assist them in every way to commit to this next stage of their faith journey which will culminate in Bishop Philip confirming them next year. At Baptism, a child's parents are blessed as they are "*the first and best teachers of the faith*". The team delivering the Confirmation programme can only do so much and cannot properly prepare your child for this great Sacrament without your support and prayers. You will always be your child's first and best teacher of our Catholic faith. For this reason, please do not hesitate to speak to one of our priests or to email the Confirmation team if you have any questions about the programme. Between us, we will do our very best to answer your questions.

If you wish to make this commitment, please completed and return the attached application and return it to the Parish Office no later than Sunday 27th August 2017. Forms may be emailed to the Parish Office using the confirmation@catholic.org.gg email address.

There is a course fee of £30.00 per candidate to cover all materials, including handbooks for the Candidate, you as Parents and your child's Sponsor, refreshments, meals during the retreat, etc. The fee should be included with your application for. Cheques should be made payable to (PRCDTR)

Please do not hesitate to contact Father Michal (who will be overseeing the Confirmation Programme) or email confirmation@catholic.org.gg if you have any questions or require more information.

Confirmation Preparation Team
Parish of Our Lady and the Saints of Guernsey