



Cathedral of St. Jude the Apostle

Cathedral Parish and School of the Diocese of St. Petersburg

Dear Parents and Guardians,

I cannot believe that it has been one month since we first met for our Confirmation class. We are excited to meet again this Thursday evening starting at 6:00 PM and ending at 7:30 PM. We appreciated everyone arriving between 5:45 and 5:55 so that we could start on time. We also appreciated everyone meeting us at 7:30 in the parish hall.

Before we get into specifics for this month's class there are a few pieces of information, described below, that we need from you all. If you have already turned in some or all of these elements, great! If you are missing some, we will fix that! You can also email the office at Office@cathedralofstjude.org for more information or to see what you may be missing.

- Permission forms (which includes photo release, medical forms, Covid waiver, and a permission slip for our retreat weekend at the Bethany Center.) I have attached copies for you to print and fill out prior to class. If that isn't an option, please plan to arrive early (5:45 or so) on Thursday night as we will have extra forms and a notary to help finalize all documents.
- We need records of baptism and first communion. If your child received these sacraments at St Jude, great! We just need to know roughly what month and year for each. If not, please let us know which Church and roughly what month and year the sacraments were administered.
- Confirmation registration and supplies fee of \$100. If there is a need for financial assistance to cover this fee, please contact Anne Koster at AKoster@cathedralofstjude.org. Payment can be turned into the office or brought on Thursday.

As promised, I want to provide you all with a quick look into what Thursday evening will entail in the hopes that you will be able to ask your child some follow up questions about our class. **Just a reminder, this is all top secret! These notes are for your benefit and not to be shared until after the class!**

Head, shoulders, knees, cup!

We are going to start our evening off with a challenge where students will face off head to head in a game similar to rock, paper, scissors. Each round will have winners and losers. Winners advance to play other winners. Those who lose will now be on a team

with the person that beat them and be their cheerleader. This continues until we have only one winner and the rest of the group is cheering for that person.

Take-away: First, this game is a lot of fun and high energy. It will be a great ice breaker to start off our evening. Second, the teaching behind it is that there are times where we don't always succeed. Do we grow bitter and give up? At the end of the game, we are all on the same team as the winner. Can we look around and celebrate other victories happening in our schools, families, friendships, and faith community? How can we relate that to our lives and our faith?

Building a Puzzle

We will start our night off by building a puzzle in teams. It's a hard puzzle! It's made harder because each person will have a series of limitations and roles to help contribute in assembling the puzzle. Depending on our numbers, we should have teams of 8-12 people and each of the following roles will have 2-3 people assigned to them.

- Visionary – They are the only people who can see what the puzzle will end up looking like. They are not allowed to speak other than using the words “yes” or “no”.
- Questioner – They are the only ones allowed to speak. However, they are only allowed to ask “yes” or “no” questions. They may not touch any pieces.
- Architect – They are the ones building the puzzle and are the only ones allowed to touch the puzzle pieces and tape. They are not allowed to speak.
- Artist – They are the ones responsible for coloring in the puzzle. They are only allowed to touch the puzzle once it completed and needs to be colored. They are not allowed to speak.

Take-away: Last month, we learned how to juggle. We learned how to navigate the many things being thrown at us in life, as well as how to assist others in need. This month, we are switching gears to focusing on building something. Life is a puzzle. The end result is unclear to us. Yet, through good mentors (i.e. Confirmation Sponsors and Saints) and using gifts from God, we can start to piece things together in such a way that a beautiful design is made.

We are going to be building off this activity to tie in 3 areas leading us towards Confirmation:

1. The Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit which they will be receiving at Confirmation
2. The importance of a sponsor and how to pick one
3. Picking a Saint for Confirmation that your child hopes to connect with more.

Each child will be receiving a copy of the book “Decision Point”. This is a very interactive text that will shed some light on the faith and especially the Sacrament of Confirmation. In our remaining classes and our upcoming retreat, we will be using this text to assist us. My plan is to mainly focus on chapters 8, 10, 11, and 12 during the rest of our time

together. That will leave a lot of material to be discovered by you and your child on your own. This is that “Theo Huxtable” element of Confirmation that I discussed at our parents’ session in January: we can only cover so much in our 90 minutes per month together, yet there is still so much to discover on our own!

Please bring this text to all remaining classes and our retreat.

Homework

Last month, I gave your family homework: (try to) go to Mass one more time than usual, go to Edge youth ministry at least once, and watch more TV. I hope those were fruitful and helpful. I encourage you to keep those challenges going.

For this month:

1. Your child needs to start identifying who they want to choose for their sponsor. The sponsor needs to be a Catholic who has received the Sacraments of Baptism, Reconciliation, First Communion, and Confirmation and still practices the faith. You should have received a form at our parents meeting, but just in case, it is attached. You can send this to office@cathedralofstjude.org or bring it to our class on March 24th.
2. Your child needs to identify who they want to choose as their Saint for Confirmation. We will be asking each child to submit a mini report explaining their choice. The report should be about one page long. The report needs to cover two areas: what is special about this Saint (what did they do that was cool, holy, or different) and how do you hope to use the example of this Saint to live your life after Confirmation?

*Please know that this report won’t be graded and isn’t done to help me prepare for Confirmation...it’s to help your child prepare for the Sacrament! They should have fun researching and thinking about why they want to select that Saint. It will also be due at our next class on March 24th.

Stay tuned, next week I will send out an email preparing for the retreat on March 19-20 at the Bethany Center. That email will focus less on what we are doing, and more on the important times, locations, and what to bring.

Thank you for all that you do as parents and parishioners!

Ryan

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