

ST. JOSEPH PARISH AND SCHOOL – JUNE 24, 2018

Dear Families and Parishioners,

Today the people of God celebrate the human herald of Jesus, John the Baptist. The message of John the Baptist is to open your mind to the new message that Jesus will bring and to live in a righteous way so as to deserve a home with God in his eternal realm. John, the harbinger for Jesus, is so important in our Christian history that the church celebrates the Feast of John the Baptist even when it takes place on Sunday. That is why the Mass today is for the Feast of John the Baptist in place of the ordinary Sunday Mass.

The Sacrament of Confirmation: Saturday, April 6th, 2019

The Sacrament of Confirmation for all parishes in Portage County will take place at St. Columba Cathedral on Saturday April 6, 2019. Portage County Deanery comprised of nine parishes including St. Joseph Parish, Randolph, decided to have a common Confirmation service at the Cathedral of St. Columba on April 6, 2019. Combining the Sacrament of Confirmation for all the parishes of Deanery is a good idea in my mind. Hopefully, our young students will get to meet other young students outside their own normal realm.

The Sacrament of Confirmation is God's sacred way of bonding with us. This is sacrament in which the Holy Spirit, the Third Person of the Trinity, bonds with each individual. Pentecost again!

The Holy Spirit seems remote when compared with the image of God the Father and the human person of Jesus. We all have an image of father. God the Father is invoked often with our common prayer, The Our Father. The Gospels portray vividly Jesus who became human for us walked our planet and died. The Holy Spirit, on the other hand, is described as a gentle wind, as tongues of fire, or as a dove. One cannot get his arms around a breeze, nor can we understand tongues of fire or the presence of God like a dove.

The Holy Spirit, however, is the love of God and the force of God touching our Spirit. The Holy Spirit is our Advocate following the Ascension of Jesus into Heaven. How do we come to understand the Holy Spirit?

If the Holy Spirit is difficult for even adults to understand, consider how much more difficult for young people who do not have the age and experience of parents and grandparents. The corollary of this is very clear. If the parents are not involved in the Sacrament of Confirmation, the Sacrament itself will have little meaning for their children. Therefore, the parish intends to engage the parents even before the young people in preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation. Without the parents, the Sacrament of Confirmation will struggle to have its effect.

We shall publish in the bulletin the list of students eligible to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. This list may be incomplete and if you feel that your sons or daughters, (grade 8 through to college) have not received the Sacrament of Confirmation, please inform us and they will be added to the list.

In July we will call for a meeting of the parents of all those who wish to engage their children in Confirmation. Without your involvement, the Confirmation for your son or daughter cannot and will not take place. We will also continue to put items in the bulletin about the meaning of the Sacrament of Confirmation and trying to understand how the Holy Spirit works in our life in a daily manner. In the same way that we made the Sacrament of I'm Sorry more understandable and available, we shall attempt to do the same for the Sacrament of Confirmation. I need your help!!

Fr. Tom Acker, S.J.
June 24, 2018