

Robert J Porwoll
Coordinator for Confirmation
robporwoll@gmail.com
Tel. 773-540-8608

Dear All,

I am writing to welcome you to St Thomas the Apostle's program of instruction to prepare for the sacrament of Confirmation. The sacrament of Confirmation is a milestone in one's life of faith, a turning point in which the gifts of the Holy Spirit flow into our hearts and minds. We cease to be children and stand initiated as adults in full-standing in Christ's Body, the Church. Our program is entering its third year. I am joined by two fine instructors, Austin Walker and Luke Foster. We have a friendly and open-minded class where we tell the grand narrative of our faith. We invite the students to place themselves within that history, to take their role within God's plan of redemption. We also explore spiritual practices and the Church's yearly liturgical drama.

Students will have 3 responsibilities:

1. Attend each session.

There is no homework so our discussion and activities make up the bulk of the instruction.

2. Pick a Confirmation Sponsor

Like a godparent for Baptism, a sponsor is a faithful, practicing Catholic, whose model and mentorship the student will choose and value as they continue to mature.

Sponsors cannot be siblings or parents.

If sponsors are distant and cannot attend the Rite of Confirmation, a stand-in (or proxy) can be arranged.

3. Pick a Confirmation Name:

Though a baptismal name is chosen *for* a baby, those to be confirmed choose their own confirmation name.

Name can be chosen from the Bible or saints' names. The saints offer a wealth of wisdom and role-models in virtues.

Students should consider: Who would I like to imitate? Which saint's life or work reflects my interests, my hopes, my passions?

Many lists of saints with descriptions are online. A few include:

<http://www.catholic.org/saints/>

<https://catholicsaints.info/>

<https://www.franciscanmedia.org/patron-saints-for-modern-challenges/>

There will also be a short application form that we shall send on to register students in the class. Our course is built in two parts: September 24—December 3 (Sunday after Thanksgiving off); January 3—March 18. We will have a Teaching Mass and an afternoon retreat near the end of Lent at the nearby Holy Cross Monastery, whose Prior Peter Funk is a former parishioner and long-time friend of St Thomas the Apostle Church.

In Christ,

Robert