

St. Mark's Catholic Church

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THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION

March 18, 2021

Dear Parents of **Grade 7 and Grade 8** Students,

As you know, this past year has posed numerous challenges for all of us. We were only able to complete the 2019-2020 confirmation program on October 31, 2020, because places of worship were closed from March to June. Then in November, the government limited attendance at places of worship to only 10 (including the priest), no matter how small or large the building. This meant we did not celebrate public Masses. In addition, meetings were prohibited in churches, which meant we could not have preparation meetings for the students.

As of this Monday, March 15, we can now open at 15 per cent capacity—a big improvement—but in the grey lockdown zone, we are still not allowed to have meetings, such as the kind we normally have for confirmation preparation. In addition, there is talk that we have entered a “third wave” with cases numbers increasing, so we may face further restrictions.

All the same, as the school year is moving on, I would like to start registration for confirmation, with the hope of being able to have preparation classes and to celebrate the sacrament in June. Sacraments are received *within a parish*. They are *not* received “with the school”. Normally people receive the sacraments in their own parish. If you come to Mass to St. Mark's Church, and would like your son or daughter to be confirmed in our parish, then the procedure here is as follows. Students in **Grade 7 or older** (as well as any adults) need to register to receive this sacrament. To obtain a registration form, they have to attend one of our weekend Masses [**Saturday 5:00 p.m.; Sunday 8:30 a.m.; 10:00 a.m. (Polish); or 11:30 a.m.**], and see me at the Mass. **Your son or daughter must attend one of the weekend Masses in person to obtain the registration form from me.** They are to return it to me *at the Church*, with a photocopy of their baptismal certificate, *by Sunday, May 9.*

Students and parents must attend three (3) preparation meetings in the Church on Saturday mornings, from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., on June 5, June 12 and June 19, as part of the immediate preparation for Confirmation. Hopefully by June this will be permitted by the government.

The date for Confirmation is (tentatively, subject to government restrictions) set for **Saturday, June 26, at 5:00 p.m.** Please note that no photographs or videos are permitted during the Confirmation Mass. They are welcome afterwards, although no group photos are allowed inside the Church because of social distancing requirements. Masks need to be worn. There is no special dress requirement for this or any of the sacraments. What is important is the inner faith and preparedness of the person who wishes to be confirmed. At the same time, people should wear what is appropriate for Church. (Shoulders, for example, should be covered.)

Those to be confirmed should be showing their genuine commitment to the Catholic faith. This is done above all by daily prayer, and trying to live a holy life, obedient to God's commandments. The greatest prayer of all is the Mass. That is why Catholics should be attending Mass every week, unless unable to do so for health reasons. We pray that the Holy Spirit may indeed come down upon all of our young people in a very special way this year, and bestow his gifts upon them in abundance.

Sincerely yours in Our Lord,

(Rev.) Edward Koroway, Pastor