

# FAMILY NEWSLETTER

## Session 1 - Ask and you Shall Receive - The Gifts of the Spirit

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January 26, 2012

Dear Parents of Confirmation Candidates,

We've finally begun our confirmation programme! We have a wonderful group of facilitators who will guide you through this preparation process.

This is the first of six "family newsletters" you will be receiving this year as your son or daughter prepares to be confirmed here at St. John Chrysostom Parish. In these newsletters, I will keep you informed of what your sons and daughters are discussing in their small groups. As well, the newsletters will contain important reminders and information and they are my only way of communicating with families. **PLEASE READ THEM CAREFULLY AND MAKE NOTE OF ANY IMPORTANT ITEMS.**

### ✧ FIRST MEETING



This is what happened at your son or daughter's first meeting. After some initial ice breakers and an opening prayer, we discussed the fact that in choosing to be confirmed, candidates are seeking to complete their initiation into the Christian community. We talked about how they were first brought into membership in this community at baptism. We asked them to share with us what they hope for as they take this step. They did this by answering two questions: "What do you ask of God?" and "What do you ask of God's Church?" We explained that in the sacrament of Confirmation, candidates ask the Spirit of God to gift them with all that they need to live out their baptism. They reflected on why they need the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit in their lives today.

We also talked about how the church offers us support and guidance in our Christian life as well as how the young people have important gifts to offer and assist the church in its mission.

We would like you to continue to reflect as a family on the meaning of their initiation into the Christian community by doing the following activities.

### ✧ For Parents:

1. You, not your son or daughter, get to do the homework this time! Please complete Pages 14 & 15 in the journal "To Our Child" and share the answers with your son or daughter. Please note: this is the only time you will be asked to write in the journal. The journal is meant to be a personal, and, therefore, private, workbook for your son or daughter to reflect on their faith journey.

2. Pull out the family photos of your son or daughter's baptism and tell the story of that day. Tell them what happened? Who was there? How old were they? You might even consider inviting the godparents to dinner and making an evening of it.

✧ **For Candidates:**

1. Share with your parents what you talked about in the preparation session. Tell them what you said you were seeking from God and from God's church.
2. Write the letter to Father Ouellette telling him why you want to be confirmed. This should be brought to the next session.

✧ **REMINDERS**

**Cell Phones, iPods, Geiger Counters, Etc:** There is no need for any candidates to have their phones or music devices with them during their confirmation preparation sessions. Candidates will be asked to place these in a basket at the beginning of the meeting and will retrieve them once our sessions are complete. I ask that you please, please be considerate of your facilitators and comply with this small request.

**Rite of Call to Confirmation:** We will celebrate this Rite at every mass the weekend of **February 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>**. There is no need to tell me ahead of time, which mass you intend to attend. It would be great if sponsors could attend this with the candidates, but I do realize that this is not always possible.

**Schedules:** I have given you all revised copies of the Confirmation preparation schedules. The retreat dates have been added and a small correction regarding the date of the practice has been fixed. Remember candidates are expected to attend ALL of the meetings. If a candidate is seriously ill or had some other important reason to miss their meeting, please contact **me** at the office and I will make arrangements to have them make up the session at some other time. Please do **not** try to arrange this with your facilitator.

**Baptismal Certificates & Sponsor Names:** I am still missing a few baptismal certificates and sponsor names. Please get this information to me as soon as possible.

**Donations:** Finally, if you still wish to contribute your donation toward the cost of the programme, you are welcome to so at any time. If this is a financial hardship for you, please, know that we **only** ask you to contribute what you are able.

**Facilitators:** There are seventeen groups of candidates preparing for confirmation. Each one of these groups is facilitated by one or two parent or parish volunteers. Please extend to them your support, gratitude and courtesy. Please remember that we depend on you to pick up your son or daughter **immediately** after their meetings. It is not fair to ask facilitators to wait for parents who arrive late. Please make a note of your son or daughter's facilitator's name and phone number below and keep it in a handy spot for reference

Facilitator's Name:	
Phone Number:	
Confirmation Group Number:	

Please do not hesitate to call me, Christine Way Skinner, if you have any questions. My number is **898-4137 ext. 231**. I can also be reached by email at **cway@neptune.on.ca**. I look forward to helping you all celebrate this sacrament.

Blessings,

