

Parish Confirmation Evangelisation Initiative.
Come Follow Me
Responding to the Call of Jesus.

A warm welcome to this brief outline on the parish element of our journey to the Sacrament of Confirmation. Since 2014 our parish has been gradually introducing a re-imagined approach to preparing for this Sacrament. The focus of our renewed approach is to utilise the Confirmation journey as an evangelising tool, telling our story to as many people as possible, not just the candidates who are preparing to receive the Sacrament. It includes parents, clergy, catechists, parishioners, co-ordinating team, and faith-based schools and as such it is an Evangelising Tool.

The "*Come Follow Me*" (CFM) is inspired by the research of Fr Kevin Doherty. His doctoral thesis addresses the speaking of Faith to Culture in contemporary Ireland. This research includes within it a re-imagined approach to the preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation. The CFM initiative views the preparation for Confirmation as a wonderful opportunity to telling the Christian Story to the broader parish family. The hope is that it will help to build a living and vibrant relationship with the Christian Narrative. This is the essence of *Koinonia*, that the Church is fundamentally communion and belonging - it is communion with Jesus and belonging to his mystical body.

The main elements of this re-imagined approach are:

The Sacrament of Confirmation has a two-year journey, starting in 5th class (Year One) and continuing on through 6th class (Year Two).

In both years the focus is on three specific areas:

- Catechesis How we Learn what we believe.
- Service How we Show what we believe.
- Liturgy How we Celebrate what we believe.

All of which is achieved by ensuring the candidates grow in **Faith**, have **Fun** and forge new **Friendships**.

Year One - 5th class... Outline.

The parish element of Year One is a very gentle introduction to our Confirmation journey and acts as a foundation for Year Two.

Catechesis Y1

How we Learn what we believe.

The journey begins in September as the candidates are invited to register for the Sacrament of Confirmation, at the same time we seek volunteer Catechists from within the parish community and the families of those to be confirmed. Following on from this the candidates from every school will attend three communal gatherings in St Patrick's Church.

1. The Enrolment Service.
2. The Advent Gathering.
3. The Service and Holy Spirit Gathering.

In addition to the above gatherings the candidates will meet for Group Sessions three times from January to June. The groups of 10/12 candidates are made up of from our different schools and apart from the social aspect of building new friendships it also helps to show that Confirmation is not a school subject. Each Group Session is coordinated with the Year One book '*The Getting ready to begin my Confirmation journey Book*'. The Group Sessions each have two adult leaders/catechists and cover three topics, which are:

- The Life of Jesus
- Baptism.
- Reconciliation & Eucharist.

Service Y1

How we Show what we believe.

In June the candidates meet with different groups involved in 'Service' (such as St Vincent de Paul, Meals on Wheels, the Legion of Mary, Ministers of the Eucharist). This is to explore how the Holy Spirit inspires and strengthens us to use our 'God-given' gifts.

Liturgy Y1

How we Celebrate what we believe.

At Christmas and at Easter the Year One candidates have to complete a simple project. This includes a small reflection on a Mass they have attended.

Year Two - 6th Class... Outline

The Parish element of Year Two is much more involved and is a step up in commitment.

Catechesis Y2

How we Learn what we believe.

The candidates meet in the same groups with the same catechists as in Year One, seven times from October to Pentecost. Each gathering is coordinated with the Year Two Book '*Alive in Our Faith*'.

The topics for the seven gatherings are:

- i, Gifts and Talents- Service: using our 'God given' gifts.
- ii, Confirmation: What it gives (gifts); What it asks (fruits).
- iii, Confirmation Sponsor - an important decision.
- iv, Letter requesting the Sacrament of Confirmation.
- v, Reflection on the care of the sick - reaching out as the hands of Jesus.
- vi, The Stations of the Cross - during Holy Week.
- vii, SpiritFest - On the Friday of Pentecost weekend.

Service Y2

How we Show what we believe.

All candidates have to choose from a list of Service Projects and commit to being fully involved and active as required. The focus is to help the candidates understand that as followers of Jesus Christ they have an obligation to reach out to others especially those in

need. These Service Projects in most cases also requires a commitment from the parents/guardians and the support of the schools.

Liturgy Y2

How we Celebrate what we believe.

There is a Confirmation Family Mass five times during Year Two. Everyone involved in parish Confirmation preparation is invited to attend - parents, volunteers, candidates, families, catechists and Pope John Paul II Award Participants.

Each Confirmation Family Mass is 'themed' and includes active participation especially by the candidates who have chosen any one of the following, 'Music Ministry, Altar Servers, Lectors, Welcoming Ministry or Liturgy Ministry as their Service Projects. These Service Projects are led by volunteers who encourage and achieve a very high standard. The themes have included Social Justice, Ecumenism. Drama has been used to emphasis some of the many themes.

The entire Confirmation family are invited to join with the parish in praying the Stations of the Cross during Holy Week.

In addition, the Confirmation family are encouraged to attend other events which include the Service of Light, the celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the Pentecost SpiritFest events. **Pentecost** is a celebration of the birthday of the Church, through Eucharistic fellowship at the Altar of the Lord, Mass, followed by table fellowship, food and refreshment at the 'Parish Party' in the Church grounds. The Friday night on Pentecost weekend is a celebration with music and testimony in St Patrick's Church especially for the newly Confirmed students or *Confirmandi*. This party marks the conclusion of the two-year journey, it also opens the doors to the post-Confirmation group **4FY**.

4FY Youth Group

The parish of Celbridge and Straffan have launched an exciting initiative for young people who have made their confirmation. 4FY (**the 'F's are for Faith, Fun, Friendship and Freedom**) is a group of young people who are committed to navigating their lives and their faith with the support of their families, their parish and their peers. We meet one Friday each month for an evening of reflection, discussion, chat and a bite to eat. Please contact 4fyouth@gmail.com for more information.

Pope John Paul II Award Scheme

In Transition Year (TY) there is a further opportunity to develop your Faith Journey by taking part in the Pope John Paul II Award scheme (PJPII). Join many others who support the parish Confirmation Group Sessions Service Projects & Liturgy services gaining a Bronze, Silver or Gold Medal Award.