

# LITURGICAL LIVING

Series 30: March 17-23

## What's the Deal with Confirmation?



Our AFC is having Confirmation on the 17th during the 10am Mass. Here's a brief description of what confirmation is and why it is so important.

Confirmation is one of the three sacraments of initiation in the Church, along with baptism and first Communion. It is often referred to as the "sacrament of maturity," as it completes the process of initiation into the Christian community, and it matures the soul for the work ahead. The Church teaches that confirmation is necessary because it enriches the person with the strength of the Holy Spirit to build up the Church and to be witnesses of Christ to others.

The rite of confirmation includes three key parts: the renewal of baptismal vows, the laying on of hands by the bishop and anointing with the sacred chrism oil.

The effects of Confirmation according to the Catechism of the Catholic Church:

- 1– It roots us more deeply in divine sonship, which leads us to say "Abba! Father!" (Rom 8:15);
- 2– it unites us more firmly to Christ
- 3– It increases in us the gifts of the Holy Spirit;
- 4– It makes more perfect the bond that unites us to the Church;
- 5– It gives us a special power of the Holy Spirit to propagate and defend the faith, by word and deed, as true witnesses of Christ; to confess with courage the name of Christ, and never to be ashamed of the Cross.

However, it is not only the Sacrament of Confirmation that strengthens us. Let us not forget that a child also needs to be nourished! But this is the role of the Eucharist! Confirmation is a joyous occasion and gives us good reason to celebrate. Let us pray for the 27 young men and women who will be receiving this sacrament on the 17th!

## The 5th Sunday of Lent (17)

Traditionally, on this Sunday, the focus is shifted away from Jesus' prayerful preparation in the desert to his suffering and death on the cross. The traditional Gospel reading for this Sunday Concludes: "So they took up stones to throw at him; but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple" John 8:59). From these lines – Jesus hiding himself from the crowd that rejects him – comes the tradition of veiling statues and crucifixes in churches and in homes on the 5th Sunday in Lent. However, veiling of statues and crucifixes is not required by the church so some parishes may not do it. Veiling is typically done with a purple cloth. We have used dinner napkins that we use around our home. Often, churches will do this on Palm Sunday in one week (that is what our AFC will be doing). This is a beautiful tradition that prepares us for this final stretch of Lent: inviting us to humbly shift our focus to the weakness and sin that causes us to reject Jesus.



Why cover the images of Christ? Sacred images are powerful ways to draw us towards Jesus. They are great reminders of God's love for us. To inspire us to look to heaven. However, when they are covered, they can be a visible reminder to pray and recollect our thoughts to Christ and his Passion. If you don't have a crucifix or other sacred art in your home or in all bedrooms, this would be a good time to get one! If you have many, it is okay to just cover the most noticeable ones or remove them for a time as well.

This is a good week to try to make it to confession. The week before Holy Week! Remember, Catholics are minimally required to go to confession at least once a year according to the 7 precepts of the Catholic Church. Lent is a great time to do so!

## **Solemnity of St. Joseph (19)**

St. Joseph is the husband of the Virgin Mary and the father of Jesus on earth. He is believed to have died before the Wedding at Cana in the presence of Jesus and Mary before Jesus' public ministry began.

St. Joseph is the patron Saint of the Universal Church, families, fathers, expectant mothers, travelers, immigrants, house sellers and buyers, craftsmen, engineers, working people, married people, persons living in exile, the sick and the dying and a happy death. He is a Saint that has a powerful intercession! Our AFC placed our need for a new roof and parking lot in his care! We also have a beautiful statue in the church where you can pray.

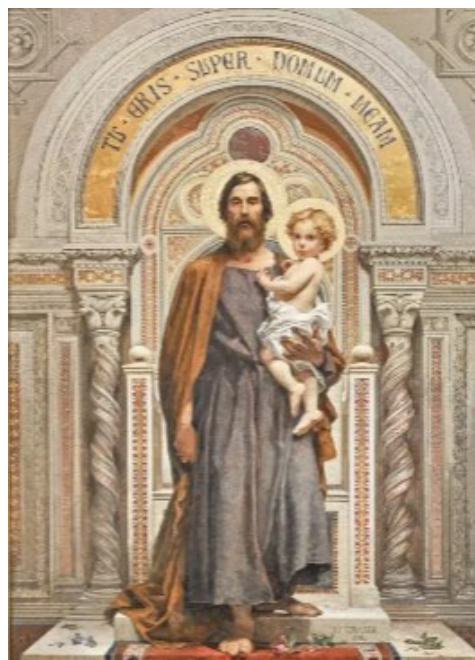
My favorite quote from St. Joseph, " . ." That is meant to be funny because we have no recorded words from St. Joseph. Pope Francis said that, "we never see frustration but only trust. His patient silence was the prelude to a concrete expression of trust." This is a good day to spend some time in silence and reflect on where you can trust God more in your life.

Another way to celebrate this day is to write a letter to your own father, a spiritual father or a new father. Tell them all the things: how you love them, how they have impacted you, your gratitude for them, etc.

Joseph was believed to be a carpenter. Do some work with your hands today. It could be woodworking or something else that is appropriate for your season of life.

### **Pray**

- [The 7 Sorrows and Joys of St. Joseph](#)
  - A traditional practice is to receive communion in honor of St. Joseph in the seven Sundays preceding the feast of St. Joseph. These seven sorrows and joys are from events in Joseph's life that are in the bible. We obviously are late to that game and it is a bit of a challenge to remember since Lent moves every year, but it is a beautiful devotion to consider next year.
- [Litany of St. Joseph](#)



See AFC Website for  
Digital Version



- Saint Joseph -

