



## Confirmation in the faith...

Confirmation celebrates the coming of the Holy Spirit. In the Acts of the Apostles chapter 2, verses 1 to 13, we read of the Apostles receiving the Holy Spirit. They had been hiding after Jesus' death, afraid and uncertain. The coming of the Holy Spirit with his gifts inspired them and enabled them to take the step of preaching the good news.

We are made members of God's family at Baptism. At Confirmation, our Baptism is completed or "sealed" by the Holy Spirit and we are called to be Christian witnesses, just like the apostles. The whole of our Christian living and the life of the Church, too, are sustained by the same Spirit.

### Who Can Receive?

Any baptised Catholic wishing to advance on the path of developing their faith. For young people, this is usually the P7 class in our Primary School.

For adults who were not confirmed as children, it means taking part in the Rite of the Christian Initiation of Adults (R.C.I.A.)

### Sponsor

A sponsor stands behind the candidate for Confirmation at the Confirmation ceremony and places their hand on the shoulder of the candidate as a sign that they will support them in living out their baptismal promises. However, the role of the sponsor is not just for one day. The sponsor undertakes to assist the confirmed person in growing in the fullness of their faith and in their membership of the Catholic Church.



A person qualifies as a sponsor by being a reasonably mature adult, who is at least 16 years old, and has already received the Sacraments of Initiation, (Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist) themselves. The Confirmation sponsor may be one of the people who was a sponsor at Baptism (subject to the notes here).

## Choosing a sponsor

(Ref. Code of Canon Law §874) To be admitted to undertake the office of sponsor, a person must:

- be appointed by the candidate, or by the parents or whoever stands in their place, or failing these, by the parish priest or the minister; to be appointed the person must be suitable for this role and have the intention of fulfilling it;
- be not less than sixteen years of age, unless a different age has been stipulated by the diocesan Bishop, or unless the parish priest or the minister considers that there is a just reason for an exception to be made;
- be a Catholic who has been confirmed and has received the blessed Eucharist, and who lives a life of faith which befits the role to be undertaken;
- not labour under a canonical penalty, whether imposed or declared;
- not be either the father or the mother of the candidate.

## Name

The tradition of taking a new name at Confirmation emphasizes the new identity of a Christian being called to witness to their faith. People are encouraged to take the name of a saint or a person from the Bible who inspires them in some way.

## Oil

The oil used is called the Oil of Chrism. It is olive oil mixed with balsam that is blessed by the bishop and priests of the diocese in Newry Cathedral at the 'Chrism Mass' on Holy Thursday. The Sacrament is conferred with the anointing with this 'Oil of Chrism' on the forehead as the **Apostolic Administrator Eamon Martin** says 'Be sealed with the gifts of the Holy Spirit'.



## **FAITH FRIENDS PROGRAMME**

This is a very original and vibrant initiative in our Parish. The work done in these sessions supports the important preparation taught in our school for the sacrament of Confirmation. The Faith Friends are selected from the youth in the parish and they share their own faith experience with these young people preparing for Confirmation.

**Confirmation Date: Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2020**