

LETTER TO THE BISHOP

Dear Candidates:

When you receive the Sacrament of Confirmation, you will be fully initiated into the Catholic Church and into the Basilica of Saint Mary parish family. Your call to share and defend the faith will include a special commitment and dedication to your home parish both now and in the future.

As a part of this process, you are to write a letter to our Bishop, Michael Burbidge, telling him why you wish to be confirmed and how you intend to live your life as a confirmed Catholic. The letter should include a description of your personal faith journey so far. This letter is a reflection on both you and on The Basilica of Saint Mary, so please write what is in your heart and take this endeavor seriously. Please use the format below and proofread your letter (spelling, punctuation, grammar, etc.). Letters are to be typed (MLA format) and submitted to your catechist by January 6th (if in CCD) or to your teacher as directed if a student at The Basilica School of Saint Mary.

Outline of Letter:

Today's Date

Your Excellency,

Paragraph 1: Introduce yourself in at least 2-3 sentences. Things to mention may include which school you are attending, how long you've attended your current school, how long you've lived in the area (if you moved into it recently), etc. You should also include a sentence or two on why you wish to be confirmed.

Paragraph 2: Write at least 3-4 sentences telling how you have prepared for your Confirmation, stating specifically what this sacrament means to you in regards to your Catholic faith.

Paragraph 3: Write at least 4-5 sentences about your Confirmation saint. You should provide some historical information about your saint, what he/she is the patron/patroness of, and why you chose this saint.

Paragraph 4: Tell Bishop Burbidge what you intend to do to continue to grow in and live out your faith after your Confirmation.

Sincerely,
[signature here]

Your name

LETTER TO THE BISHOP

SAMPLE LETTER TO THE BISHIP #1

January 6, 2019

Your Excellency,

My name is Mary Magdalene and I am an 8th grade student at The Basilica School of Saint Mary in Alexandria, VA. I am currently preparing for Confirmation and wish to share a couple of my experiences.

This summer I volunteered as a crew leader for the Basilica of Saint Mary's Vacation Bible School. During the week I was responsible for five children taking them to different stations where they learned about how Jesus rescues us when we are lonely, worry, struggle, do wrong, or are powerless. We spent time in Adoration on the last day. I was so happy to be a part of helping these children grow in their faith and look forward to helping again next year.

For my Confirmation patron I have chosen Saint Thérèse of Lisieux. I admire her family and personal faith greatly. Like her, I hope to grow deeply in my faith at a young age. I am particularly drawn to her "little way" dedicated to seeking holiness in the ordinary and everyday life.

Confirmation means I am ready to live my faith every day. I look forward to being confirmed and living my faith in the "little way" as Saint Thérèse did.

Sincerely,

---Handwritten Signature Here---

Mary Magdalene

SAMPLE LETTER TO THE BISHIP #2

January 6, 2019

Your Excellency,

My name is Patrick Ireland and I am an eighth-grade student at George Washington Middle School in Alexandria, VA. I am currently enrolled in CCD at the Basilica of St. Mary and am preparing for my Confirmation. I look forward to being confirmed because I have learned that I will receive the fullness of God's Holy Spirit through the bestowal of your anointing, and I trust that I will need His help to live out my faith in our current world.

To prepare for this sacrament, I have spent the past few months researching saints in order to pick one as my "patron" and Confirmation saint. I have really enjoyed reading about some awesome men and women who, through God's grace, transformed their lives and lived as radical witnesses to God's truth and love. I have come to see that what the world needs now is more men and women like these, people who have come to know and experience God's love, who know His saving truth as illuminated by Scripture, and who hold fast to the teachings of the Church, which Christ created for the benefit of men, not as an impediment as many today believe. I know that Confirmation is bestowed in order to strengthen one in their faith, and I hope that through this sacrament I become on fire for God and able to enter His Kingdom to live with Him forever.

In light of this, I have chosen Saint Ignatius Loyola as my Confirmation saint because, as I learned at last year's Camp Apostles, he was a soldier for Spain who then became a soldier for Christ and His Bride, the Church. I admire the fact that he sought to seek God's will in all things and that he wrote a book ("The Spiritual Exercises") that still helps men and women discern whether God is calling them to do something (or what He is communicating to them in general). I hope to learn more about Ignatius' "discernment of spirits" as I seek God's will for my adult life, whether this be which college to attend, which major(s) to pursue, or which vocation God has in mind for me. Confirmation means that I am ready to live my faith boldly and courageously. I look forward to being confirmed and living my faith like St. Ignatius, ready and willing to serve God.

Finally, as Confirmation approaches, I would like to assure you that this is something I take seriously. My faith has guided my family through some rough times and I know that through it we can continue "soldiering on" as St. Ignatius would, discerning God's will in all things, ordinary and extraordinary.

Sincerely,

---Handwritten Signature Here---

Patrick Ireland