

Guided Reflection on the Celebration of Confirmation – by Joe Paprocki, DMIN

Take a moment to get comfortable. Relax and take some deep breaths. Just spend a few moments paying attention to your breathing...in and out....slowly...in and out.

Yesterday was a big day....your Confirmation. It was a busy day filled with family and parish community and celebrations. Let's take the time now to look back and reflect on the experience.

Picture yourself walking into the church. Yesterday it was filled with people and full of sounds. Now, it is empty and quiet and still. Just stand there for a moment alone in the church taking in the silence.

Now, head over to where you were seated yesterday for the Confirmation Mass. Sit down and take a deep breath, once again taking in the silence and the stillness of the church.

After a few moments, you look up and see Jesus walking toward you. He has this kind look on his face that says that he knew he would find you here and he's been looking forward to spending some time with you.

You stand up to go over to greet him and then together you go back to sit down where you sat yesterday at Confirmation.

Jesus asks you how you're feeling today. Take a moment to tell him.

Then Jesus says, "Yesterday was an important day. It was busy and filled with activity, but something really simple and very important happened. I came into your life in a new way. Now that it's quiet and still, let's take some time together to go back and reflect on this special day."

You and Jesus both close your eyes and it's quiet for a moment. Then he says,

"You were surrounded by lots of people yesterday: family, friends, fellow parishioners. Tell me about the people who were with you yesterday.

What kind of feeling was there among them? Was there excitement for you? Who seemed happiest and most excited for you?

Was there anyone missing? Someone that you wish had been there but wasn't? Tell me about him or her.

Tell me about your sponsor. Why did you choose this person to stand by you? What is this person like? What can you learn from him or her?

Picture yourself standing in front of the bishop now, surrounded by your family and with your sponsor standing by you. Feel his or her hand on your shoulder. What does this mean to you? What does it say to you?

Feel the bishop tracing the Sign of the Cross on your forehead. Feel the sacred chrism – the holy oil – being placed on your forehead. What does it feel like? Can you smell the slight fragrance of the oil? Just experience this touch and smell for a moment.

Hear the words of the bishop: **BE SEALED WITH THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.**

BE SEALED WITH THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

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Feel the Holy Spirit surrounding and filling you, like a warm blanket being placed around you.

Welcome the Holy Spirit into your life.

Hear your own voice saying, AMEN.

Feel the bishop's hand now as he embraces your hand and says, PEACE BE WITH YOU.

PEACE BE WITH YOU.

PEACE BE WITH YOU.

Feel my peace fill your heart. Hear your own voice say, AND ALSO WITH YOU.

Watch yourself walking back to your seat now, surrounded by your family, friends, and your sponsor. You get back to your seat and you still feel a hand on your shoulder. You look around but you see that it is no longer your sponsor. It's me.

That's what this day was all about. It was about me telling you that I am with you, I'm standing by you, present with you at all times. You have my promise on that. I promised this to you on the day you were baptized and yesterday, I confirmed my promise and I'm so happy that you accepted it and that you promised to stay with me.

I know there's going to be times when it will be hard for you to stand by me. Sometimes you'll just forget. Other times you might be afraid. But now you know that I'll always be standing by you. You're filled with my Holy Spirit, and together, we'll walk through your life's journey and you'll never be alone.

I'll stand by you."

It's quiet now for a minute or so. You open your eyes and Jesus is smiling at you and his hand is on your shoulder.

Talk to him now. Tell him how you feel and what you're thinking.

Listen to whatever Jesus has to say to you.

It's going to be time to get back soon, so take a moment to thank Jesus for this time together. Thank him for this chance to understand and feel what yesterday's confirmation was all about.

Tell Jesus that you want to spend more time together with him like this

After a few moments, you look around but you don't see Jesus, but you can still hear him speaking to you: "I'm with you always."

And you still feel his hand on your shoulder.