

## Incarnate Word Confirmation Confirmation/Baptismal Name Paper

Actions:

1. Read "Topic E: Our Universal Call to Holiness" and "Next Step: Choosing Your Confirmation Name."
2. Talk with your sponsor. Both of you should answer these questions.
  - Who is your favorite saint? Why?
  - Do you believe that we're all called to holiness?
  - How do you think that you, specifically, are called to be holy?
    - What actions does that involve?
  - Is there a saint whose life you would like your life to look more like?
3. Research saints. (See online databases below.)
4. In four paragraphs or more, write why you're choosing this name and what about these saint(s) you hope to emulate, and attach as separate sheet.

Online Databases:

<http://www.catholic.org/saints/>

<http://www.americancatholic.org/features/saints/>

<http://catholicsaints.info/>

**REMEMBER, THIS IS READ BY FATHER VOWELS**



Confirmation Candidate's Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
*Please print first and last name.*

Date Sponsor Meeting Occurred: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsor's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

*\*If the interview took place by phone or email, parent may sign for sponsor.*

## Topic E: Our Universal Call to Holiness

*There are those who dedicate themselves to a sense of honor,  
To a life of courage  
And a commitment to something greater than themselves.*

*Many will hear the calling,  
Few will earn the title:*

*The Few. The Proud. The Priests and Religious.*

The above quote, where “the priests and religious” is substituted for “the Marines,” shows how we sometimes think about holiness – it’s only for a few, for those who consecrate their lives to God. So...

### ...Do you think you can be a saint?

Jesus thinks you can. The people he chose as apostles show us the type of person for whom he’s looking.

In Jesus’ day, every young Jewish boy would have attended Hebrew school until a certain age, maybe 9 or 10.

Then, the students who showed promise in study were allowed to continue, and the others were sent to go learn a trade – maybe learning carpentry from men like St. Joseph, or joining the family business of fishing.



After a second period of study, more students were sent away from school, and only the best few were allowed to continue school as teenagers.

Once they finished this third period of study, only *some* of these “best” few were asked by a rabbi to “follow” him, which meant that the rabbi had faith that these young men could one day become wise and learned rabbis – that they could do what he did.



Peter and Andrew and the other apostles think of Jesus as a rabbi, a great teacher, maybe the greatest they’ve ever seen. And what does he say to them?

**“Come, follow me.”**

These men were probably the students who were sent away from school at 9 or 10. Nobody probably thought they had a lot of promise, but they were good fishermen – that’s an honest, normal job. Yet this famous rabbi just said to them the code words for “I think you can do what I do.” The apostles jumped at the chance, and Jesus shows us that ordinary people can do what he does – love God and others with our whole heart.

You might think that the idea of Christian morality is generally for us just to “do our best,” and in some ways that’s true... but we also need to be real about what our best effort would truly look like.

1. We have a tendency to sin, inherited from Adam and Eve (called *concupiscence*).
  - Advantage: Evil
2. God himself has been united with our humanity in the Incarnation.
  - Advantage: Us

3. We have been transformed in baptism into a new person, passing through death with Christ into newness of life.
  - Advantage: Us
4. We have the Holy Spirit and the Eucharist and the other sacraments given to us. Christ himself is our food, our strength, our guide, and our grace.
  - Advantage: Us
5. We have the ability to go to Scripture, Tradition, and the Church (the saints in heaven and on earth) for resources and guidance and prayers on our behalf (called *intercession*).
  - Advantage: Us

See where we're going?

No one, including Jesus, ever (credibly) claimed that this was easy, even with all this help we get. But we can do it. We can be saints. And we're asked to be. In the book of Deuteronomy, God says to Israel and to us, "*I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse; therefore choose life.*" (Deuteronomy 30:19)

It takes time to build up the capacity, sure. The great St. Augustine struggled with a few repeated sins long after his conversion. We all fall. But we should never say, "I can't" or "That is beyond my capacity to achieve." After all, the Bible has some words for you:

"It is God's will that you grow in holiness."

- 1 Thessalonians 4:3

"Be holy, for I, the Lord your God, am holy."

- Leviticus 19:2

"Be imitators of God as his dear children. Follow the way of love."

- Ephesians 5:1-2

"I can do all things through him who strengthens me."

- Philippians 4:13

And if you do this, St. Catherine of Siena explains what will happen: **"If you are who God meant you to be, you will set the whole world on fire."** St. Irenaeus of Lyons also has a great quote for this: **"The glory of God is man fully alive, and the life of man is the vision of God."**

**So how do we go about this? How do we become who God made us? And who did he make us to be?**

That's the tough question, and it can only be genuinely answered in the context of continual cooperation and conversation with God. That's why we practiced discernment with the Holy Spirit in topic D. However, what is clear is that you're allowed to be different from others. The universal call to holiness doesn't mean the universal call to sameness. There's a saying that goes:

*"Bernard loved the valleys,  
Benedict the hills,  
Francis the small towns,  
and Ignatius the great cities."*

These were all great saints, all of them started religious orders, and yet they had very different interests and preferences. That's typical.

**If you are who God  
meant you to be,  
you will set the  
whole world on fire.**  
*St. Catherine of Siena*



The saints are a great place to look to see how you might be called to live out the things we hear in the Gospel. The saints help us see more clearly what it looks like to live following Jesus, even when Jesus didn't live in St. Louis, work with Catholic education, or marry someone. Think of a picture of Jesus in a many-colored stained-glass window:

*"It isn't that Christ is insufficient; He took on all that was human in becoming human.*

*The saints, in a thousand bursts of color, refract some part of Christ's infinitely brilliant light in their own time and place. The saints help to make known the Christ who has been revealed and yet remains in part hidden."*

- Ben Wilson

Pope Saint John Paul II also explains that to see who we are meant to be, considering to the "Gospel heroism" of the saints and asking for their prayers is a good start:

*"Dear young people, the Church needs genuine witnesses for the new evangelization: men and women whose lives have been transformed by meeting with Jesus, men and women who are capable of communicating this experience to others. The Church needs saints. All are called to holiness, and holy people alone can renew humanity. Many have gone before us along this path of Gospel heroism, and I urge you to turn often to them to pray for their intercession."*

- "Letter to World Youth Day Attendees" 2005

In the details, your life is still going to look as different from the saints as their lives are different from Jesus and each other. There are as many specific calls to holiness as there are unique individual people making choices. However, we still see the *love of Christ* in every saint's life. **Jesus asks us to follow him because he knows we can do what he did, with his help - love.**

#### A Variety of Saints to Consider:

- **St. Hedwig** - wife and mother of seven, servant of the poor
- **St. Augustine** - passionate about everything, eloquent, learned (God doesn't need everyone to be really smart and well-studied, but he does want the really ridiculously smart people to use their gifts too!)
- **St. Philip Neri** - saint of mirth
- **St. Joseph Cafasso** - handicapped, ministered to prisoners
- **St. Juan Diego** - faithful messenger of love
- **King David** - poet and musician, soldier, responsibility for the people of God
- **St. Hildegard of Bingen** - philosophizing with the best of them, writing up treatises on medicine and astronomy and all kinds of learning
- **St. Catherine of Siena** - got things done, called out those who needed it

## Next Step:

### Choosing Your Confirmation Name

Your Confirmation name will be the name the Bishop uses when he confirms you. Choosing a new name for Confirmation is an ancient and honorable tradition. Taking a new name can be symbolic of a new stage in life. Many of your parents probably participated in this tradition when they were confirmed. It follows in the scriptural tradition of the famous phrase, "I have called you by name" (Isaiah 45: 3-4). In the Hebrew Scriptures, Abram became Abraham, and Jacob became Israel. In the New Testament the tradition continued when Simon was renamed Peter by Jesus (Matthew 16:17), and Saul was called Paul (Acts 13:9) by the early Christian community.

The Church also invites candidates to reclaim the name they received at Baptism. This makes sense also, since Confirmation is the fullness of the Sacrament of Baptism. Feel free to choose your baptismal name as your Confirmation name.

In choosing a name for Confirmation, use these criteria in your judgment:

1. Do research on the history of your own name and any other names you might be considering. Is there someone you were named after? Is there a family history to your name? Are you named after a saint? Pray and let the Holy Spirit guide your research.
2. Pick a name that reflects a virtue or value you wish to aspire to. This virtue may be reflected in the person who has that name (it may be a saint or a relative). \*
3. If you are choosing a saint, research that saint's life well. Use books and online resources. Come to know that saint as if he or she were an old friend.

*\*The Archdiocese of Saint Louis requires that if you choose a new name, it be from among the listing of the Church's Saints. If you do want to choose a relative's name, check to see if it is the same as or derives from the name of a recognized saint. If you are unable to choose the name of the relative you intended because it is not a saint's name, please be sure to tell them anyway how much you respect and admire them!*

