

From the desk of Fr. Stimpson:

September 19, 2021

Dear Friends,

On Sunday September 19th at 3:00pm, Bishop Louis Tylka will be at St. Paul to confirm our 21 young people. I wanted to highlight a couple important things about the significance of Confirmation by the Bishop.

Acts 8:14-17 is a scriptural example for us that while Baptism and Confirmation are two distinct sacraments, they are nevertheless essentially connected. The Samaritans in Acts 8 had received Baptism, which forgives sins and makes us sons and daughters of God and gives us the initial gift of the Spirit. Yet, their Baptism found fullness when the apostles came and laid hands on them to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

In Eastern Christianity, the connection between Baptism and Confirmation is emphasized. In the East, the priest is the ordinary minister of Confirmation and he confirms infants immediately after baptism.

In Western Christianity, Roman Catholicism for instance, we have emphasized the connection between Confirmation and the laying on of hands by the successor to the apostle, the bishop, who possesses the fullness of Holy Orders.

While priests, like me, possess the innate power through Holy Orders to confirm, it is exceptional in Western practice for a priest to confirm, usually only when he baptizes adults into the Church or in danger of death. I also encourage any of you not so young Catholics who were baptized but fell through the cracks at Confirmation time to contact me through email or the office. Confirmation truly is a powerful sacrament to unlock our lives in the Spirit. Also, for non-Catholic Christians and non-baptized persons in our midst, RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults) which are classes to learn about Catholicism will begin Tuesday September 28 at St. Francis of Assisi Newman Center.

Peace
Father