



## Ponderings

We all have many conversations in the course of day. Probably most of them are rather insignificant. “What time will you be home for dinner?” “Did you pick up the dry cleaning?” “Did you return your brother’s phone call?” “Where should we go for dinner to celebrate our son’s graduation?” “Who drank the last drop of milk?”

There are probably some serious conversations we have about more important matters. “Do you think you need that knee replacement surgery?” “Should I interview for that new job out-of-state?” “Which college should I go to?” “Is it time to down-size and move into an apartment?” “Should we get a new pet?”

We don’t often have conversations about our faith. We might talk about the matters of religion, or matters of the Church, or what Pope Francis recently said---we do occasionally have these conversations. We do engage in these conversations once in a while.

Beginning during the “Covid Time” when our students preparing for the sacrament of Confirmation could not have a retreat experience, we came up with an alternative activity and that was to have a few ‘intentional’ conversations with their sponsor. These conversations, as we have heard, from so many of the candidates for Confirmation and their sponsors, have been beneficial. In some cases, these have been refreshing, exciting and eye-opening. Because they were the kind of conversations that had probably not occurred before, there weren’t too many expectations about them. We have continued to keep these ‘intentional faith-based conversations’ between candidate and sponsor as part of our preparation for the sacrament.

We present a few quotes from the candidates’ reflection on the conversations. (We have taken out any specific names and put either ‘candidate’ or ‘sponsor’)

*“During these conversations I learned things about myself as well. The first thing I learned is that I usually only pray to God for small things like finding someone to sit with at lunch or to help me be less stressed on a test. I know this because when Lauren asked me about the prayer questions, I didn’t have a clear answer to tell, and I would like to improve on this.”*

*“.... being involved in Church and going through the Sacrament of Confirmation has strengthened my faith. Every day I feel closer to God. I know that my sponsor will serve as an example to lead a good Catholic life.... I now know that all the sacraments are very important and only bring us closer to God....”*

*“Although I have known my sponsor all of my life, I learned many new things about her from these conversations. I discovered that she believes that God has a plan for her. She said that God has a plan for everyone. She also told me that when she is upset, sad, angry or overall unhappy about something she prays. She told me that if you have a problem, it can help to pray because God can give you guidance and prosperity.”*

*“.... a really important thing to remember when you’re confirmed is that you’re just starting to be considered an adult in the church and your responsibility for your actions in church and getting yourself to and from church every Sunday. 90% of people don’t come to church after being confirmed because most people think it is the end of your journey, but it’s the beginning.”*

*“These conversations have taught me that I am making the sacrament of Confirmation because not only is God calling me but he has chosen me, similar to how he called and chose many others. I have also learned that when I make the sacrament of Confirmation, the Holy Spirit will be unleashed in my life.”*

*“The next question I will touch upon is what I have learned about myself through this process. Going in I thought that this will be a ‘one and done’, get the questions I need answered and go write up my paper. My opinion is completely opposite now, with me having loved these conversations and cherishing every moment with my sponsor. I feel as though I have new courage to face and follow my faith and continue with my journey to adulthood in the Catholic church.”*

Thanks to our newly confirmed---for their conversations! The work of the Holy Spirit!  
--Fr. Gaffney









May 4, 2024



April 30, 2024



100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in the United States. On May 5, 2024 Bishop Richard Henning celebrated the 10:30 a.m. Mass at St. Bernard, Wickford, commemorating the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Sisters of the Cross and Passion in the United States. Many of the Sisters were able to be at the celebration along with graduates from the schools with which they were associated, associates, parishioners and friends. (next to the bishop: Rev. David Gaffney, pastor and Rev. Charles Maher)



