

NAME _____

Confirmation Retreat At Home Make-Up

Please set aside 1 hour one day to complete this retreat. Please turn in this journal as proof that you have completed this requirement in your preparation for Confirmation.

Tips to make this a beneficial experience:

- Tell your family what you are doing and ask them to pray for you.
- Turn your phone notifications OFF so that you are not distracted.
- If interested, use this Spotify playlist during your retreat (Searchable as: OLG/StB At Home Confirmation Retreat) Direct Link:
<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/5rZln03dc6NARZpoawP281?si=84KjvfXQtu5iRgJYPXa9g>
- Clear a space in the room in which you plan on staying for your retreat. Light a candle. Place a Bible, Crucifix, Rosary, or other holy meaningful object nearby to help you focus. Or, if it is a nice day, do this in your backyard!
- Take your time. Read the prayers, text, and questions slowly and thoughtfully. Take some silent breaks in between the sections or go for a walk. Think deeply about your response. There are no wrong answers.

1. Opening Prayer

- Close your eyes and focus on your breathing for a few moments. Ask God to be present with you. Ask God to make this a good experience for you.
- Begin with the Sign of the Cross and pray:
Loving God, you created me and you know me. You have wonderful plans for my life. Be with me as I prepare for my Confirmation. Help me to feel the presence of your Holy Spirit. Open my heart to understand and love you more. Open my eyes to see your wonderful plan for my life. Be with me today and always so that I can grow closer to you. Amen.

2. Who am I?

- How would you describe yourself to others? What words describe your personality, gifts, talents, interests, etc.? _____
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- What kind of person would you like to be? What kind of person do you think God wants you to be? _____
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□ Psalm 139

You have searched me, Lord, and you know me.

You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar.

You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways.

Before a word is on my tongue you, Lord, know it completely.

You hem me in behind and before, and you lay your hand upon me.

Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain.

Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?

If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.

If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast.

If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become night around me," even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to you.

For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.

My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth.

Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.

How precious to me are your thoughts, God! How vast is the sum of them!

Were I to count them, they would outnumber the grains of sand— when I awake, I am still with you.

- What does this psalm mean to you? _____
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- How would you describe your relationship with God right now? How would you like this relationship to grow? _____

3. Your vocation

- Prayer by Thomas Merton (a Trappist monk who died in 1968)

My Lord God, I have no idea where I am going. I do not see the road ahead of me. I cannot know for certain where it will end. Nor do I really know myself, and the fact that I think that I am following your will does not mean that I am actually doing so. But I believe that the desire to please you does in fact please you. And I hope I have that desire in all that I am doing. I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire. And I know that if I do this you will lead me by the right road though I may know nothing about it. Therefore will I trust you always though I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death. I will not fear, for you are ever with me, and you will never leave me to face my perils alone. Amen

- Every baptized person is called to be holy. Holiness is aligning your life and will to that of God. God wants what is best for you; our goal is to want the same thing. God wants you to be fully yourself and fully alive. Do you think you want the same thing as God for your life? Do you feel that sometimes you want things that God would not want for you? _____

- Our personal vocation is how God calls each individual to live out holiness. Every single decision in life should lead us to greater holiness, to be closer to God, to being more fully alive. You have a vocation to a state of life: priesthood, religious life, marriage, single life. You have a vocation to a personal calling: your job, volunteer work, service to the Church. Your vocation is the life path that makes you the most holy and fully yourself. How are you, **right now** in your vocation as a student, son/daughter, sibling, etc. living out your call to holiness? _____

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- How do we know to what God is calling us? *“The place to which God calls you is the place where your deep gladness and the world’s deep hunger meet” – Frederick Buechner.* We discern through prayer. Think about your gifts and talents, as well as your passions. What gets you fired up? Holiness always bears fruit and makes a difference in the world. What do you feel God might be calling you to do?
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4. God gives us grace

- Good News! You do not have to do this alone! God gives us grace to help us! If we were to rely on ourselves and our own strength, we would not get very far, however we are Gods children, and God always provides what we lack. Grace is God’s favor to us. We do NOTHING to deserve grace, God gives grace freely and abundantly. We just have to accept it. When have you experienced God’s grace in your life?
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- At Confirmation we become strengthened and open to accept and use gifts of the Holy Spirit which we received at baptism. Imagine you get exactly what you want for your birthday. You are so excited that you put it away in the back corner of your closet where no one will see it and you will never use it. Gifts are meant to be used! Which of these gifts of the Holy Spirit do you feel you have and use the most? Which do you want God to strengthen within you?

Wisdom, Knowledge, Understanding, Fortitude (Courage), Right Judgment, Piety (Reverence), Wonder and Awe

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- Prayer to the Holy Spirit by St. Augustine:

*Breathe into me, Holy Spirit, that
my thoughts may all be holy.*

*Move in me, Holy Spirit, that my
work, too, may be holy. Attract
my heart, Holy Spirit, that I may
love only what is holy.*

*Strengthen me, Holy Spirit, that I
may defend all that is holy.*

*Protect me, Holy Spirit, that I
may always be holy*

5. Your Relationship with God

- To keep the grace flowing, to keep discerning if you are doing God's will, to find your vocation, you must develop and nourish your relationship with God. Imagine that you never speak to or spend time with your best friend. You wouldn't be friends much longer, would you? St. Francis de Sales once said: "Every one of us should spend a half hour in prayer each day. Except when we are busy. Then we need a full hour." Do you spend time with God? How can you make more room for God in your life? _____

- Prayer is a relationship. It is a two-way conversation. We should listen as well as talk. We may not hear God actually speaking words in our ears, but we may feel a sense of peace, or confidence in a decision, or renewed energy to do something. These are ways that God speaks to us. Have you ever felt God speaking in your life?

- A simple way to pray: ACTS ○ **Adoration:** Adore God, praise God, tell God how wonderful he is. Look at all that God has done in history and in your life and appreciate how Great God is. ○ **Confession:** Confess your sins. What is burdening

you? What is holding you back from holiness, from being the best version of yourself? Where have you fallen short? Ask for God's forgiveness.

- **Thanksgiving:** Thank God for all of the gifts in your life. Thank God for the little things you hardly notice, and for the big things that take your breath away.
- **Supplication:** Ask God for what you need. Ask God to help you, and to help others that need his grace.

- Spend 5 minutes right now in prayer using the above suggestions. Then spend a few more minutes just being silent. Just being still and knowing that God is with you. Write your prayer if that helps you to concentrate: _____

6. Closing Prayer

Look over your notes from your retreat. Thank God for this experience, for being with you.

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love.

Send forth your Spirit, and they shall be created. And You shall renew the face of the earth.

O, God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit, did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may be truly wise and ever enjoy His consolations. Through Christ Our Lord. Amen

End with the Sign of the Cross