

## **I'm the parent of a Confirmation candidate. Why do I have to be involved? What do I have to do?**

Congratulations! Chances are, it is to your credit that your son or daughter is enrolled in the Confirmation Preparation Program. It is your duty, under Church Canon Law, to ensure that your child is being formed in Faith, and so you are fulfilling that responsibility.

A Jewish rabbi once related that before the age of Bar- or Bat-mitzvah, the child's responsibility to follow Jewish law and tradition lies with the parents. After this age, the children are "privileged to participate in all areas of Jewish community life and bear their own responsibility for Jewish ritual law, tradition, and ethics." In other words, it becomes the young person's responsibility to continue in the faith. There was, the rabbi continued, a prayer that parents recited that went something like this:

"Thank you, Lord, for removing from me  
the burden of making sure my child follows  
Jewish law and teaching, and putting that  
burden instead on my child. Thank you,  
thank you, thank you. Amen!"

I don't know if it's true that Jewish parents recite this prayer, but there is some truth in that many parents abdicate responsibility for their children's lives once their sons and daughters enter high school (or even middle school) because they don't want the hassle. Certainly attending Mass and Confirmation Preparation are part of that abdication in many families. It is very difficult to get something out of Mass when the morning begins with a fight over clothing or running late or "what's the point in going - I don't get anything out of it anyway."

However, it doesn't change the fact that our young people need us. They need us to push them to do the right things, to make morally right decisions, to "build character," and to set a good example for them. It doesn't mean that they won't rebel, but that doesn't excuse parents from being active participants in their children's lives, and in their faith formation and spiritual development as well.

For this reason, the participation of the parents and families is encouraged and in some cases required during the Confirmation Preparation process. At the Confirmation Orientation, you will be asked to do the some of the following:

- (1) attend Church Classes twice a year with your son or daughter and actively participate;
- (2) Sign up to chaperone at least one Home Class a year;
- (3) Help with Group Projects, like the Posole Ole Special Olympics Walk or Halloween Carnival;
- (4) Participate in Ministry with your child, like going to St. Martin's to feed the homeless people or the nursing home to visit residents

This is not intended to be punishment to you, any more than attending classes and doing service is intended to be punishment for the Confirmation candidates! Rather, it is to provide opportunities for you to participate with your child in growing in faith. It is our hope that, as you take advantage of these opportunities, your relationship with your child will become stronger and evolve into something more positive and beautiful than you ever imagined.