



Diocese of Belleville
Office of the Bishop

Sacrament of Confirmation

GUIDELINES for Choosing the Names of Saints

There is a long-standing tradition that when young people are confirmed they symbolize this deeper initiation into the Church by selecting the name of a saint as their Confirmation name. This is an expression of the newly confirmed person's commitment to Jesus Christ. It is also a very effective way of introducing our young Catholics to the Catholic tradition of the veneration of the Saints.

Those who are preparing candidates for Confirmation are asked to make sure that the selection of a name is part of Confirmation preparation. There are many pastoral benefits from maintaining this valuable custom. The most important benefit might be the opportunity to remind our young people that by baptism they are called to be saints.

If the idea of selecting a name is introduced early enough in the preparation, the candidates will have ample time to find out about the person and to select one who is interesting and challenging to them personally. There are many concise introductions to the lives of the Saints available. Making use of such resources will help the Confirmation candidates decide for which person they wish to be named. The focus of selecting a name should be on what the *Confirmandi* are going to do for God and others by imitating that person. The process of selecting a Confirmation name can be an easy way to clarify the Church's teachings concerning the liturgical year and the Church's reason for keeping the lives of the saints before our eyes as we contemplate the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Confirmandi may choose the name of a Saint, Blessed or Venerable or the name of one of the archangels: Michael, Gabriel or Raphael. *Confirmandi* may choose a patron saint of either gender regardless of their own gender.

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