

To candidates for the Sacrament of Confirmation

Dear young friends,

I wonder how you were feeling during your preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation? Were you excited and wondering how the gifts you are to receive from the Holy Spirit would work in your life? Were you looking forward to this celebration when you would receive the final sacrament of initiation into God's Church? And now the whole journey towards the Sacrament of Confirmation has been put on hold because of the Coronavirus lockdown! I wanted to send you a message of encouragement in these difficult days. Even though the celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation has been delayed because of this crisis, please know that your new Bishop is very much looking forward to meeting with you. Try to be patient and faithful to meeting with Jesus in prayer. Ask the saint whose name you are choosing to pray for you. Pray to the Holy Spirit that you will be even more ready to receive the gifts which will be poured out on you when you are Confirmed. We will soon celebrate that Pentecost day when the Holy Spirit was poured out upon our world. And finally, please spare a prayer or two for the new Bishop! I send you these words together with my blessing for yourself and your families.

✠ David J Oakley
Bishop of Northampton