

A LETTER TO THE BISHOP

Requesting the Sacrament of Confirmation

The Sacraments of Christian Initiation (Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist) are not automatically given. A person needs to *request* these and all the sacraments of his or her own free will. God *invites* us into eternal friendship with him, but he does *not force* us to accept the invitation. Writing a letter to the Bishop to request the Sacrament of Confirmation is one way you express how you've *freely chosen* to more closely identify yourself with Jesus Christ in the way you live life. That free choice is *reaffirmed every Sunday* when you say "Amen" to the Presence of Christ in the Eucharist.

Please follow the format below when writing your Confirmation letter to the Bishop.

GREETING

Begin with either: "Most Reverend David L. Ricken," or simply "Dear Bishop Ricken,"

BODY OF LETTER

Paragraph 1: Introduce yourself. Say something about your family or background, where you live, how old you are, where you go to school, what grade you're in, or similar things.

Paragraph 2: Request the Sacrament and give at least 2-3 (or more) reasons why you would like to be confirmed.

Paragraph 3: Explain how you have prepared for the Sacrament of Confirmation. It is important to mention specific parts of your preparation: your prayer life, participation in other sacraments including the Mass, service opportunities or experiences you've found especially impactful, and things like this.

Paragraph 4: Describe how you intend to continue being a disciple of Christ by loving God and others. After Confirmation, how do you plan on continuing to develop as a son or daughter of God in Jesus, and as a sharer of the Good News of Jesus?

CONCLUSION

Conclude the letter with: "Sincerely," or "With Thanks," or "In Christ," or something similar.

Then sign your full name.

Be sure to check your spelling and grammar!

*Letters are due to Fr. Brian by Sunday, March 8, 2026
if you're unable to finish tonight.*

WRITING WORKSHEET

*Before writing a draft of your letter,
write down ideas of what you want to include*

Ideas for Paragraph 1:

- Do you have any siblings? _____
- What interests do you have? _____
- Where do you go to school? What grade? _____
- Is your family from someplace other than Neenah? _____
- Other things you want to say about yourself: _____

Ideas for Paragraph 2:

- What do you hope will happen by being confirmed? _____

- How does being confirmed reflect your relationship with Jesus? _____

- What part(s) of Catholic living do you hope to have strengthened through Confirmation through the gifts of the Holy Spirit? _____

- What are other personal reasons why you want to be confirmed? _____

Ideas for Paragraph 3:

- Is there an example of when you had to really rely on God? _____

- Has confirmation preparation changed your prayer life or relationship with God? _____

- What service opportunities have been especially meaningful to you? _____

- How else have you prepared for Confirmation that you want to be sure to tell Bishop Ricken about and have enjoyed (or that have challenged you to grow as a person and as a friend of Jesus)?

Ideas for Paragraph 4:

- If you have a sense of “what you want to be when you grow up” (that is, your *vocation*), how do you see your Catholic faith shaping how to approach and live it? _____

- If you intend on going deeper into Scripture, are there particular books, letters, or other writings in Scripture that have your interest? _____

- Is caring for the poor and the lost a way you plan on continuing your life as a Catholic? _____

- What liturgical ministers might you be interested in being a part of as a confirmed Catholic? _____

- If you plan on marriage some day, how do you hope your Catholic faith will guide your marriage as well as the raising of children? _____

- Are you considering the priesthood or joining a religious order? _____

- What aspects of your prayer life (including going to Mass and confession) do you hope to deepen even more as a confirmed Catholic? _____

Use these questions above to help give you ideas for what to include in your letter.

Write a rough draft on lined loose leaf paper.

Small group leaders will be going around to assist. Just raise your hand.

After your rough draft looks good, you’ll rewrite a final draft on heavier paper and in pen. The Small Group leaders will have these materials when you’re ready.

Sample Letter to the Bishop (Do NOT copy word for word!)

March 1, 2026

Most Reverend David L. Ricken,

Hello. My name is John Smith. I am currently in 11th grade at Neenah High School. My family and I belong to St. Gabriel Parish in Neenah. I have an older brother and a younger sister. I have lived in Neenah since I was born. I enjoy playing sports, watching TV, and having fun with my friends.

I am writing you today to request to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. I want to be confirmed because I want to deepen my relationship with Jesus. I know that when I receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit, I will be more fully equipped to face the challenges that I will have in the future. I want my Catholic Faith to always be a big part of my life, and I know that Confirmation will give me the grace I need to keep it like that.

I have done a lot of work in preparation for Confirmation. I began my preparation in 9th grade, reviewing important information about Jesus, the Bible, and the Church. I have finally chosen my Confirmation saint, St. Sebastian, whom I admire very much partly because of my interest in sports, and mostly because I am struck by how he suffered and endured for the faith. I completed all my class assignments and homework, which taught me a great deal about the faith. I also completed a spiritual activity, as well as found a sponsor, and completed a Works of Mercy Project, which helped me see the importance of serving others, which is something Jesus always likes to see.

Once I am confirmed, I will continue to live my Catholic faith for the rest of my life. I will go to Mass on Sundays, and try to make it to Confession more often. I will continue to learn about my faith by reading the Bible and listening more closely to those who talk to me about doing the will of God. I look forward to meeting you, Bishop, when you come to celebrate Confirmation.

Sincerely in Christ,
John Smith

Sample Letter to the Bishop (Do NOT copy word for word!)

March 1, 2026

Dear Bishop Ricken,

My name is Brittany Jones and I am an 11th grade student at St. Mary Catholic High School in Neenah. My family is originally from southern Illinois, but we're parishioners now at St. Gabriel Parish in Neenah.

I am writing to you because I would like to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. I've been preparing for it for several years and I feel ready to receive it. I have learned that Confirmation is not the end of my faith life, but just the beginning. I am ready to take my faith seriously, become more active in my parish, and live out my faith through serving others.

I have prepared for Confirmation by attending my parish's religious education program, attending Mass with my family, and helping out more around the house when my parents ask me to do so. One part of my Confirmation preparation has been the conversations we have during our classes on Sunday nights. I like that I can share my thoughts, ask questions, and learn more about Jesus Christ and how I am called to be a friend and disciple of his.

Confirmation means that I am ready and willing to live out my Catholic faith. I am ready to be a leader to my friends and family. I am ready to receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit and grow into the person God is calling me to be. I feel that I have been well prepared for Confirmation through all of the classes and service projects I have attended and completed.

Sincerely,

Brittany Jones