

Choosing a Confirmation Name and Saints Poster

Choosing a new name for Confirmation is an ancient and honorable tradition. Taking a new name can be symbolic of a new stage in life. It follows in the scriptural tradition of the famous phrase, "I have called you by name (Isaiah 45:3-4)." In the Old Testament, Abram became Abraham, and Jacob became Israel. In the New Testament, the tradition continued when Simon was renamed Peter by Jesus (Matthew 16:17), and Saul called Paul by the early Christian community (Acts 13:9).

Since the Second Vatican Council, however, this is no longer a mandatory practice of the Rite of Confirmation. The Church now invites Candidates to reclaim the name they received at Baptism. In fact, the Diocese of Phoenix states the following:

"A Confirmation Candidate is strongly encouraged to be confirmed under his or her baptismal name (if a biblical, beatified, or canonized figure), or in accordance to the past custom of the Church, select the name of a biblical, beatified, or canonized person as recognized by the Church. If candidates decide to select a name, they should be familiar with the life of their person for their choice and the ways in which this person was a witness to Christ and demonstrated discipleship" (Diocese of Phoenix, Sacraments of Confirmation and First Eucharist Policy and Guidelines, 2009; Canon 855).

If you decide to adopt a new name for yourself or stay with your Baptismal name, please use the following criterion in your judgment:

1. Do research on the history of your name and any other names you might be considering. Is there someone you were named after? Is there a family history to your name? Are you named after a saint? Pray and let the Holy Spirit guide your research.
2. Choose a name that reflects a virtue or value you wish to aspire to. This may be reflected in the person who has that name (it may be a saint or a relative.)
3. If you are choosing a saint, research that saint's life well. Come to know the saint as if she/he was a friend.
4. Once you have made a choice, please create a poster with your Saints name, any particular details about the saint, and why you are choosing this saint. You can find a picture of the saint or draw a picture of the saint. You will present this poster on the retreat in either March or April.