

We end this month of April with the memorial of St. Pope Pius V who had the most difficult task of implementing the reforms of the Council of Trent in the 16th century. Many of those reforms remained in place until after the Second Vatican Council in the 20th century. Implementing reform is never easy. “We’ve always done it that way” and “We’ve never done it this way before” and “If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it” are just a few of the reactions to reform that are heard. In my experience, however, when a reform is explained usually there’s an acceptance...if not agreement. The reforms called for from the Second Vatican Council (1960’s) are still being implemented. Reform takes time...and patience...and prayer...and an open mind and heart.

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VERY IMPORTANT INFORMATION

By now, you may have heard of a reform that will be implemented in our Diocese beginning July 1, 2021, regarding the celebration of Confirmation and First Eucharist. The celebration of these sacraments completes one’s initiation in the Church. The usual minister of Confirmation is the Bishop. *(During the COVID pandemic, Bishop delegated his pastors to celebrate Confirmation. For me, this was a golden lining in the cloud of the pandemic.)* Most often the Bishop would come to the local parish and celebrate Confirmation. **Beginning July 1, those to be confirmed and receive their first Eucharist will make a pilgrimage to the Cathedral in Springfield to receive these sacraments from the Bishop at the mother Church of the Diocese.**

The Cathedral is the place where major liturgical events are held. Among them are: Ordinations, Chrism Mass, Confirmation of Adults, the Rite of Election, Mass for couples celebrating 50+ years of marriage, the annual Mission Mass, and the Installation of a Bishop.

The Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Springfield is **OUR Cathedral**. Just as St. Ambrose or St. Michael are OUR Churches, the Cathedral is the Church for ALL parishes in the Diocese. I liken it to the following: Think of the parish Church as YOUR home, the Cathedral as your GRANDMA’s home, and St. John Lateran (in Rome) as your GREAT-GRANDMA’s home. Each of these homes gathers larger families. We are part of an international family. Our Diocesan cathedral is home to ALL Catholics in 26 counties in central Illinois. St. John Lateran in Rome is home to BILLIONS of Catholics from all over the world.

Rather than trying to explain this reform in this update, I will provide several links to assist with understanding and appreciating this change in practice. I would like to point out that this change has nothing to do with the Bishop NOT wanting to travel to the parishes. This really isn’t about HIM, **it’s about the universality of the Catholic Church**. This change in practice will create an opportunity for the parish to celebrate with our children after they receive the sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist. *(This is not unprecedented. There is a ritual for welcoming an already baptized infant to the Church when baptism took place in an emergency and the child recovered.)*

Here are the links to more information:

[Confirmation and First Holy Communion at the Cathedral - Diocese of Springfield in Illinois Video](#)

I am sure you will have questions, as do I. Please e-mail me (sjanoski@dio.org) and I’ll try to answer them.

May God bless you!