

## Confirmation Year 2

### **PALANCA LETTER**

“Palanca” in Spanish means “lever”. Palanca, for our purposes, is a spiritual lever used to move people, gently and lovingly, toward God. It comes in the form of a letter written to give support and guidance in the form of a prayer, sacrifice, and heart to heart communication.

#### Who is it from and who is it for?

We ask that each parent/guardian/confirmation sponsor/family member/significant adult role model (like teachers, catechists, coaches, neighbors, etc.) write a letter to your Confirmation candidate.

#### What can it do?

The long and short-range results of Palanca are quite positive and very moving. Often times it re-opens the lines of communication between parents and teens, allowing each to gain insight and understanding of each other. God also takes advantage of this opportunity, revealing Himself to us through each other.

#### Why is it so important?

It is important that at least all parent(s)/guardian(s) write letters to their Confirmation candidate. Consider all the good the Palanca can do for your teenager and for you. Also, be aware of your teenager’s feelings if everyone but your son or daughter received a Palanca letter.

#### What things should be included?

- Describe specifically why you believe this teenager is such a wonderful, unique creation of God. What is it about who they are that demonstrates their goodness?
- Describe how proud you are of this young person for his/her preparation for Confirmation – the effort, the service, prayer, concern, and care he/she has shown.
- Describe the special place in the family this young person holds, what you look for in him/her that no one else can give; how he/she has brought love and joy to the family and to others.
- Tell how much you love him/her and how grateful you are for all he/she is to you and to others.
- Encouragement your teenager to come to you in times of pain, discouragement, and failure. Include an expression of sorrow for those moments of weakness or failure in your own life.
- Express the hope that this young person will always strive to grow in his/her relationship with Jesus Christ and His Church.
- Mention any prayer/sacrifice you have offered on their behalf (a spiritual bouquet).

#### Where and when?

Each Palanca letter should be sealed in its own envelope. On the front side of the envelope(s), print the first and last name of your teenager. We will place the letters in a larger, nondescript envelope for each student.

#### Palanca Letter Prayer Service

A retreat will be held in February, prior to Confirmation. Students will receive Palanca letters at that time. Make sure all letters are in the SOR office **no later than February 11, 2020.**

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***Sample Palanca Letter***

Dear Cathy,

Well, the time has arrived for your Confirmation.

I remember when you were first born, your Mom and I were just a couple of years out of college and only married for a few years. Needless to say, we looked forward to the day we could hold you and take care of you. At the time, I weighed about 40 pounds less than I do now and Mom...well, she has always been beautiful. I think it is in that respect that you most resemble her. Anyway, it was an exceptionally pretty Spring that year with flowers blooming everywhere. I was so excited about having my girls come home. I got up early the day you were to arrive, cleaned the house and ran to the florist and got all your Mom's favorite spring flowers. The apartment was packed with hyacinths, forsythia, tulips, and daffodils. To this day, the smell of hyacinths reminds me of you.

A lot has happened these past fourteen years. Your Mom and I have found that staying married requires us to make a choice every day to love each other. I've learned the meaning of fear because of an uncertain future, but also the joy of my family and the peace that comes when you, although a big girl now, hug me still. I remember taking you to kindergarten when you were five and dropping you off that first day. On my way to work, I started crying just thinking about how lonely and scared you might be. Maybe I was really feeling sorry for myself – it was my first day at a new job and I was scared too.

You've worked very hard in preparing for the Sacrament of Confirmation. During this time, you have especially inspired me to spend more time in prayer with God. I say this because the prayers you offer at the dinner table are so awesome. Some of the things you say in prayer, I have never even thought about before. I think that wisdom comes out of your growing relationship with God. It encourages me to place more emphasis on my own relationship with God.

I want to thank you for all the service you've done for Grandma Raymond. She appreciates the help you've given her, but she especially loves the company you give to her. She's been so lonely since Grandpa Raymond died. She relies much more on her family now for the comfort, love and support she needs. I think we as a family are going to have to think creatively about how Grandma Raymond can be included in our family activities. This is all flowing out of what you have begun in your own service.

Anyway, I guess you're wondering why I'm telling you all this. I want you to know that your Mom and I are real people. We're not just disciplinarians. We love you very much and never stop thanking God for giving you to us. Fourteen years ago I looked at you for the first time and marveled at the wonderful miracle you were. Now I look at you and only marvel all the more at the wonderful person you've become.

I'll love you always,  
Dad