

Confirmation

Candidate Guidebook



Information About the Sacrament of Confirmation

...Confirmed by the gift of the Spirit, that they give witness to Christ
by lives built on faith and love..."

General Intercession from the
Rite of Confirmation

Confirmation

- ☞ welcomes us and deepens our belonging to the faith community
- ☞ deepens our relationship to God, as Creator, Redeemer and Spirit
- ☞ strengthens us as disciples.

✦ A Sacrament is part of the way that God loves us and calls us.

A sacrament is God's love expressed as free, undeserved gift. The Gift within Confirmation is that of strengthening us for discipleship and deepening our belonging to the faith community through the Trinity.

✦ God uses visible signs to communicate invisible love.

To communicate God's love, God uses our senses: eyes, ears, touch, smell, and taste, and elements of our world. In Confirmation, the signs we will celebrate include being anointed with oil and the laying on of hands as we remember the water of Baptism and the nourishment of Eucharist.

✦ God calls and invites; we respond.

An attitude of openness communicates a "yes" to God's invitation to a deeper relationship. This "yes" does not mean we know that we will always be faithful or that we are worthy of the gift. "Yes" means we are open to be strengthened by God who calls and loves us. In Confirmation, we have the opportunity to say "yes" through the various responses in the prayer.

✦ The Community witnesses to and celebrates the sacraments.

A sacrament is a powerful sign that God is alive and present in the world. As Church, we are called to be sacrament, that is, to be God's hand and healing touch in the world. At the same time, we celebrate the sacraments as our most important prayer. This community that celebrates sacraments is global, reaching to other faith communities throughout the world and joined in a common bond. The community is also local as a diocese or archdiocese, as a parish and as a community of faith in families. In Confirmation, the community witnesses our celebration and provides a sponsor who represents the love of the community for us.

"The love of God has been poured into our hearts
by his spirit living in us..."

Entrance Antiphon for *Rite of Confirmation*
Cf. Romans 5:5; 8:11

How do I know if I'm ready?

None of us are ever ready, worthy or deserving of a sacrament. You need to be ready to be open to how God will strengthen you and continued to be present in your life. We can make an effort to be prepared to celebrate Confirmation in a way that shows our sincerity, we can participate all the way, making our responses come alive and keeping our eyes and ears ready to see what God is doing. The community is here to help you to feel prepared.

What is the Rite of Confirmation?

A ritual is a patterned way of doing something. The *Rite of Confirmation* is a prayer ritual of the Church that witnesses to the sacrament. The Rite usually takes place within Mass. Most of it will feel familiar to you. Some special parts of the rite include:

Renewal of Baptismal Promises

A chance to promise again that we will be open and will strive to be faithful

Laying on of Hands and Anointing with Oil

Like a friend putting their hand on your shoulder or a parent's loving embrace, gestures can make love and support feel real and connected. God's love and support is made visible through these sign which call upon the Holy Spirit.

"...be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit."
Anointing Rite for Confirmation

What will I have to do to be Confirmed?

Our parish is gathering a community of youth who wish to prepare for Confirmation who will join together for the following steps in this journey:

- ★ Youth will have a sponsor, an adult who will walk with and help their candidate to celebrate Confirmation.

Each candidate is asked to choose an adult member of the greater Catholic community to act as a sponsor during the Confirmation journey. The Sponsor represents the Catholic community and should be seen as a life-long role model and guide for the Candidate.

Sponsor selection guidelines:

- *Sponsor must be a Confirmed Catholic at least 16 years of age*
 - *Sponsor should be active in their faith and Christian life. Active participation means that the sponsor regularly attends Mass and is involved in the life of their parish and – most importantly their faith formation*
 - *A Sponsor is preferably someone outside the immediate family. Parents cannot be designated sponsors.*
- ★ **Attend** all formation sessions, ROCFM activities, rituals, retreat, and Sunday Liturgy
 - ★ **Experience** a process of learning by living out your faith with the entire community that will help you grow closer to God and be ready to celebrate the Rite of Confirmation
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 - ★ **Celebrate** the Sacrament of Reconciliation
 - ★ **Reflect and write** a reflection on the life of a Catholic Saint that will be your model during this process
 - ★ **Attend** the Confirmation rehearsal prior to the celebration of the Sacrament – Sponsors are encouraged to attend the rehearsal and retreat. If not available, parents or other family members should plan to attend.
 - ★ **Candidate Interview**
 - ★ **Letter to Bishop**



CONFIRMATION CANDIDATE
LETTER TO THE BISHOP

- Letter should be typed and addressed “Dear Bishop”
- Opening paragraph should introduce yourself to the Bishop, state that you are a Candidate for Confirmation and then tell a little bit about yourself: *the Church you belong to, the school you go to, the community you live in*
- The next few paragraphs should talk about your Journey to Confirmation: *your formation sessions, your life experiences, the retreat, the food drive*
- Select one of the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit and explain how you will be a “Witness to Christ” using that gift
- Ask to be confirmed:
Based on my journey this past year, I feel that I am ready to be sealed with the Gifts of the Holy Spirit and accept the new and more challenging responsibilities that come with this Sacrament. I respectfully request to be Confirmed on
- Sign your name

There is no minimum requirement for this letter. Please remember that the Bishop has never met you and the more you can tell him about your faith journey the better.

THIS LETTER IS DUE: _____

SAINT REFLECTION

History behind the Confirmation Name

The tradition of selecting a saint's name for Confirmation grew out of a pre-Vatican II practice that asked Confirmandi to select a Saint's name to be invoked during the Rite of Confirmation. Some of your parents and grandparents may have been required to do this. However, since Vatican II, this practice is no longer a requirement of the Rite of Confirmation. **THE CHURCH INVITES CANDIDATES TO KEEP THE NAME GIVEN TO THEM AT BAPTISM.**

The Church strongly suggests that you use the name your parents gave you at Baptism. **THE REASON IS THAT CONFIRMATION IS THE FULLNESS OR COMPLETION OF THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM.** Neither the Rite of Confirmation nor the Code of Canon Law refers to the custom of selecting a Confirmation name.

The Rite simply refers to the candidate being "called by name." The presumption is that the Candidate is called by the name given at the time of Baptism. The Baptismal promises your parents made on your behalf when you were a baby are renewed at Confirmation.

The Saint Reflection

Whatever name you decide on, your own name or that of a favorite saint, we ask that you explore how this holy person, this saint, offers you witness to walk more closely with Christ during the Confirmation preparation process.

Find out if you were named after a beloved family member or favorite saint; or, research the roots of your name as a derivative of a Christian name.

Whatever name you decide on for Confirmation, tell us explicitly either:

1. For Confirmation, I am taking the name of ... because **OR**
2. For Confirmation, I am affirming my Baptismal name of ... because

Guidelines for writing your Saint Reflection (1 page minimum)

Pray Reflect and let the Holy Spirit guide you in your search.

- Start with: For Confirmation I am taking/affirming the name ...
- Provide a brief summary of their life
- What did they do with their lives that made them worthy of sainthood?
- Why did you select this saint?
- How can the life of this saint be a model of faith and commitment to you throughout the Confirmation process?

Resources: Here are some good places to start:

<http://americancatholic.org>

<http://www.catholic.org/saints>

<http://www.catholic-forum.com/saints/indexsnt.htm>

http://www.vatican.va/news_services/liturgy/saints/index_saints_en.html

CONFIRMATION RETREAT

PARTICIPANT BEHAVIOR GUIDELINES

The Confirmation retreat is designed to be special for the Candidates. It's a time to be with one another and reflect on the journey ahead. In order to keep the events flowing smoothly we ask that you remain considerate in observing the following guidelines:

- Do not bring outside foods or beverages – this includes gum too.
- No cell phones: If we see or hear it, we will take it away.
- Other electronic devices (including mp3 players, Game Boys etc.) are not allowed. If we see or hear it, we will take it away.
- No devices that may be used as a weapon (lighters, matches, lasers, knives, etc.) are permitted. The item will be taken and we'll call your parents to pick you up.
- No running in the building.
- No smoking / drinking or we'll call you parents to pick you up.
- No wandering beyond the boundaries set forth by the team leader.
- Respecting all team members and facilities staff and one another.
- Keeping noise to a minimum.
- Keeping the facilities and rooms neat. All furnishing must stay in the rooms in which they were found.
- Asking any team leader for help if you need anything or if you feel sick.
- Being open to having a good time. Be yourself and work as part of the team.

Candidate and Parish Covenant

- A covenant, in its most general sense, is a solemn contract or similar undertaking

Candidate

I understand that deciding to enter the Confirmation preparation program is an important decision requiring study, prayer and purposeful participation.

I will do my best to take this decision seriously and will participate and support my companions on this journey by asking questions and sharing my thoughts and opinions. I will strive to be engaged in my words and actions for my benefit and for the benefit of my team.

I have been told about and understand that attendance at a retreat is expected of me. I agree to meet this requirement. If a serious problem should arise with attending either event, I will take this over with the Confirmation Catechist and the DRE to come to a resolution together.

I understand that if I am going to miss a formation session, I will need to inform the Confirmation Catechist. The Catechist will send me the materials necessary to make up the session – due within 1 week of missing the session.

I have been informed of, understand, and agree to live out my faith by actively participating in the many ministries in the parish.

I will do my best to pray everyday to encourage my growth in and understanding of the Holy Spirit. Further, I will participate in Mass each week. I understand that doing so will help me celebrate more fully the Sacrament of Confirmation.

I understand that the Confirmation preparation program is entered into voluntarily. It is understood that those who attend do so because they want to.

Parish

The parish will support you with the materials and information necessary for the preparation program.

The DRE, catechist, program team, parish staff and the parish community will pray for you and your fellow companions so that you may continue to grow in the power of the Holy Spirit.

The DRE, catechist and program team are here to help you grow in your awareness of how the Holy Spirit is active in your life.

The parish community promises to support your endeavor with the most powerful force in the universe – Prayer.

COVENANT TO THE CONFIRMATION PREPARATION PROCESS

The Confirmation process is a seven-month journey in which the Candidate will explore different aspects of faith, church ministry and service. This process necessitates a full commitment from the Candidate, Parents/Guardians and Sponsors as this is a Sacrament that, by definition, calls for a time of reflection on personal faith and a more active participation in the life of the Church.

Candidate Covenant

I understand that it is my choice to enter into the process of preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation as presented to me in the Candidate Covenant. I am ready to enter into this journey leading me to the Sacrament of Confirmation with my fellow Candidates, Parents, Sponsor and faith community. I will complete the process set forth above and allow the Holy Spirit to lead me to Confirmation.

Candidate Signature: _____

Date: _____

Parent Covenant

I have read and understand the Confirmation Preparation process. I will support my child in their journey and encourage them in their commitment to the process. Further, I will support the Pastor, DRE and Catechist in their efforts to prepare my child for the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

Participant Information & Participation Form

Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Parent(s) or Guardian Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

School: _____ Year of Graduation: _____

Received Baptism on, Date: _____ Location: _____

Received First Eucharist Date: _____ Location: _____

If there is a parent living outside the home that you would like to be informed about this program, please list:

Parent Name _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Youth Email Address: _____

Parent Email Address: _____

Sponsor Information:

Sponsor Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____

Email _____