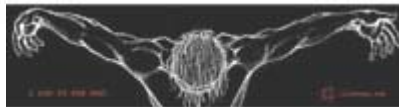


LED
BY
THE
SPIRIT
St. Joseph's Parish Community
CONFIRMATION



JOURNAL 08-09

& CANDIDATE GUIDEBOOK

11TH



DISCUSSION/JOURNAL WRITING

Prior to completion of this year's preparation, each candidate is expected to have completed this journal with the discussion guides and all worksheets complete. The journal, service projects, choosing a confirmation name, and the letter to the Bishop should be completed by **March 15th**.

Candidate Agreement

I am committed to this year of preparation for Confirmation. I agree to attend all required sessions, which include attendance at Sunday Mass, the sponsor/candidate sessions, the two service projects, two liturgical ministry activities, and all class sessions.

I will participate in all sessions with an open heart and give 100% of myself to my small group and small group leaders.

I agree to cultivate a relationship with my sponsor and to learn from their spiritual guidance. Most importantly, I promise to receive all that God has in store for me this year and to let the gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit come alive in my life.

Signature

Sponsor Information

A Sponsor must be a practicing, confirmed Catholic, who is at least 21 years of age (If younger than 21, please speak with Confirmation Coordinator or priest). He or she may not be the candidate's mother or father. A godparent is a good choice. The candidate is encouraged to choose someone who lives close by. The sponsor should be a person who is prayerful, open, dependable, loving, and is comfortable sharing his or her faith with young people.

Role

- 1) The sponsor represents the support and prayers of the entire Church. He or she will be the candidate's "spiritual friend." In this program, the following is asked of the sponsor:
- 2) Accompany the candidate to the sponsor and candidate sessions (outlined in the sponsor guidebook and student's journal). To meet with the candidate regularly throughout this year of preparation and to discuss the topics addressed in the preparation sessions.
- 3) Share their faith story with his or her candidate.
- 4) Spend time getting to know the candidate, possibly taking him or her out to lunch or dinner, or having him or her over to your home.
- 5) Pray for and with the candidate.
- 6) Sponsors need to attend the Confirmation run-through.
- 7) Attend the Rite of Confirmation.
- 8) Present the candidate during the Confirmation Rite.
- 9) Continue to be there for the candidate and lend spiritual support after the confirmation ceremony. (Suggestion: Send a card or note every year on the anniversary of his or her confirmation)

Sponsor Form

Confirmation Candidate's Name _____

Sponsor's Name _____

Sponsor's Relationship to Candidate _____

Sponsor's Address _____

Sponsor's City, State & Zip _____

Sponsor's Telephone #: _____

Sponsor's Church _____

Name of Pastor at Sponsor's Church _____

Year and place of Sponsor's Confirmation _____

- Sponsors need to be present at the Sponsor/ Candidate sessions.
- Sponsors need to attend the Confirmation Rehearsal.
- Sponsors need to be present at the Confirmation Ceremony.

(Should a sponsor have a work conflict or be out of town when attendance at these activities is crucial, the family must provide a proxy.)

Sponsor's Agreement

I agree to serve as a sponsor for this Confirmation candidate. I understand my role as described on the sponsor information sheet, which I have received from the candidate and read. I agree to attend the required sessions with my candidate, unless not possible due to distance or work schedule - in which case a family member proxy will stand in my place. I agree to cultivate a relationship with my candidate during this year of preparation for their Confirmation and to serve as spiritual support during this important time in their life, as well as in the years to come.

Signature

CONFIRMATION GUIDELINES

St. Joseph's Catholic Church implements these guidelines for the benefit of the Confirmation candidates and their respective families and sponsors. Please make yourself aware of the guidelines to make the preparation process a faith-filled experience for all involved (candidates, sponsors, families, coordinator, teachers, and priests).

Attendance:

There are a limited number of classes our students have in religious education before their confirmation. These classes play an important role in the student's faith formation. We established these guidelines to ensure that students fulfill this important process in their formation.

- 1) Students are expected to attend all of their religious education classes.
- 2) If students know ahead of time that they will be unable to attend a class, they should notify their catechist as soon as possible about when they will be gone and the reason for missing class.
- 3) If a student misses class and the catechist has not been notified, the catechist will call the parent/guardian the following day to make sure that there are no problems. On the second unexcused absence, the Youth Ministry Coordinator will make a follow-up call with the parent/guardian.
- 4) After the first class that a student misses, excused or unexcused, the following will occur:
 - Second and third class missed: The student will write a one page paper on the material that he/she missed in class and student will meet with Youth Ministry Coordinator to discuss the paper.
 - Fourth class missed: The student and parents/guardians will meet with the YM Coordinator and the pastor or associate pastor to discuss a proper solution.

Community building projects:

St. Joseph's sees the opportunity to serve our parish and community of Moorhead as an invaluable part of Confirmation preparation and significant in reminding our candidates of their baptismal vows. Included in the service component of Confirmation is serving in the many ministries offered at mass.

1. The candidates are asked to do four community building projects, two in the parish or in the community, as well as two ministries of the mass during the year.
2. The ministries in mass include:
 - **Ushers of hospitality**, welcoming people as they enter the church and passing out bulletins as they leave the church, as well as doing the offertory
 - **Gift-bearers**, bringing up the gifts during mass
 - **Lectors**, reading the scriptures during mass (1ST and 2ND Readings)
 - **Commentators**, reading the Petitions (Prayers of the Faithful)

Retreat Guidelines: "Why do I have to make a retreat for confirmation?"

All our candidates are expected to attend a retreat in the eleventh grade. The reason for the retreat is to offer the candidates a concrete opportunity to enter into their baptismal call of being sons and daughters of God and to reflect on all the preparation has to offer them.

1. The candidate must make at least a full weekend retreat (Friday-Sunday or Saturday-Monday).
2. The candidate is expected to attend a retreat during their 11-grade year or the summer prior to their 11-grade year. Any retreat attended before then will not make up or "count" for their Confirmation preparation. We simply ask the student to attend a retreat their junior year, even if they have attended one before because the student is in such a different place emotionally, spiritually, educationally and socially, from year to year.
3. The candidate may not leave at any part of the retreat, excused or not. If it is in knowledge of the candidate or

- candidate's parents that he/she might leave, we ask the candidate to look at another date to make a retreat.
4. The reason for this is to not distract the other teens on retreat. We want to offer the teens the best we can possible give on retreats. For any retreatant, to leave early or depart for even part of the retreat can destroy the experience for other retreatants and for him/herself.
 5. Candidate must be signed up (registration submitted) for their retreat by November of the eleventh grade.
 6. St. Joseph's offers many different retreat settings for our candidates preparing for Confirmation, such as:
 - TEC, To Encounter Christ (Crookston Diocese sponsored)
 - LIFE TEEN Retreats (Parish sponsored)
 - Discipleship-Week (sponsored by NET)

To-Do List: *What should the candidate have completed and turned in to be confirmed?*

- * Check with the candidate periodically to ensure they are completing these tasks in a timely fashion.
- Copy of the Baptism Certificate, November 23rd, 2008
- Sponsor Information Form, September 14th, 2008
- Confirmation Interview; March 2009
- Two LIFT Projects; Completed by March 2009
- Two Liturgical Ministries; Completed by March 2009
- Candidate Agreement
- Choose confirmation name, March 2009
- Letter to Bishop, March 2009
- Journal; March 15th, 2009
- Attend a overnight retreat
- Confirmation Practice: April 22, 2009
- Confirmation Ceremony: April 26, 2009

CONFIRMATION: Yesterday and Today

The sacrament of Confirmation has its roots in the Old Testament. The scriptures contain many references to God's power and God's spirit acting through people. The prophets were considered inspired by the Spirit when carrying out their mission of calling the people back to God. The Old Testament does not, however, reveal the fullness of the spirit we see in Jesus.

The Gospels are full of references to the Spirit: "Jesus with the power of the Spirit in him returned to Galilee; and his reputation spread throughout the countryside." (Luke 4:14) The Gospel writers saw Jesus as so filled with God's spirit that it was impossible to separate from Jesus. Jesus made a promise to his friends that the Paraclete would come to all of them, and the spirit of Him and his Father would dwell in their hearts.

The first Pentecost, recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, is the basis for our Confirmation: the outpouring of God's spirit on all His people. As the apostles began to spread the message of Jesus, adults were baptized. According to the Book of Acts, a Baptism of water was followed by a Second Rite, the imposition of hands and a second anointing. Apparently, Christians also received the Eucharist for the first time and all of this took place in one ceremony.

As increasing numbers of people sought admission into the Christian community, it became difficult for the bishops, successors to the apostles, to be present at every adult baptism. Parents were also becoming concerned for their small children, as the infant mortality rate was high, and wished to see them baptized early. Gradually over the centuries, the bishops reserved the administration of the second anointing and laying on of hands for themselves and Baptism was usually administered by a priest. By the fifth century, Pope Innocent I clearly and definitively distinguished the rite of Confirmation as a separate rite. The Council of Trent in the 16th Century assigned the bishop as the minister of Confirmation.

Until this century, the sequence of reception of the sacraments was kept the same as the ancient initiation ceremony: Baptism,

Confirmation, Eucharist, with the latter two sacraments received about the age of twelve. In 1910, St. Pope Pius X issued a decree allowing children to receive Communion at the age of twelve. This decree changed the traditional sequence of receiving the sacraments, placing Confirmation after Eucharist. Since that time, the sacrament of Confirmation has been the focal point of theological dispute.

In the United States, Confirmation, for the most part, is being administered in adolescence. Historically the significance of Confirmation lies in its being an unfolding, strengthening and completion of Baptism. Confirmation marks the point at which a child, who was baptized at the request of devout parents and has received basic instruction in keeping with his/her age, takes it upon him/herself to publicly profess their baptism and affirm their faith before the congregation.

Confirmation candidates need to examine their faith, reception of the Eucharist, and their motives honestly. It is a serious and difficult decision to publicly profess one's faith, to be ready to take personal responsibility to live a Christian life. The sacrament of Confirmation completes our initiation into the church family. The beauty of the sacrament also lies in the fact that it is *the beginning of an adult Christian way of life.*

PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful, and enkindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your spirit and they shall be created, and you shall renew the face of the earth.

Let us pray: Oh God, who did instruct the hearts of the faithful by the light of the Holy Spirit, grant that by the gift of that same spirit, we may be truly wise and ever rejoice in his consolation. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Examination of Conscience:

1. I am the Lord your God, you shall have no other gods beside me.

Did I fail to love God, to make God first in my life, to thank him and trust him as he deserves? Did I fail to pray? Have I denied my faith? Was I careless in saying my prayers? Do I give God time everyday in prayer? Do I make a god out of my work, my possessions, or my image in the eyes of others so that these rule my life instead of God? Am I angry toward God because of illness or misfortune? Have I been involved with magic, horoscopes, Ouija boards, or fortune telling?

2. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.

Did I curse or swear? Did I use God's name in vain, lightly, carelessly, by blasphemy? Have I used foul language? In conversation, have I passively listened to slander and to jokes demeaning the Church, or God's authority? Have I repeated this slander or jokes?

3. Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.

Have I deliberately missed Mass on Sundays or holy days of obligation? Did I leave Mass early without a good reason? Have I been to communion at least once a year? Did I receive Holy Communion in the state of serious sin? Have I allowed myself to become so dominated by my work and chores that I have not set aside Sunday for spiritual and family activities?

4. Honor your father and your mother.

Did I honor and obey my parents? Did I respect others with lawful authority, especially teachers? Have I talked back? Did I fail to help at home or to spend time with my family? Do I blame my parents for my own shortcomings?

5. You shall not kill.

Did I give in to feelings of anger or jealousy? Have I kept hatred in my heart? Have I ever struck anyone in anger, intending to injure the person? Did I fight, give a bad example or cause scandal? Have I abused alcohol or drugs? Have I permitted or encouraged abortion? Have I thought about suicide? Have I killed someone? Have I killed someone with gossip or what I've said?

6. You shall not commit adultery.

Did I consent to impure glances, passionate kisses, or sinful touches? Did I give my mind over to lustful thoughts or fantasies? Was I immodest in dress or behavior? Did I look at pornography, impure books, magazines or videos? Am I guilty of impurity with myself, premarital sex, oral sex, touching of genitals, or adultery? Do I avoid laziness, gluttony, idleness and the occasions of impurity?

7. You shall not steal.

Have I stolen what is not mine, what or how much? Did I return it or make up for what I have stolen? Have I cheated on tests or homework?

Did I waste time at work? Have I written graffiti (this steals nature's beauty)? Have I been extravagant in my manner of life, to the neglect of the poor at home and abroad?

8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

Have I lied, gossiped, or talked about people behind their back? Do I always tell the truth? Am I sincere? Did I reveal secrets that should have been kept confidential? In any of my previous confessions, did I lie to or deliberately conceal something from the priest? Am I critical, negative or uncharitable in my talk? Have I injured the reputation of others by speaking about their failures and sins with little desire or intention to help them? Have I condoned prejudice and hatred toward people of other nationalities, races or religions?

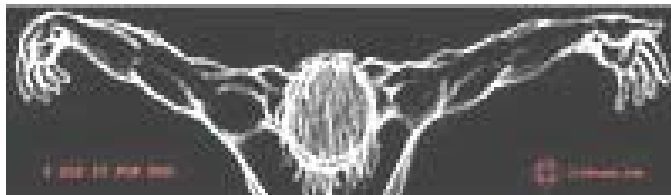
9. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.

Have I consented to impure thoughts? Have I encouraged them by stares, curiosity or impure conversations? Did I neglect to control my imagination or desire of other people? Have I rejected my family in my heart, wishing to distance myself emotionally and personally from them?

10. You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.

Is my heart greedy? Am I jealous of what another has? Am I envious of others because I do not have what they have? Do I habitually compare myself with others? Am I moody or gloomy? Do I work, study and keep busy to counter idle thoughts? Am I critical, negative, or uncharitable in my thoughts of others? Is my heart set on earthly possessions or on the treasures in heaven?

HOW MUCH DO YOU LOVE ME?



“This much.” he said. Then he stretched out his arms and died.

Liturgical Ministry Evaluation

1. In what ministry did you participate?
2. Was it what you expected?
3. What did you like most about your experience?
4. What did you like least?
5. How did you benefit from this specific ministry in the Mass?
6. Beside yourself, who did this experience benefit?
7. What did you learn from this experience?

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COMMUNITY BUILDING PROJECT EVALUATION

1. What type of service did you perform?
2. Was it what you expected?
3. What did you like most about your "Living your Faith" experience?
4. What did you like least?
5. How did you benefit from your service?
6. Beside yourself, who did this experience benefit?

What did you learn from this experience?

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What did you learn from this experience?

Do you know your "stuff"?

These are questions about the church and about your parish that you should be able to answer. Some questions can be answered from memory; some questions will require research. Some can be found in the parish bulletin, Catechism of the Catholic Church or sacred scripture. You can work on these questions with your mentor, a parent, or a group of candidates. Of course, you are discouraged from simply copying the answers from one another. (DON'T EVEN THINK ABOUT IT!)

1. What is the weekend Mass schedule for St. Joseph's?

2. List the times when the sacrament of Reconciliation is offered at St. Joseph's?
3. When are weekday Masses celebrated at St. Joseph's?
4. What are the requirements at St. Joseph's to qualify as a lector?
5. What are the requirements at St. Joseph's to qualify as a Minister of Holy Communion?

6. Give the full name of the bishop of the diocese of Crookston? Where does he live?

7. List at least five parish organizations at St. Joseph's and the work done by each.

8. List three agenda items from a recent parish council meeting.

9. Name three laypersons who are employed at St. Joseph's and the positions of each.

10. Write the Our Father—neatly and with correct spelling.

11. Write the Hail Mary—neatly and with correct spelling.

12. Write the words to the Sign of the Cross.

13. Write the Ten Commandments (in proper order).

14. What are the two "Great Commandments" that sum up the whole law of God? (see Mark 12:28-31).

15. What is the name of your diocesan newspaper? Who is the editor? Name three regular features.

16. Name three national Catholic newspapers or magazines.

17. Give the name of a religious bookstore in your area.

18. What is the average weekly monetary contribution of the adults in your parish? How much does the parish collect each week?

19. At what age is a member of your parish expected to begin to contribute monetarily to the support of the parish?

20. How is the money that is collected used to support your parish?

21. What are the three theological virtues?

22. What are the four cardinal virtues?

23. What is the meaning of the word "catholic"?

24. Write the Eight Beatitudes. (see Matthew 5).

25. What are the "Stations of the Cross"? Explain.

26. Can a Catholic receive Holy Communion at a non-Catholic service? Why or why not?

27. Can a non-Catholic receive Holy Communion at Mass? Why or why not?

28. Who can administer the sacrament of Baptism?

29. What conditions must parents fulfill in order to have their child baptized?

30. What is required for worthy reception of Confirmation?

31. How is the sacrament of Anointing the Sick celebrated?

32. When should the sacrament of Anointing be received?

33. What help does the sick person receive from the sacrament of Anointing?

34. What is required to receive Holy Communion worthily?
35. How should a person prepare to receive Holy Communion? What should one do immediately after receiving?
36. What is meant by the theological term *transubstantiation*?
37. What is required to receive Holy Orders in the Roman Catholic Church today?
38. What special graces and powers does a priest receive through the sacrament of Holy Orders?
39. How is the sacrament of Holy Orders administered?
40. What is required to receive the sacrament of Matrimony worthily?
41. Under what conditions might a priest refuse the sacrament of Matrimony to a couple?
42. Who administers the sacrament of Matrimony?
43. Priests in the Roman Catholic Church are required to take a promise of celibacy. What is the purpose of this law?
44. What is meant by the *seal of confession*?
45. Give two other names for the sacrament of Reconciliation?

46. What do you do when you go to Confession? Give a step-by-step description?

47. What are the responsibilities of the Baptismal sponsor (God-parent)?

48. Who can be an attendant at a Catholic wedding? Can a Catholic be an attendant at a non-Catholic wedding?

49. What are the two main parts of the Mass? What takes place during each?

50. Put these parts of the Mass in sequential order:

Prayer over the gifts

Sign of the Cross

First Reading

Sign of Peace

Communion

Second Reading

Holy, Holy, Holy

Our Father

Homily

Prayer after Communion

Opening Prayer

Penitential Rite

Gospel

Blessing

Dismissal

Eucharistic Prayer

51. What is the position of the Catholic Church on divorce and remarriage? How is divorce different from annulment?

52. Under what conditions does the Church grant a marriage annulment?

53. List the five Joyful Mysteries of the rosary.
54. List the five Sorrowful Mysteries of the rosary.
55. List the five Glorious Mysteries of the rosary.
56. List the five Luminous Mysteries of the rosary.
57. What is an ecumenical council? How many ecumenical councils have there been in the history of the church?
58. What was the most recent ecumenical council? When and where was it held? What are some of the changes it brought to the church?
59. List the last five popes, the years of their papacy, and one significant fact about each.
60. Define **collegiality** as related to the college of bishops.
61. What is meant by the term *ecumenism*?

62. What is meant by *infallibility*? Under what conditions are the teachings of the pope considered infallible?

63. Describe each of these Church structures:

Archdiocese

College of Cardinals

Parish

Diocese

Deanery

Pastoral Council

64. Describe each of these roles or positions in the Church:

Pope

Priest

Nun/Sister

Cardinal

Deacon

Catechist

Bishop

Monsignor

DRE

65. In what three languages were the books of the Bible first written?

66. What is meant by the term *septuagint? vulgate?*

67. Tell whether each of these English translations of the Bible is accepted by the Catholics, Protestants or both.

King James

Good News

Revised Standard

New Jerusalem

The Way

New American

68. Which English bible translation is used in Catholic liturgies?

69. List the names of the twelve apostles.

70. Identify each of these Old Testament characters:

Abraham

Joseph

Sarah

Esther

Jacob

Rebecca

71. Identify each of these Old Testament characters:

Isaiah

Solomon

Miriam

Moses

Ruth

Jonathon

72. Identify each of these New Testament characters:

Simon Peter
Mary Magdalene
Anna
Paul
Nicodemus
Judas Iscariot
Martha

73. Identify each of these New Testament characters:

The Beloved Disciple
Luke
Saul
Timothy
Thomas
Stephen

74. Identify the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit; where are they referenced in the scripture:

75. Identify the twelve fruits of the Holy Spirit; where are they referenced in scripture and the Catechism of the Catholic Church:

76. Define these biblical terms:

Pentateuch
Yahweh
Pharisee
Psalm
Exodus
Sabbath

77. When is Advent celebrated? What special prayers and practices are associated with Advent?
78. When is Lent celebrated? What special prayers and practices are associated with Lent?
79. What are the holy days of obligation? List them and give the dates when each is celebrated (Hint: The next question does not answer all six.)
80. Identify these feast days:
- Ash Wednesday
 - Holy Thursday
 - Good Friday
 - Holy Saturday
 - Easter
 - Pentecost
81. What is the distinction between the virgin birth and the immaculate conception?
82. What is fasting? What are the rules governing fasting in your diocese?
83. What is abstinence? What are the rules governing abstinence in your diocese?

84. Where do you find the letters *INRI*? What do they stand for?
85. What is the official teaching of the Catholic Church on artificial birth control?
86. What is the official teaching of the Catholic Church on pre-marital sexual intercourse?
87. What are the three vows taken by men and women religious? What does each vow mean?
88. Does a wedding Mass on a Saturday afternoon fulfill the Sunday Mass obligation? A funeral Mass on a Saturday morning?
89. How many different colors of vestments are worn at Mass? For what kind of feast or season is each color worn?
90. When is Confirmation celebrated at St. Joseph's this year?

Sponsor/Candidate Sessions & Dates

All lessons are to be prepared before each session with your sponsor. Answers to questions are to be written. We have included prayers, but you may make up your own or use from the “Basic Prayers” section of the candidate journal.

Session I

Getting to know one Another

Opening Prayer: Thank you God for those who love us – those who are there when we need encouragement, a kindly ear, a good talking to, a pat on the back, a shared meal, or the gift of their time. Thank you God for our ability to show love to other people, for the times when we have encouraged, listened, shared advice, patted one another’s back, shared a meal, or given our time. For all these gifts of love, we give you thanks.

1. Recall one person or one event that stands out to you as special and which greatly affected your faith.

2. Share your faith story/journey with each other.

3. How have my outlook, my attitude, and my faith been affirmed, challenged or changed because of this experience. Discuss. (Please write a short paragraph).

Closing Prayer: Listening is a great gift that you, God, and the people in our lives can give us. Thank you for all those who have heard us out, who let us share our pain and joy, who have taken and words and feelings seriously, who have valued and appreciated what we have said – for all our friends, we give you thanks, God who always listens – may we listen to theirs, too. Amen.

Session II
Being Called

Opening Prayer: God of power and love, open our hearts in welcome. Remove the things that hinder us from receiving Christ with joy so that we may share His wisdom and become one with Him. Amen.

1. Read together Genesis 12:1-5 and Jeremiah 1:4-10.

2. What do these passages say to you?

3. Were you ever asked to do something or go somewhere alone and were unsure of the outcome?

4. Have you ever experienced fear of the Lord's call due to your age?

5. How have your outlook, attitude and faith been affirmed, challenged or changed because of this experience?

Closing Prayer: Dear Lord, keep us, your children born of water and the Spirit, faithful to our calling. May we all follow in Jesus' path of service to humanity and reflect the glory of His Kingdom. Amen.

(Close with praying the Nicene's Creed together, this is in your Section of Basic Prayers). Be ready to discuss the Creed for your next meeting together.

Session III
Basic Beliefs

Opening Prayer: Dear Jesus, give us faith. Make us good people that we can love, learn, lead lives with meaning, and hope as you intended us to. Grant us faith that you are with us because, in fear, we pray we are not always sure. In your name, Jesus Christ. Amen.

1. Say the Nicene's Creed together. Discuss.
2. To be a responsible, effective member of the faith community, it is necessary to have a basic awareness and acceptance of that community's tradition and practices. What have I done to become more aware of these things?

3. Read each of the following statements:
 - God created and creates the universe and continues to hold it in existence and exercise control over it without interfering with but rather empowering our free will toward the good.
 - All humanity participates in sin to some degree and radically needs God's help to do good and to be saved.
 - Jesus is the only Son of God, fully human and fully divine.
 - It is through Jesus, his teachings, his example, and ultimately his saving death and resurrection that all people have access to the redemption offered by God.
 - Though all Churches and religions can help people find the salvation offered by God through Jesus Christ, the one true Church founded by Jesus upon his apostles subsists in the Catholic Church.
 - Though the Catholic Church has a history that includes faults and weaknesses, it is still the best means I have to know about God and to become the fully human person God intends me to become.
 - The sacraments have the power to put me in contact with the Risen Jesus and to experience His saving actions just as truly as if I had lived and walked with him two thousand years ago.

Closing Prayer: Dear God, give us an increase in faith so that we may rest in you. Increase our faith so that we can perform the same works as you did. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Session IV
Prayer

Opening Prayer: Dear Jesus, you said where two or three are gathered in your name there you will be. Be with us now as we pray the prayer you taught us. Our Father...

Prayer is an essential skill for effective membership in the Faith community and for maintaining an overall Christian lifestyle.

How one prays is not as critical as THAT one prays.

Activity A

Listed below are four elements that affect our ability to pray and common obstacles related to these. Share together how these problems affect your own prayer life and try to identify practical things you can do to overcome them. Write out possible solutions to each one.

1. TIME
 - Can't find time?
 - Don't take time?
 - Others?
 - Possible solution:

2. INNER QUIET
 - Can't seem to settle down?
 - Can't concentrate?
 - Other?
 - Possible solution:

3. EXTERNAL QUIET
 - Can't find a suitable quiet place for prayer?
 - Can't find a place with a good atmosphere for praying?
 - Other?
 - Possible solution:

4. AIDS TO PRAYER
 - Can't find the right book or other aid for praying?
 - Don't know how to use the bible well for this?
 - Other?
 - Possible solution:

Activity B

Read each of the following scripture passages about prayer. Write an answer to each question.

Luke 2:41-43

Matthew 6:5-15

Mark 7: 24-29

Mark 8:11-12

Matthew 18:19-20

1. What truth or principle does it seek to teach us about prayer?

2. Does my own prayer reflect that truth?

3. What can I do to insure that my prayer will possess that quality described in the scripture passages?

Closing Prayer: Try spontaneous prayer! Say whatever is in your heart.

Session V
Christian Life Style

Opening Prayer: God of love, we once again turn to you, asking for your Guidance and grace. Help us to acquire large-heartedness, clarity of purpose, purity of heart, and an ability to see through your eyes, so that we might truly love our brothers and sisters.

The overall spiritual life involves us in both positive practices and in a program of self-discipline aimed at rooting out or curbing weaknesses and bad habits we may possess. We try to maintain that balance between nurturing the good that is already there and curbing negative elements that may be present.

1. Scripture Search: Read the following scripture passages.

Luke 12:22-34

Matthew 5:21-24

Luke 17:1-11

Matthew 5:27-30

Luke 18:18-30

Matthew 5:38-42

Luke 19:11-27

Matthew 5:43-48

Matthew 6:1-4

2. Write out answers to each question.

- What is Jesus really asking of His followers in terms of life style?

- Do I expect people, myself included, to act like that? Why or why not?

- To what degree is that principle part of my own lifestyle? What do I need to do, if anything, to improve in this area?

- How responsible am I for the decisions I make?

- How do I involve God in my decision-making?

- How can I stand up for my Christian values in daily situations?

Closing Prayer: Close with prayers from your heart.

Session VI
Witness and Service

Opening Prayer: God, you have gifted each one of us with unique potential to do good for the human family. Thank you especially for the talents of (name them) which I see in (name the person you are praying with). (Each person to pray at loud here).

Gracious God, we thank you for these gifts, unique to each one of us. Let us never be jealous of talents we don't have, but rather let us rejoice in who have made us and dedicate our gifts to the general good. Amen.

An integral part of committed membership in the Church is sharing the day-to-day fellowship and concerns of the local parish community and being willing to share one's own time, treasure and talent in response to the needs experienced by the community. To be a confirmed member of the faith community requires a willingness to 'go public' and to make Jesus visible to society at large by one's own actions and behavior.

1. Under each of the categories, identify what you are doing to share your time, talents and treasure (money) on behalf of the parish and/or others in need of service.
2. Decide what more can be done in these areas in response to your vocation to love and be servant unto others. In terms of treasure, it is good to evaluate just how you are presently spending whatever money you have available for personal use. Where do we place our values and priorities?

What am I doing?

TIME TALENT TREASURE

Ways I can further share and serve:

TIME TALENT TREASURE

3. Read each of the following scripture passages about witness.

Acts 2: 42-47

Luke 12: 8-12

1 Corinthians 12

James 2: 14-26

Isaiah 6: 1-9

4. As you reflect on your future adult life in the Church, following Confirmation, discuss what your faith life will be like. What contributions of service would you like to make to the Church in the future? What special role(s) will you take? (Write down your thoughts and ideas about this).

5. How will my faith life change as a result of my Confirmation? (Write down your thoughts and ideas about this).

Closing Prayer: End with your own prayer between both the sponsor and candidate.