

SHEPHERD OF SOULS AREA FAITH COMMUNITY CONFIRMATION 2023-2024: PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS



Class Attendance

Candidates are expected to attend all scheduled classes. This includes the Wednesday evening classes for all 1st and 2nd year Confirmation candidates, as well as the monthly Sunday evening classes for 2nd year candidates. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to notify the Confirmation Coordinator of any absences. Absences may be excused in cases of illness/injury/health issues or emergency situations. The Coordinator will determine whether an absence is excused. An excess of unexcused absences may result in dismissal from the program. More than two excused Sunday absences, or four Wednesday absences, may result in a requested meeting with the Coordinator to discuss the situation.

Mass Attendance and Mass Journals

Regular and consistent Mass attendance is expected and required of all Confirmation candidates. Both 1st and 2nd year Confirmation candidates will be issued a Mass journal which they will keep and write in throughout the faith formation year. Once per month (from October through April), they must take notes at a Mass and present their answers to their catechists. The catechists will keep track of the completion of these monthly entries and inform the Confirmation Coordinator if any candidates have failed to complete them. The questions to be answered each month are as follows:

- **Pick one of the Mass readings (1st Reading, 2nd Reading, or the Gospel). What is something that stood out to you, and why? Provide details.**
- **Briefly summarize the homily. How can you apply the homily's message to your daily life?**

Each answer should consist of at least one *detailed* paragraph. The notebooks will include these instructions. Candidates will be asked to discuss their responses with their sponsors outside of class. Failure to complete these assignments will result in a phone call or e-mail from the Coordinator to discuss the situation.

Service Hours

Candidates will be expected to complete six (6) hours of service each year they are in the Confirmation program, for a total of twelve (12) hours. They will be performed by the candidates on their own time, ideally alongside their sponsors and/or families. It is possible that a service project may be offered in class, but this is not guaranteed. Candidates and families can access a list of suggested/recommended service project ideas on the parish website. Should a candidate wish to pursue an idea that is not on the list, the candidate's parents may present it to the Coordinator for review and approval. Candidates may spread out their service project hours however they wish within each year of the Confirmation program. (Candidates must complete six hours each year; they may not, for example, do all twelve hours as sophomores and then do none as juniors.)

Confirmation Commitment Sunday

2nd year Confirmation candidates and their sponsors will attend a Confirmation Commitment Mass on Sunday, Oct. 15th. The purpose of this Mass is to celebrate the candidate's commitment to Confirmation preparation. It is also a chance for the whole parish to embrace and pray for the candidates. Each of the parishes in our AFC will host its own Commitment Mass, as opposed to having one Mass at a single location. The Commitment Mass for St. Philip's will be held at 8:00 AM. If a sponsor is unable to attend, or one has not yet been selected, a parent may fill in for the sponsor.

Confirmation Retreat

All 1st year candidates are required to attend a Confirmation retreat. The retreat is designed to inspire candidates, build upon their faith, and instill within their hearts a deeper relationship with God. **NET Ministries will be sending a missionary team to host a single-day retreat here at Shepherd of Souls. The date for this retreat is Jan. 29, 2024.** If a candidate misses the retreat for a valid reason (such as illness or a family emergency), the candidate's family will need to discuss alternatives with the Coordinator.

We will provide more information as we draw nearer to the retreat date. Prior to the retreat, the Coordinator will provide families with the rules, guidelines, and expectations of the retreat, as well as other important details, including cell phone policies and parish staff contact info. The consequences for violating these rules will also be clearly laid out.

Sponsors

Each candidate is to have one sponsor who is:

- At least 16 years old and sufficiently mature for this role
- A fully initiated Catholic (Baptized, First Communion, Confirmed)
- A practicing Catholic in good standing with the Church
- Not the candidate's own father or mother

The duty of a sponsor is to be act as a role model and witness to our Catholic faith, to support the candidate and their families on the faith journey, and to pray with and for the candidate. A godparent is the recommended choice for a sponsor, but this is not strictly required.

The sponsors of 2nd year candidates are asked to attend the monthly Sunday evening classes. **They are also asked to be present at the Confirmation Mass itself on May 5th at 2:00 PM at St. Anthony's in Watkins.** Candidates and sponsors are encouraged to meet outside of class and discuss issues relevant to the candidate's spiritual journey. A sponsor's guidebook is available with more detailed information.

1st year candidates must decide on their sponsors by Jan. 3rd. 2nd year candidates must decide upon their sponsors by Nov. 12th (if they haven't already). An online sacramental information form will be made available, including fields for the sponsor's name and contact info.

Letter to the Bishop and Catechist Interviews

Each 2nd year candidate will write a letter to the bishop indicating his or her readiness for the sacrament of Confirmation. Instructions and criteria for this letter can be found on the parish website. **The candidate will complete the letter at home and will submit it to the Coordinator by the due date of Dec. 13th.**

Interviews are an integral part of Confirmation preparation and provide a useful tool in assessing the growth and readiness of the candidate. It is an opportunity for the catechist to evaluate the candidate's attitude regarding the Confirmation process, and the spiritual growth of the candidate through the process. Interviews for 2nd year candidates are tentatively scheduled for April 2024.

Catechists will let candidates know in advance what day and time their interview is scheduled for. Interviews will be approximately ten minutes in length.

Confirmation Checklist

Requirements

Due Dates

Attend Confirmation Commitment Sunday Mass
(2nd year candidates only)

Oct. 15th

Write a Letter of Intent to the Bishop
(2nd year candidates only)

Due by Dec. 13th

Select a Confirmation/saint name*

Due by Jan. 3rd (1st year)
Due by Nov. 12th (2nd year)

Choose a sponsor*

Due by Jan. 3rd (1st year)
Due by Nov. 12th (2nd year)

Submit copy of baptismal certificate**

Due by Jan. 3rd (1st year)
Due by Nov. 12th (2nd year)

Fulfill all service project requirements
(All candidates)

Due by Apr. 24th

Complete the interview with catechist
(2nd year candidates only)

April (specific dates TBD)

Attend the Confirmation Retreat
(1st year candidates only)

Jan. 29th (Held at Our Lady)

**There will be an online registration form available to collect this information. It will include required fields for Confirmation name, sponsor (including contact info) and sacramental information.*

***If your child was baptized at St. Philip, St. John, Our Lady, or St. Gertrude, then we should already have their baptismal certificate on file. Only those families whose children were baptized elsewhere will need to submit a copy of their child's baptismal certificate.*

Confirmation Calendar 2023 – 2024



AFC Sunday Evening Confirmation Sessions (6:30 – 8:00 PM)

(For 2nd year Confirmation candidates and their sponsors)

October 1 * November 12 * December 3 * January 7 * February 4 * March 10 * April 28

(The April 28th will also include the Confirmation Mass rehearsal.)

St. Philip Wednesday Evening Confirmation Sessions (6:30 – 7:30 PM)

(For both 1st year and 2nd year Confirmation candidates)

September 13, 20, 27 * October 4, 11, 25 * November 1, 8, 15, 29 * December 6, 13, 20
January 3, 10, 17, 24 * February 7, 14, 21, 28 * March 6, 13, 20 * April 3, 10, 17, 24

The Churches of St. John's and Our Lady have their own Wed. evening schedules. Please consult the Shepherd of Souls website calendar or contact Dcn. John Hansen or Deb McCann for St. John's and Our Lady schedules, respectively.

Confirmation Commitment Sunday

(For 2nd year Confirmation candidates)

Sunday, October 15 – refer to AFC Sunday Mass schedules. St. Philip's Mass is at 8:00 AM.

Confirmation Retreat

(For 1st year Confirmation candidates)

Jan. 29, 4:00 – 9:00 PM

Confirmation Liturgy

Held at St. Anthony

Sunday, May 5, at 2:00 PM