

# Confirmation Preparation

By a signing with the gift of the Spirit, confirmation enriches the baptized with the Holy Spirit, binding them more perfectly to the Church, and strengthening them in their witness to Christ by word and deed and in their work to bring to its fullness the Body of Christ. Confirmation is conferred through anointing with chrism and the laying on of hands.

## Frequently Asked Questions regarding Confirmation

### **What is the age for confirmation?**

A minimum age of 16 has been established by the Archdiocese of Milwaukee for the celebration of confirmation.

### **Who can serve as a confirmation sponsor?**

A person who is serving as a confirmation sponsor must:

- be designated by the one to be confirmed;
- be 16 years old;
- be a Catholic who has been confirmed and who has received the sacrament of Eucharist and leads a life in harmony with the faith and role to be undertaken;
- not be bound by any canonical penalty legitimately imposed or declared;
- not be the father or mother of the one to be confirmed.

### **Can parents demand that their children be confirmed?**

No. Confirmation must be the free choice of the individual. Parents may require their children to attend confirmation preparation sessions.

### **Do Confirmation candidates need a confirmation name?**

Each year, as individuals prepare for the Sacrament of Confirmation, there may be questions regarding the name used by the candidate. These guidelines will help in formation of your confirmation candidates.

Candidates may use their baptismal name or another Christian name when receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation. A Christian name would be the name of a saint or blessed.

Derivatives of names (Kelly for Catherine; Jenna for Genevieve) or Old Testament names are also appropriate. Candidates may use their first or second names if they are Christian names, or they may select a new Christian name. The candidate should know the relationship of the name to the religious Christian tradition. Exceptions can be made if a particular non-Christian or family name has significant meaning for a candidate that can be articulated to the bishop. Most importantly, candidates should be encouraged to learn about their patron as part of their preparation for the sacrament and should particularly focus on the virtues of their patron they wish to emulate.

### **May parents be confirmation sponsors?**

No, but their role in the faith development of their children should not be underplayed or minimized.

### **Should a person be confirmed prior to marriage?**

If possible, confirmation should be celebrated before the sacrament of marriage. If a person has not been confirmed and requests marriage, the confirmation should be celebrated if the person can be adequately prepared. If it is impossible to prepare someone adequately before marriage, then the priest should proceed with the wedding, but use every means possible to see that the person is confirmed on the first occasion after the marriage has taken place.

### **Is it required that Catholics be confirmed before they marry in the Church?**

If they can do so without serious inconvenience, Catholics who have not yet received the sacrament of confirmation are to receive it prior to being married. If a person has not been confirmed and requests marriage, the confirmation should be celebrated if the person can be adequately prepared. If it is impossible to prepare someone adequately before marriage, then the priest should proceed with the wedding, but use every means possible to see that the person is confirmed on the first occasion after the marriage has taken place.

### **Why isn't confirmation celebrated at the Catholic high schools?**

The parish is the center for initiation and is the place where adult faith is lived out.

### **Requirements to receive the sacrament of Confirmation – taken from: Archdiocese of Milwaukee Sacramental Guidelines**

*“There are two kinds of preparation: remote and immediate. Remote preparation refers to the years of catechesis that have led to this moment; immediate preparation refers to catechesis for confirmation specifically. A parish confirmation program should not attempt to provide the more general catechesis of remote preparation, but should focus on confirmation itself. In effect, confirmation preparation should not try to do more than is intended. Immediate preparation should last no more than one year.”*

#### **Immediate Preparation:**

**Message:** Confirmation preparation itself is concerned with the rite of Confirmation and the signs, symbols, and images related to Confirmation. It focuses on a life of Christian discipleship lived in the context of a Catholic Community. Ingredients of the message component of immediate preparation for confirmation include: laying on of hands, anointing, sign of the cross, baptismal vows, prayer, the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, litany, fasting, service, welcoming, study of scripture, contact with the community of believers, discipline, water, oil, candles, gifts of the Holy Spirit, etc.

**Worship:** The Worship component of confirmation preparation included the opportunities for deepening prayer and faith. Commitment to Eucharist and Eucharist participation are central in the life of a fully initiated Catholic Christian. Saying “yes” to confirmation means saying “yes” to participation in a Eucharistic community.

The retreat is integral to a candidate's preparation and is not to be omitted without serious reason, weighed on an individual basis.

**Community:** Confirmation preparation takes place in the context of community. Confirmation candidates need committed adults to lead them to a recognition of and identification with the Christian

community and its beliefs. For this reason, it is important that the total parish somehow feel a part of the confirmation program.

**Service:** As part of preparation for confirmation, the involvement in community service is critical. “The experience of Christian Community leads naturally to service.” To live as Christ lived is to live a life that responds to the needs of others – at home, in school, in the community, etc. While service is an essential component of preparation for confirmation, it should be seen more as constitutive of the gospel than as a project to be completed or hours to be counted.

With this in mind, candidates for Confirmation will be asked to complete a total of five (5) service components or events as a requirement for their preparation for the sacrament. Three (3) components should be done within the parish, and two (2) components should be done within their community.

Parish events would be any event that requires volunteers that happen at St. Gregory the Great for example: parish festival, St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry, altar serving, choir, etc.

Community events would be anything that requires volunteers that happen in your neighborhood, your school, your city, or any national or international organizations that you participate in.

Please remember that whatever service you choose to do, it must serve others and not yourself or an organization that you are involved in. For example:

Your baseball team is having a car wash to earn money for new equipment and your coach tells you, that you are expected to be there to help. – This would not be considered service because you would be someone benefitting from the funds being raised.

Your baseball team is having a bake sale because one of your teammate’s parent is being treated for cancer and the funds will help with expenses during this time since they are unable to work, so you volunteer to bake cookies and help with the sale. – This would be considered service because you took time to help in some way.

A list of service opportunities within the parish will be listed on the parish website. Please complete all service by April 1, the year you wish to be confirmed. *(Some events will happen after April 1, for these events, please notify the Director of Faith Formation)*