

SEALED

2020-2021 Confirmation Packet

BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN CHRIST,

Welcome to this blessed journey toward the Sacrament of Confirmation! In this packet you will find a variety of information, including important dates and forms. Please hang onto it throughout the year so you may refer back as much as you need. You should find that it answers most of your questions, but as always, please feel free to contact me via email (matt@ollparish.org) or phone (360-695-1366 ext. 109) whenever you need further clarification.

WHAT IS CONFIRMATION

Confirmation is the final of the three *Sacraments of Initiation*. “Confirmation completes the grace of Baptism by a special outpouring of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which seal or ‘confirm’ the baptized in union with Christ and equip them for active participation in the worship and apostolic life of the Church” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church Glossary*). “By the sacrament of Confirmation, the baptized are more perfectly bound to the Church and are enriched with a special strength of the Holy Spirit. Hence they are, as true witnesses of Christ, more strictly obliged to spread and defend the faith by word and deed” (*CCC 1285*).

Confirmation is not a completion of sorts, but a new beginning, a stepping out into a new role as members of the Body of Christ. It is important to note, however, that while parents are often the ones making sure their child receives this Sacrament, the grace of Confirmation does not take root unless the one receiving it has chosen the Sacrament of their own accord.

A NOTE ON ABSENCES

Teens – I want you to want this. Confirmation isn’t about crossing yet another Sacrament off the checklist, nor is it about pleasing your parents’ wishes. *This is about you*. This is an incredible opportunity to truly come into your own. There will always be another soccer game, another sleepover, another weekend away... but you only get to be Confirmed once. I want to challenge you to recognize your Confirmation preparation as a priority.

That being said, there are certainly some reasonable excuses to miss an event: serious illness, family emergencies, birth of a sibling, school theatre performance, etc. **Communication is key**. If you won’t be there for any reason, you need to let me know, otherwise I worry about you! There are also some *unreasonable* excuses for missing an event: being scheduled for work, going to a friend’s birthday party, and homework that you put off until the last minute being a few.

CONFIRMATION SPONSOR

Basic requirements to be a Confirmation sponsor:

- Be at least 18 years of age
- Have received Baptism, consistently receive the Eucharist, and be Confirmed in the Catholic Faith
- Be an active Catholic, consistently attending Sunday and Holy Day Masses and generally participating in the Sacramental life of the Church (**If not an active member of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, a signed letter from the Pastor at the sponsor's home parish must be provided**)
- Live a life consistent with the views and teachings of the Catholic Church
- **Be available to meet once a month with their Confirmation candidate (whether in person, over the phone, etc.) and complete 5 hours of community service with candidate.**
- The sponsor *may not be* a candidate's parent, guardian, or boyfriend/girlfriend

It is important to note that the sponsor must be a person whom the candidate can feel comfortable opening up to regarding issues of life and faith. While parents are encouraged to suggest suitable individuals to their child, the choice of a sponsor is ultimately up to the Confirmation candidate, and not up to their parent or guardian.

WHO IS A CONFIRMATION SPONSOR?

Like a parent, a Confirmation sponsor's job is to be an up-close-and-personal witness of the Christian life to their candidate. The sponsor's task does not end when the teen is confirmed; rather, the sponsor is obligated to help the teen continue to grow in faith, to help in his or her Christian walk throughout life, and to seek out the candidate if he or she ever goes astray. The sponsor should seek to communicate the Faith to his or her candidate, who, throughout the Sacrament, becomes in a very real sense, that sponsor's "spiritual child." Sponsors should commit to praying daily for their candidates and remind their teens that they are praying for them.

WHAT DOES A CONFIRMATION SPONSOR DO?

Throughout the Confirmation preparation process, a sponsor should be an active part of the candidate's life. **Sponsors and Candidates will be required to meet once a month to discuss how their Confirmation journey is going, what they have learned in class, etc. and complete 5 hours of community service together before the Confirmation date.**

TAKE YOUR TIME (but not too much time...)

Choosing a sponsor is not always an easy task. If you have had someone in mind for a long time, ask them! If you're not sure who to ask, take your time. Pray for the Holy Spirit to guide you. Some people to consider may include: godparents, parishioners at Our Lady of Lourdes, a youth ministry volunteer, someone on the parish staff, or a teacher from a Catholic school. If you are having trouble finding a sponsor, talk with your parents or Matt for some suggestions. It is important to find a sponsor early on in the Confirmation process, as you will want their support as much as possible.

*** Confirmation sponsor forms are due no later than Sunday November 15th ***

CONFIRMATION SPONSOR FORM

(to be completed by sponsor)

To be a sponsor, you must:

- Be at least 18 years of age
- Have received Baptism, consistently receive the Eucharist, and be Confirmed in the Catholic Faith
- Be an active Catholic, consistently attending Sunday and Holy Day Masses and generally participating in the Sacramental life of the Church (**If not an active member of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, a signed letter from the Pastor at the sponsor's home parish must be provided**)
- Live a life consistent with the views and teachings of the Catholic Church
- **Be available to meet once a month with their Confirmation candidate (whether in person, over the phone, etc.) and complete 5 hours of community service with candidate**
- *You may not be* a candidate's parent, guardian, or boyfriend/girlfriend

What does this mean for me?

Like a parent, a Confirmation sponsor's job is to be an up-close-and-personal witness of the Christian life to your candidate. Your task does not end when the teen is confirmed; rather, you are obligated to help the teen continue to grow in faith, to help in their Christian walk throughout life, and to seek out the candidate if they ever go astray. You should seek to communicate the Faith to your candidate, who, throughout the Sacrament, becomes in a very real sense, your "spiritual child." You should commit to praying daily for your candidate and remind your teen that you are praying for them.

Throughout the Confirmation preparation process, you should be an active part of the candidate's life. Plan to meet regularly with your candidate once a month in person, over the phone, via Skype, etc. to discuss how their Confirmation journey is going, what they have learned in class, etc. and complete 5 hours of community service together before the Confirmation date.

Candidate's Name: _____

SPONSOR INFORMATION

Name: _____ **Age:** _____

Address: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip Code:** _____

Home Phone: _____ **Cell Phone:** _____

Email

Address: _____

Registered Parishioner of (parish name): _____

Parish City: _____ **Parish State:** _____

Baptized at (parish name): _____

Parish City: _____ **Parish State:** _____

Are you married? Y N If yes, were you married in the Catholic Church? Y N

I understand the responsibilities that I am undertaking and have both the desire and the intention to fulfill them.

Sponsor Signature

Date

CONFIRMATION SAINT

WHO ARE THE SAINTS?

What an incredible gift we have in the communion of saints. They are like us! They are our ancestors, our teachers, our friends, our siblings. They are real, truly human. They are sinners – they are repentant children of God.

The saints lived on this earth and experienced suffering, joy, pain, broken promises, peace, frustration, war, injury, heart-break... they know our hearts. But mostly, they know what it takes to be united with God here on this messy earth. They know what it takes to live well for Him.

WHY DO WE CHOOSE CONFIRMATION SAINTS?

We choose a Confirmation saint (like we choose a Confirmation sponsor) not out of due diligence to the “rule,” but rather because *we realize how unfortunate it would be to travel alone*. We recognize how important it is to know your Confirmation saint not only by name, but also by story. The saints have so much to teach us about this journey.

Pick a saint who speaks to you somehow. Know their story. But, mostly know the power of their prayer. Ask for their intercession like you would ask for the prayers of your friends. Saying “yes” to a Confirmation saint is like saying “yes, you may always pray for my poor and weary soul.”

How fantastic is that!? I pray that in this process you don’t just find a Confirmation saint, but instead an incredible friend.

RESOURCES

<http://lifeteen.com/blog/biggest-best-list-confirmation-saints-guys-girls/>

<http://catholicsaints.info/patronage-topics/>

<http://catholicsaints.info/alphabetical-list/>

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

[Lives of the Saints](#) by Fr. Alan Butler

SPECIAL NOTE

Please DO NOT choose a saint simply because they are a patron of something you enjoy. Take the time to research and choose a saint whose life you identify with or relate to in some way, or whose story you find powerful; read their quotes or writings in your personal prayer, and seek to emulate them in your everyday life. At one of our future SEALED sessions, you will be expected to discuss your saint and why you chose them in small group.

Your Name (first & last): _____

Confirmation Saint Name: _____

Feast Day: _____

*** Confirmation saint forms are due no later than Sunday December 13th ***

A LETTER TO FAMILIES

In a 1990 keynote address to the Family Life Congress in Phoenix, Arizona, Bishop Joseph Bernardin of Chicago said, “despite the fact that more formal or systematic catechesis usually takes place outside the home, informal or spontaneous catechesis in the home is simply irreplaceable.” In a recent study conducted by the National Study on Youth and Religion, **the majority of teenagers named their parents as their number-one spiritual influence.** You provide your child’s first glimpse at the unconditional love that is at the heart of the gospel. You are also the first to show your children, by example, what it means to be a disciple of the Lord. Your teen’s faith tends to mimic your own.

It is essential, then, that you live as an example of the faith, especially in this formative Confirmation year. If they see you attending Mass, partaking of the Sacraments, praying daily, and witnessing to others, chances are that they will seek to do the same. Be present to their journey, be willing to ask them questions about what they’re learning – many times we have something to learn from them ourselves. If they have questions that you don’t know the answer to, that’s okay! Tell them that you don’t know, and work with them to find an answer. There are many good resources for answers to our questions: the Catechism of the Catholic Church, Sacred Scripture, encyclicals and other Church documents, and the writings of the saints, among many others.

If you ever need additional support in this process, please don’t hesitate to ask. I am here to support each of you as you walk with your teens as much as I am here to support your teens themselves.

WHAT I NEED FROM YOU

I truly cannot do this without you. In addition to being an example of faith to your child at home, I ask that each family set aside an event or activity to volunteer your time throughout the Confirmation year (though if you’d like to do more – I certainly won’t stop you). Please keep an eye on your email in the next few weeks for a link to sign up for a volunteer activity!

It is such a pleasure and a blessing for me to be able to work with your families in this process. If at any point in time you have questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me via email at matt@ollparish.org or via phone at (360) 695-1366 ext. 109 and I will get back to you as soon as possible.

Blessings,

Matt Nelson
matt@ollparish.org
360-695-1366 ext. 109
Pastoral Assistant for Youth/Young Adult Ministry
Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church