

# PROGRAM EXPECTATIONS

*“All Catholic youth who are candidates for the sacrament of Confirmation, even those who are home-schooled, must be enrolled in a parish process of preparation for the reception of the sacrament. They must participate in all of its communal dimensions (ritual, prayer services, etc.) and any other requirements determined by the parish.”*

*(Excerpt taken from the Archdiocese Policy on the Celebration of Confirmation)*

## **Parents’ Role:**

- ◆ Should recognize that they are the primary educators of their children.
- ◆ Should provide the office with a copy of their child’s baptismal certificate if they were *not* baptized at the Church of St. Joseph in Miesville.
- ◆ Should make sure their child attends class and comes prepared.
- ◆ Should serve as models for their child by practicing their Catholic Faith and attending Mass.
- ◆ Can assist their child in preparing for the reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation through prayer and encouragement.
- ◆ Should help their child understand that doing gifts of service is the beginning of a life committed to Christian service.
- ◆ Should become involved and guide your child throughout the entire Confirmation process.
- ◆ Should provide transportation for their children as needed to and from events.
- ◆ Assist your child in choosing an appropriate sponsor.
- ◆ Are encouraged to attend any classes, prayer services, retreats, speaker events, etc.
- ◆ Should attend Parent Meetings as scheduled.
- ◆ Are asked to assist the Teachers whenever possible or as needed.  
(i.e. help with driving to events, help in classroom or Mass or retreats as needed)
- ◆ All volunteers having regular and ongoing contact with minors must fulfill all OPCY requirements (Sign a Code of Conduct form, submit to a background check and attend a Virtus session)

## **Attendance**

- ◆ Participation and attendance in class are vital elements in preparing the Candidate for the reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation. It is expected that Candidates will not only make every effort to attend all classes, but also participate in all of its communal dimensions (ritual, prayer services, etc.) and any other requirements determined by the parish.”
- ◆ Candidates should come to class prepared (bring confirmation binder, book and bible to each class) and be willing to participate in activities and discussion.
- ◆ In case of illness, parents should call the office *prior* to class, and/or send a note or email.
- ◆ It is understandable that there may be times when an emergency or conflict arises. Such instances must be discussed with the teacher or the Faith Formation Coordinator, and arrangements will be made for a make-up assignment.
- ◆ Make-up assignments may consist of reading and/or written assignments and arranging with the catechist to view missed video segments.
- ◆ Candidates with excessive absences (4 or more), along with their parents, may be asked to meet with the Faith Formation Coordinator to evaluate whether the Candidate will be allowed to continue in the program, or whether they need to repeat the entire year.

### **Mass Participation (Homily Reflections Notes)**

- ◆ The Mass and the Eucharist are the very center of our Catholic faith. The obligation to attend Sunday and Holy Day Masses and to avoid unnecessary work on those days is a responsibility for all Catholics. We expect Candidates (and families) to understand and accept this precept of our Catholic Faith and attend Mass faithfully.
- ◆ **Year I** Candidates are asked to complete **Five “Homily Reflection Notes”**. Forms will be provided in the main church entrances. Notes must be signed by the presiding priest or deacon. Unsigned notes will not be accepted.
- ◆ In addition, Candidates will attend Mass as a class and participate in various Mass ministries on the Second Sunday of the month as assigned.

### **Special Mass Attendance:**

- ◆ Candidates are expected to attend special Masses at St. Joseph Church in which certain Confirmation Rites are to be conducted in the presence of the congregation. Parents and/or sponsors are included in some of these rites and should attend as well. These rites are: the **Rite of Welcoming** (Year I), the **Rite of Enrollment** (Year II) and either a **Rite of Sending or Receiving** before or after Candidates have been Confirmed (Year II).
- ◆ Candidates are to **attend one Lifeline** Mass/speaker event held at the NET Center on First Saturdays at least once in the two year process. This Mass gives the students the opportunity to celebrate Mass with youth from the Archdiocese.
- ◆ We recommend (not require) that families attend a Chrism Mass at the Cathedral held during Lent at least once in the two-year process because of the blessing of the chrism oils.

### **Interviews**

- ◆ Candidates are required to attend two interviews.
- ◆ **Year I- Initial Interview** (Candidate, Parent, Faith Formation Coordinator and Pastor)  
This is a time set aside for the Pastor to meet all the Candidates. Handbook will be reviewed and Candidates will be asked to sign a Commitment Form stating they understand what is required of them and their commitment to fulfill the requirements.
- ◆ **Year II-Final Interview** (Meet with Pastor personally before being confirmed)\_Pastor will assess the readiness of the Candidate for the reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation. If the Pastor deems it necessary, he may arrange a follow-up interview with candidate.

### **Retreats**

- ◆ Candidates are required to attend a **“Day Retreat”** each year with their Sponsors.
- ◆ Candidates are required to attend one **“Confirmation NET Weekend Retreat”** during the two year Confirmation preparation process. NET retreats are provided at least once a month from Sept-April. Current retreat dates are listed in the handbook. Parents must provide a \$50 non-refundable deposit. The parish will pay the remainder of the cost. If this presents a hardship, please contact the Faith Formation Office. There are two ways to register:
  1. Register online at netusa.org. You will need to pay the full cost of the retreat. St. Joseph Church will reimburse you the cost minus the \$50 deposit.
  2. Give a \$50 deposit check payable to “Church of St. Joseph”, to the Coordinator, who will register the Candidate. Please write Candidate’s name and date of retreat in the memo section of the check.
- ◆ The NET retreat was selected because it is specific to Confirmation—substitutions will be explored on a case-by-case basis. Adaptations can be made for those with Special Needs.

## Prayers

- ◆ All Candidates will need to know all the basic Catholic Prayers: The sign of the Cross, Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be, Act of Contrition, Apostles Creed, etc.
- ◆ Candidates should know the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit and be familiar with the Fruits of the Holy Spirit.

## Gifts of Service:

- Gifts of Service impart to our Catholic youth the importance of following the example of Jesus who came not to be served, but to serve.
- Practicing Works of Mercy instills in the Candidate the importance of serving and reaching out to others especially in one's own family, parish and community.
- Candidates will be asked to participate in a variety of service projects throughout their Confirmation preparation. Some service projects will be conducted as a class and may take place during our regular Faith Formation class time.
- Candidates will be asked to complete at least **10 gifts of service** in the two year process. They will also be required to reflect and write about the services completed.

## Choosing a Saint (Year I)

- ◆ “Candidates are encouraged to follow the tradition of the Church and select a name to be imposed by the Archbishop or Bishop during the sacrament of Confirmation. This may be the candidate's baptismal name or it may be another Christian name, such as the name of saint, blessed, or a name from the old Testament.” *(Excerpt taken from the Archdiocese Policy on the Celebration of Confirmation)*
- ◆ When selecting a name, the candidate should be encouraged to learn about the relationship of the name to the Christian tradition, and in particular to study the virtues of their patron and consider the means in which they might emulate him or her.” *(Excerpt taken from the Archdiocese Policy on the Celebration of Confirmation)*
- ◆ During Year I of the Confirmation process, Candidates will be asked to do research, and write a 1-2 page report on the life of this particular Saint. Specific information can be found on the Saint Report Handout.

## Letter of Intent (Year II)

- ◆ Candidates in Year II of the Confirmation process will write a letter to the Pastor requesting to be confirmed. Candidates will be informed when the letter is due and will receive a handout on specific information that should be included in the letter.

## Take the Initiative/Discipleship (Year II)

- As all fully-initiated (confirmed) Catholics should take initiative to grow in spirituality and knowledge of their faith, in Year II we will encourage the Candidate to take initiative of their own growth in faith. (Participation in Youth Ministry events are greatly encouraged)
- Year II students will be asked to choose at least two activities to enhance their spiritual formation and encourage discipleship (living as a disciple of Christ).
- These two activities should be chosen from the list of approved activities.
- Candidates will receive and complete a packet of “Take the Initiative” activities in Year II of the Confirmation process.

## **Progress**

- ◆ A file of each Candidates progress toward fulfilling their commitment will be kept in the Faith Formation office.
- ◆ A progress report will be sent out in February (Year II) and in March (Year I). You may also contact the Confirmation Coordinator throughout the year if you have any questions regarding the Candidates progress.
- ◆ If a Candidate is not making sufficient progress toward fulfilling their yearly commitments, they will be referred to the Pastor. The Pastor and/or Faith Formation Coordinator will arrange a meeting with the Candidate and parent(s), to determine the next course of action.
- ◆ Candidates may request (in writing) for an extension of deadlines to the Coordinator stating the reasons why he/she was unable to fulfill certain requirements on time. It will be at the discretion of the Coordinator if an extension will be granted.

## **Youth Ministry**

- ◆ Youth Ministry and the Faith Formation program work side-by-side to foster the spiritual growth of young people.
- ◆ After completion of the Confirmation program, faith formation for high school youth will take place under the umbrella of Youth Ministry.
- ◆ Therefore, Candidates are strongly encouraged to participate in Youth Ministry groups or events throughout their Confirmation progress, to foster continued growth in their Catholic faith. (See “Take the Initiative/Discipleship”)
- ◆ Youth Ministry events will be publicized in our Faith Formation monthly newsletter, Youth bulletin board, flyers and the parish bulletin.
- ◆ Some events include a summer Mission Trip, attending monthly Lifeline Mass/Speaker, attending events offered by and around the Archdiocese, in addition to local parish sponsored field trips, activities and service opportunities.

# Sponsors

## Choosing a Sponsor

“It is desirable that the sponsor of the child at baptism is also the sponsor at Confirmation, although another person, of either sex, may fulfill this function, providing that the individual fulfills the following requirements. (*Excerpt taken from the Archdiocese Policy on the Celebration of Confirmation*)

As in the Sacrament of Baptism, Confirmation Candidates should seek the spiritual help of a Sponsor. Please prayerfully consider your choice. Candidates will be asked to choose a Confirmation sponsor by \_\_\_\_\_.

## Requirements for Choosing a Sponsor (taken from Canon 874)

- ◆ The Sponsor must have completed the 16th year of age, unless the pastor or minister has granted an exception for a just cause.
- ◆ The Sponsor must be a Catholic who has been confirmed and has already received their First Holy Communion
- ◆ The Sponsor must lead a life of faith in keeping with the function to be taken on. This means a sponsor may not be bound by any canonical penalty legitimately imposed or declared.
- ◆ Sponsor may not be the father or mother of the one to be-confirmed
- ◆ Sponsor must be able to attend group meetings/retreats and any special ceremonies for the Rite of Confirmation.
- ◆ In the event that a sponsor is unable to attend a required meeting, a parent or some other adult may serve as a substitute.

## Sponsor's Role

- To pray for and with the candidate.
- To spend time getting to know the candidate, and be willing to share their own personal faith story with his or her candidate.
- To complete “6 Conversations” booklet with the Candidate.
- To accompany the candidate to specific classes in which sponsors are requested to attend (Sponsors may attend any or all classes.)
- To present the candidate during the Rite of Confirmation.
- To continue to be there for the candidate and lend spiritual support even after Confirmation.
- Should fill out the Sponsor sheet and return it to the Faith Formation office, indicating their acceptance to take on the role of sponsor.

# GIFTS OF SERVICE

*Mother Teresa of Calcutta: Total Surrender*

*“You are his (God’s) co-worker. Therefore, he depends on you for that special work ...  
The talents God has given you are not yours—they have been given to you for your use,  
for the glory of God.” (pg. 119)*

*“You are sent to serve and not to be served: Go to serve with a humble heart.  
Never escape the hard work. Be always the first one to do it. (pg. 127)*

**Gifts of Service impart to our Catholic youth the importance of following the example of Jesus who came not to be served, but to serve. They also instill in them the importance of active participation in one’s own family, parish and community.**

1. Gifts of Service should be projects aimed at helping family, parish, and outreach (local community or beyond Minnesota). Candidates should choose at least one service in each of these areas. Service should be chosen with care and consideration.
2. Candidates are required to fulfill at least 10 gifts of service of their choosing in the two year process. Candidates are encouraged to go beyond the required number of service gifts, since one should not limit the time and talent we are called to share. (List all service completed on the Tracking Sheet in your Confirmation Binder)
3. The number of hours will not be tracked as some projects may require hours to fulfill, and some may require many days to fulfill. For instance, if you are a server, or sing in the choir, you do not list each time you serve as a gift of service, but rather list it as “one” gift of parish service. This will afford the Candidate the opportunity to try out new areas of service.
5. While the number of hours won’t be tracked, a valid service project should take more than one hour to complete.
6. Family Service should go beyond regular, weekly chores, and should be a project talked over and decided with your parent(s). Completing service with your family is greatly encouraged.
7. Service ideas and opportunities will be provided throughout the year. On occasion we will schedule outreach projects that students may participate in such as Feed My Starving Children.
8. Candidates should thoughtfully reflect on the service they completed using the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy as a guide. Candidates will need to fill out six reflection sheets provided in their Confirmation Handbook.
9. Candidates should turn in the reflection sheets as the service is completed yet no later than the final due date listed in the Confirmation yearly schedule.