

# Confirmation Program Handbook



2020-2021

St. Pius X Catholic Church, Cedar Rapids, IA

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*Confirmation Fee and Registration are due by September 13.*

*The Parent/Candidate Covenant must be signed  
and returned to St. Pius before September 20.*

## Contact Information

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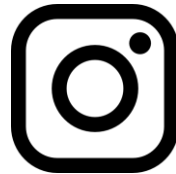
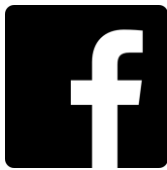
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St. Pius X Youth Ministry

crpiusxym

### **Purpose of Confirmation**

It is the hope that candidates enrolled in the Confirmation process at St. Pius will:

1. Have a fundamental understanding, knowledge, and appreciation of our Catholic faith.
2. Have an understanding of the Sacrament of Confirmation in relation to the other Sacraments of Initiation: Baptism and Eucharist.
3. Participate regularly in the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist as well as attend Mass weekly.
4. Have an understanding of the mission of the Church and the call to ministry.
5. Experience and appreciate the need for personal prayer.
6. Recognize individual gifts and talents and the gifts of the Holy Spirit.
7. Have a basic understanding of one's faith in relation to one's life. This includes developing a Catholic moral system and also discovering how one's spirituality can be lived out in a variety of adult lifestyles.
8. Develop an appreciation for the importance of Scripture.
9. Recognize that faith is an ongoing process that continues throughout life.

### **Program Overview**

The St. Pius Confirmation program is a year-long sacramental preparation program for all sophomores regardless of what high school they attend. This program is designed to affirm a strong theological foundation, explore the Sacrament of Confirmation and all it entails, and focus on initiating young people into ongoing faith development within the church. Classes meet once per month on a Sunday from 11:30am-1:00pm, immediately following the 10:30am Mass. The dates of the classes are indicated on the calendar of lessons given out at the parent meeting. The candidates meet in a small group setting with a lead catechist. Large group lessons are taught by Micaela Andrews, the Coordinator of Confirmation. All classes and meetings take place in Pius Hall. In addition, the candidates are required to attend the retreat with the large group as well as complete 25 hours of service in both the parish and community.

### **COVID-19 Clause**

We realize the very real danger of COVID-19 and strive to find the best protection for all of our students and staff. At this time, we are planning for classes to meet socially distanced in-person, but this may change to online if the circumstances become too dangerous. Face masks will be required at all classes and events. The service component will still be expected, so students may have to get creative in their ideas of service. We will do our best to keep all families informed as the situation progresses. Please check your email, the parish bulletin, and the website regularly for updates regarding COVID-19.

### Eligibility

To be eligible to enter the Confirmation program, a candidate must be baptized and meet the following criteria:

- Be a registered parishioner of St. Pius X Catholic Church. The candidate's family must be registered parishioners of the parish in order to enter the program. To register, contact the Parish Office at (319) 393-4445.
- Be at least a sophomore in high school. In addition to sophomores, those who are juniors or seniors in high school and have not been confirmed are also welcome to attend.
- Complete the proper religious education. Each candidate must have participated in a Catholic religious education program or attend a parochial high school.

### Attendance Policy

Attendance at all the monthly scheduled sessions on the calendar is mandatory. If a candidate is going to be absent, it is the parent's responsibility to contact the Coordinator of Confirmation at least 3 days in advance and the reason for the absence must be stated. Candidates are expected to be at all small group sessions and all required events unless illness or family emergency arises.

**Sports events/practices, trips, weekends away, homework, and similar reasons are not acceptable for being absent.** Any candidate who misses more than one required event within the program year must meet in person with the Coordinator of Confirmation to determine the appropriate course of action. Excessive absences may lead to a meeting with Father Thompson and the potential postponement of receiving Confirmation by one year. All make-up work needs to be completed for each session missed regardless of reason. If you have a special situation that results in multiple absences for your child, talk with Micaela to make arrangements.

### Cancellation of Classes/Inclement Weather Policy

Confirmation classes or other events may be cancelled due to inclement weather. Inclement weather can include any kind of extreme weather, usually snow or ice, which might create hazardous driving conditions. In the case of a class cancellation, parents will not be called; instead an email will be sent out to all families and, depending on when the cancellation occurs, an announcement may be made at Mass.

### Confirmation Fee

Confirmation candidates are provided supplemental materials as well as access to video content used in classes. In addition, we provide items for both the Confirmation Mass and reception. In order to cover the cost of these materials, there is a **\$75.00** fee for Confirmation. We ask that you submit this fee to the Parish Office as soon as possible. Please submit the fee separate from any other payment you may be providing. Checks can be made out to St. Pius X Catholic Church, but remember to put "Confirmation" in the memo line along with your child's name. Online payment options are also available on the Confirmation tab of our website: [www.crpiousx.org](http://www.crpiousx.org).

To pay the Confirmation fee online, follow the steps below:

1. Go to [www.crpiousx.org](http://www.crpiousx.org) → Sacraments → Confirmation
2. Click the button that says "Pay Online"
3. Log in or create a profile if needed.
4. Under "Religious Education Tuition" put in \$75.00
  - When entering your payment information, we prefer that you enter your bank account information rather than credit/debit card information. This is because of the credit/debit card fees we incur for these transactions. However, either method is acceptable.

*The last day to pay the Confirmation Fee is September 13, 2020.*

### Registration

Confirmation registration is completed online. In order to register, follow the steps below:

1. Go to [www.crpiousx.org](http://www.crpiousx.org) → Sacraments → Confirmation
2. Click on the link to register
3. Fill out your information using My School System
  - Be sure the class you register for is **Confirmation 2020-2021**
4. After filling out all the information, make sure everything is saved and submitted

*The last day to register for the Confirmation Program is September 13, 2020.*

During our Confirmation classes, we use the online streaming platform, FORMED. A free FORMED account is not just limited to candidates; it can be accessed by every single person in a household if desired. Having an account will be especially necessary if you have to make up any class you miss. You can register using one of these two methods:

- On a computer: [www.crpiousx.formed.org](http://www.crpiousx.formed.org)
- On a phone: FORMED app → enter the code 6KXFDJ

### **Confirmation Retreat**

Our lives today are filled with distractions and constant stimulation, and we are surrounded by clamoring voices all with their own ideas of what is important in life. It is essential that we take time away from all this to return to God and to grow deeper in the practice of our faith. In addition, a necessary part of the Confirmation process is the bond that is formed between the candidates. The Confirmation retreat is designed to strengthen and deepen this bond between the candidates and God as well as each other. To this end, the retreat is a mandatory part of the Confirmation process. Details of the retreat will be provided as the time draws closer. We ask that you make it a priority to attend the retreat with our whole group. In the rare case that a candidate is unable to attend our retreat, the candidate is responsible for contacting the Coordinator of Confirmation to set up an alternative.

### **Confirmation Interview**

The Confirmation Interview is an opportunity for the Coordinator of Confirmation to determine that all students are prepared to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. We encourage the candidates not to think of it as a “test” that they might “pass” or “fail” but as their chance to show us that they are, indeed, prepared to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. Confirmation Interviews are scheduled using an online sign-up and will be conducted in person with the Coordinator of Confirmation. An email will be sent with a link to the sign-up closer to the date.

### **Choosing a Saint**

At St. Pius, candidates are confirmed using their baptismal name, not a saint name. The reason for this is that Confirmation is the reinstatement of the promises made at your Baptism. As such, it is most appropriate to confirm using the student’s baptismal name. However, the importance of a saint is recognized. Candidates will be asked to choose a saint as their inspiration, mentor, and/or guide throughout the Confirmation process. The student should pick a saint who would symbolize a new beginning in their faith life and a connection with that particular saint. It is important and necessary to learn about the saint before choosing them. This will be elaborated upon during one of our classes.

# Confirmation 2020-2021 Calendar

\*all events will occur in Pius Hall unless otherwise noted\*

## Informational meetings [students and parents] – attend one

Wednesday, August 19<sup>th</sup>: 6:30-7:00pm

Saturday, August 22<sup>nd</sup>: 3:45-4:15pm

Sunday, August 23<sup>rd</sup>: 9:45-10:15am

## Sessions (Sundays 11:30am-1:00pm) [students only]

September 20<sup>th</sup>: What is a sacrament?

October 11<sup>th</sup>: What is Confirmation and how do I prepare for it?

November 15<sup>th</sup>: Who is the Holy Spirit?

December 13<sup>th</sup>: What does the Holy Spirit do for me?

January 17<sup>th</sup>: What is the link between Baptism and Confirmation?

February 21<sup>st</sup>: What does it mean to be anointed and sealed?

March 21<sup>st</sup>: What is my mission and vocation?

## Retreat [students only]

Sunday, April 11<sup>th</sup>: time and location TBD

## Practice [students and sponsors]

Date and time TBD

## Celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation [everyone]

Date and time TBD

The Archbishop's schedule will determine when our Confirmation date is.

For now, please reserve **ALL six** of these possible dates on your calendar.

**TENTATIVE** dates of Practice and Confirmation

<u>Practice</u>	<u>Confirmation</u>
April 24 <sup>th</sup> at 9am	April 24 <sup>th</sup> at 4:30pm
April 24 <sup>th</sup> at 7pm	April 25 <sup>th</sup> at 10:30am
May 1 <sup>st</sup> at 9am	May 1 <sup>st</sup> at 4:30pm
May 1 <sup>st</sup> at 7pm	May 2 <sup>nd</sup> at 10:30am
May 8 <sup>th</sup> at 9am	May 8 <sup>th</sup> at 4:30pm
May 8 <sup>th</sup> at 7pm	May 9 <sup>th</sup> at 10:30am



## Service

Students are expected to complete 25 hours of service throughout the whole year. This is not to make them “put in time” or to give them “busy work.” We are aware that during this time of COVID-19, hands-on service opportunities may be difficult or impossible. Now is our chance to research creative ways to reach out and serve the needs of our parish, community, and world.

Service is a way for you to use your gifts, talents and abilities to help others. To be a true service project neither you nor anyone in your immediate family can benefit, either directly or indirectly, from your service. The goal is to look beyond yourself and beyond those nearest to you and give of yourself to help someone else. If you are having trouble finding service opportunities, explore the needs of people in your Church, school, neighborhood or community.

These suggestions are some of the ways a student may choose to serve. Perhaps something on this list will give you other ideas on how to use your special gifts.

- Help with events at St. Pius
- Assist the elderly or a needy family with their chores (cut grass, yard work, cooking, cleaning, shopping, etc.)
- Baby-sit for someone who needs help
- Organize or help with a recycling project or clean-up campaign
- Write cards or letters to hospitalized children, teens or military personnel
- Collect food for the poor or work in a food bank
- Collect, clean, and repair clothing for the poor
- Perform special services for the handicapped (read to the blind)
- Prepare meal or desert for a family dealing with a death
- Collect toys for poor children
- Make gifts or favors for those in hospital/nursing homes
- Bake for a bake sale
- Work in a Special Education program or tutor after school
- Coach or assist with young children’s sports activities

Students need to keep track of their hours to be turned in at the end of the Confirmation year. If you have trouble finding service opportunities, contact the Coordinator of Confirmation for ideas.

### **Involvement After Confirmation**

Full initiation through the Sacrament of Confirmation opens up new possibilities of involvement with your faith in your parish. Confirmed Catholics are encouraged to participate in the various ministries at the parish and can serve in other roles as well:

- Youth Ministry – Meets Wednesday nights and is open to all high school students
- Liturgical Ministry – Confirmed Catholics may serve in a variety of liturgical ministries including as a Lector, Eucharistic Minister, Usher, Server, Greeter, Cantor, or Instrumentalist.
- Catechetical Ministry – Confirmed Catholics are welcome to help catechize younger children through Children’s Liturgy of the Word as a Timekeeper or Leader, or as a helper in our Religious Education program.
- Other Parish Ministries – To see the full range of ministries at the parish, either check our website ([crpiusx.org/stewardship](http://crpiusx.org/stewardship)) or visit the office to pick up a copy of the Stewardship Booklet.

### **Standards Expected of Candidates**

While we are very proud of the behavior of the young people who have gone through the program in the past, we wish to remind candidates and their parents that proper behavior and conduct is expected at St. Pius at all times. Any behavior or conduct problems will be addressed directly with the Coordinator of Confirmation.

All Confirmation candidates are expected to adhere to the following standards:

- Candidates are expected to attend Mass on a regular basis.
- Respect for the Coordinator of Confirmation, catechists, other candidates, and all church property is expected.
- Being on time and having regular attendance is expected.
- The use of phones is strictly prohibited during the sessions. After one warning, these items will be confiscated if they are seen being used.
- There will be zero tolerance for disrespectful, violent, or abusive behavior of any type. Bullying, in particular, will not be tolerated.
- There will be zero tolerance of harassment of any kind, including, but not limited to, verbal harassment, gender bias, threats, sexual harassment, and foul language.
- There will be zero tolerance for substance abuse of any kind, including, but not limited to drugs, inhalants, alcohol, and tobacco.
- No object which may be construed as a weapon or use of said object as a weapon will be tolerated on-site at parish programs.

## Parents' Role and Responsibilities

Because parents...

- Are the primary educators of their children
- Are responsible for initiating their children into the sacramental life
- Serve as models for their children by being committed Christians

...parents should expect to:

- Worship with your family regularly.
- Pray for your child's spiritual growth every day.
- Be actively involved in the Confirmation preparation of your child.
- Engage in discussions about the material being studied, including sharing your understanding and perspective.
- Encourage your child to reflect and thoughtfully consider the decision to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation.
- Support and encourage completion of assignments, activities, and expectations.
- Assist in retreats, service work, meetings, classes, spiritual events, and social events.
- Faithfully bring your teenager (and when necessary, yourself) to meetings, programs, and events that are planned to help your child prepare for the Sacrament of Confirmation.
- Emphasize the importance of the Sacrament of Confirmation by taking an active part in the celebration of Confirmation.

Confirmation is an opportunity for parents to reaffirm their commitment to the Catholic faith and to become refreshed and renewed in their faith life. This renewed commitment involves developing a genuine desire to participate in the Eucharist and the sacramental life of the Church as well as a commitment to uphold the Precepts of the Church:

1. To attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation.
2. To receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation at least once a year, especially if aware of committing a mortal sin.
3. To receive Holy Communion at least once a year, between the First Sunday of Lent and Trinity Sunday.
4. To observe the days of fasting and abstinence established by the Church.
5. To financially support the Church.

Sometimes the Confirmation Preparation process can seem a bit overwhelming, so we try to make it as simple as possible for you to be informed throughout the process. The following tips may help make the year go more smoothly:

- Keep this handbook in a safe, accessible place. The answers to many of the questions that come up throughout the year can be found in this book. If you are confused about anything, we encourage you to look through this book to see if the issue is addressed.
- Please check for emails from Micaela frequently. This is the best form of communication.
- Call or email Micaela if you have any questions or concerns. (See page 3).

## Confirmation Sponsor

A sponsor is a person who knows the candidate and can help them on their spiritual journey and can share their own faith. Ideally, it should be someone who has been involved already in the candidate's spiritual formation, such as a godparent, a family member, or a member of the local parish. When deciding on a sponsor, choose someone to whom you can talk about the faith, who will also be a good role model for you to follow, and who will take an active role as your sponsor in your life. Each candidate should choose their sponsor near the beginning of their preparation so that the sponsor can play an active part in the preparation process.

In order to be eligible, a Confirmation sponsor must:

- Be a practicing Catholic in good standing with the Church
- Be at least 16 years old
- Belong to the Catholic Church and have been fully initiated (have received the Sacraments of Baptism, Eucharist, and Confirmation)
- Not be the biological parent of the candidate
- Not be prohibited by law from exercising the role of sponsor

A sponsor may:

- Be the same sponsor the candidate had for Baptism (a godparent)
- Be a new sponsor selected specifically for Confirmation

How to be an effective Confirmation sponsor:

- Be a good Catholic role model. The primary job of a sponsor is to show a candidate how to live the faith as an adult. This includes going to Mass every Sunday and Holy Day, going to Confession regularly, and praying daily. But it also means bringing your faith into the ordinary situations in daily living: being a model of forgiveness, compassion, and personal sacrifice. If you are not growing in holiness yourself, you will not be able to help your candidate grow in holiness.
- Offer prayer support. Remember to pray for your candidate every day for the rest of your life. It can be as simple as offering a Hail Mary every morning or as complex as creating your own prayer routine. Remember your candidate in your Mass intention each Sunday and Holy Day. And let them know that you are praying for them.
- Show visible spiritual support. Make it a point to ask your candidate about their prayer life on a regular basis. Are they getting to Mass every Sunday and Holy Day? If not, how can you help (take them yourself, talk to their parents about going as a family, etc.)? Are they getting to Confession regularly? If not, how can you help?
- Mark the Confirmation Anniversary. Remember the date that your candidate is confirmed and celebrate it each year. Send a card, make a phone call, or go out to dinner. Do something to remind your candidate (and yourself) that this was a major event in both of your lives.

# Parent/Candidate Covenant

*Detach and return this page to Micaela by September 20, 2020.*

The Confirmation process is a year-long journey in which the candidate will explore different aspects of the Catholic faith. This process necessitates a full commitment from the candidate, parents/guardians, and sponsor as this is a sacrament that, by definition, calls for a time of reflection on personal faith and a more active participation in the life of the Church.

The requirements of the Confirmation preparation process are:

- Selection of an appropriate Confirmation sponsor
- Attendance and participation at the service day, retreat, and all Confirmation classes
- Weekly Mass attendance
- Completion of all materials assigned during Confirmation class
- Participation in some ministry at the parish

## CANDIDATE COVENANT:

- I understand that it is my choice to enter into the process of preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation. I am ready to enter into this journey leading me into the Sacrament of Confirmation with my fellow candidates, parents, sponsor, and faith community. I will complete the requirements set forth above and allow the Holy Spirit to lead me to Confirmation.
- I have read through the Confirmation Program Handbook and understand that I am responsible for all that is compiled within it.

Candidate Signature:

Date:

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## PARENT COVENANT:

- I have read and understand the program requirements of the Confirmation process. I will support my child in their journey and encourage them in their commitment to the process. I realize that this includes their attendance at Confirmation class once per month and Mass every weekend.
- I have read through the Confirmation Program Handbook and understand that I am responsible for all that is compiled within it.

Parent/Guardian Signature:

Date:

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