

CONFIRMATION

2016



“You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses...to the ends of the earth.” (Acts 1:8)

St. Patrick's Church
Gretna, NE

Confirmation Expectations

1. Participate in Sunday Mass and Holy Day Masses.
2. Participate in Confirmation activities.
3. Attend class and do assigned homework.
4. Choose a sponsor.
5. Choose a Confirmation name.
6. Complete service projects.
7. Attend a Retreat.
8. Interview with Fr. Mike.
9. Write a letter to the Archbishop.



Confirmation Calendar 2016-2018

2016

September/October

Rite of Acceptance and Meeting

2017

January

Choose a Sponsor

February

Bible Mass & Sponsor Assignments

March

Sponsor assignment due

April

Holy Week starts – Chrism Mass

Triduum – Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter

May

Summer Service Days

June

Summer Service Days

November

Retreat

Confirmation Name finalized

December

All Service, etc done

Interview with Fr. Mike

2018

January

Write a letter to the Archbishop

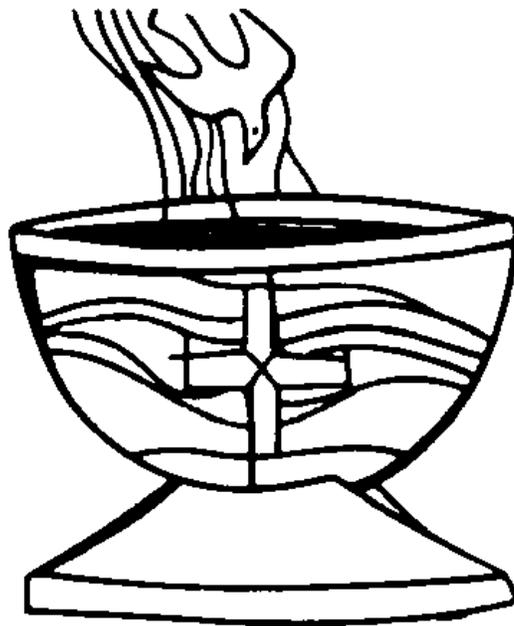
Last Two Weeks: Wednesday: Practice, Sunday: Confirmation

Theological and Historical Aspects of Confirmation

In the early Church, and until the Fifth Century, Confirmation was not a distinct rite. In its earliest time, the Church anointed and laid hands on the newly baptized. In the Third to Fifth Centuries this was seen as a completion of Baptism and was done by the Bishop. However, it was some period of time between Baptism and the anointing. Starting in the Fifth Century, Confirmation was seen as a rite separate from Baptism.

Now, let's look at the theological principles associated with Confirmation. First, it "flows from Baptism, which it seals and affirms" (*Confirmation Guidelines*, Archdiocese of Omaha), and "the new life received in Baptism is brought to its full power in Confirmation" (*Credo*, German Catechetical Association). Therefore, there is still a strong connection that Confirmation has with Baptism, and all the Sacraments of Initiation:

Through the Sacraments of Christian Initiation men and women are freed from the power of darkness. With Christ they die, are buried, and rise again. They receive the Spirit of adoption which makes them God's sons and daughters and, with the entire people of God, they celebrate the memorial of the Lord's death and resurrection (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults).



On its own, this Sacrament holds much meaning. One can ask three questions:

1. Why be confirmed?

A day comes when the young person is no longer satisfied with saying: This is what my parents do. The older he is, the more he has to take his own steps in faith. He has to decide for himself the path he is going to choose, the plan he is going to adopt for his life and for the object of his endeavors. As he enters this stage of his life he receives the sacrament of Confirmation (*Credo*).

2. What is supposed to happen at Confirmation, theologically?

Confirmation is the sign for the individual Christian that God's Holy Spirit comes upon him and moves him-the Spirit whom Jesus promised to his disciples (John 16:7-13). The word 'confirmation' comes from the Latin and means literally 'strengthening'. Sometimes it is also described as 'seal'. What began in Baptism is sealed and completed in Confirmation; union with Christ and His Church; working for people in the Spirit of Jesus.

Confirmation is the sacrament of Christian adulthood. The Christian is strengthened for his work in the world. Christians believe in the special power of the Holy Spirit which encourages them and enables them to bear witness to Christ in the Church and in public. The Spirit of Jesus Christ, the anointed One, gives courage to the person confirmed and urges him to do in his life what Jesus the Christ did: to live wholly for God and, in His name, for others (Credo).

3. What should the outcome of Confirmation be?

A Christian does not receive Confirmation only for himself. The gift of the Holy Spirit is intended also to be effective for the good of others. It is through Christians that people encounter the Spirit of Christ, through this Spirit that they should be enabled to experience His power for good.

This is true in the first place within the parish. Here the Christian should make his competence and his talents available; for example, by taking an active part in the Mass; by involvement in social problems in his district, by care for the lonely and the aged, by youth work, by work for the parish council.

The task entrusted to the one confirmed is not confined to the sphere of the Church. He is confirmed for the world; there he has to become a messenger of the loving nearness of God. A person open to the Holy Spirit is expected to battle against injustice, and to use his talents for social and development work, or to promote work for the missions. Perhaps he may even become professionally engaged in the service of the Church (*Credo*).

Curriculum and Classroom Details

The *Guidelines for the Sacrament of Confirmation in the Archdiocese of Omaha* state:

“Catechetical programs offered through the parishes exist to help the people of God form their children for the fullness of life with Christ in the Church. They provide unique opportunities of formation within the local Church, with a candidate's peers and with catechists who can model this life.”

Attending class is important for the candidate's preparation for Confirmation. If a child cannot attend class, please call and let us know. Students need to attend class regularly. When a student misses class the family should contact the DRE or teacher to receive any missed lessons or information. At times there will be homework. It is difficult to cover all material one hour each week. It will be easier for the candidate if the parents and/or sponsors are involved. As the *Guidelines* state:

“It is primarily the responsibility of the parents to present their children for the sacrament of Confirmation having prepared them, with the help of catechetical institutions.”



Choosing a Sponsor

A sponsor is one who helps the candidate prepare for the Sacrament of Confirmation and for a life of active faith. They should be a person in the candidate's life that can fulfill these two roles.

The *Guidelines for the Sacrament of Confirmation in the Archdiocese of Omaha* state:

1. The sponsor may not be the candidate's parent.
2. The sponsor may be of either gender.
3. The sponsor must be at least sixteen (16) years of age. However, as it is crucial that a sponsor be sufficiently mature for this role, it is recommended that parents and the candidate collaborate on choosing an adult sponsor with whom the candidate can speak about his/her faith.
4. The sponsor of a candidate for Confirmation must be a Catholic in good standing with the Catholic Church who has already received the sacraments of initiation: Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist.
5. Being "in good standing" refers to those who regularly practice their faith and believe what the Church believes, having accepted the responsibilities of their baptismal promises. If the proposed sponsor is married, he/she must be in a valid marriage according to the norms of the Catholic Church. Whether the sponsor is married or not, he/she must be living a lifestyle consonant with the moral teachings of the Church. All sponsors must be free from the burden of canonical penalties.
6. Non-Catholics may not be sponsors.
7. When appropriate, the godparent from baptism may be the sponsor for Confirmation. In such cases, the above norms should be followed.

While parents and sponsors both fulfill many of the same roles, the sponsor serves as a representative for the wider Church community. The possibility also exists for a sponsor to be chosen from the parish. If this is something that your family is interested in, please contact the Director of Religious Ed.

The responsibilities of the sponsor are to serve as a role model in the faith and to help them prepare for the sacrament. While much of this is done informally in the relationship the candidate and sponsor already share, there will be two opportunities for all Confirmation students to work with their sponsor so they may help them prepare for the sacrament. One is this spring when the candidates will have an assignment they will need to complete with their sponsor. The other will be at the Confirmation rehearsal the week before the Confirmation Mass.

Choosing a Confirmation Name

The tradition of taking a new name to signify a new role has its roots in the Old Testament. When God called Abram to be our Father in Faith his name was changed to Abraham, meaning ‘father of many nations.’ In the New Testament, Simon’s name is changed to Peter, which means ‘rock.’ In the early Church, new Christians took different names that reflected their new life as a follower of Christ, since their old names were pagan ones. This continued and people began choosing names of saints whom they wanted to imitate.

The name the candidate chooses shows that he/she is a full member of the Church. It is suggested that the Confirmation name be the same as one’s Baptismal name. However, a second name may be chosen. Whatever the name is, it must be the name of a saint or blessed. It should be a saint that the candidate admires and wants to imitate.

Next year, the candidate will need to decide on their saint’s name. Although students have already worked on saint projects in the 7th grade, they may choose to change their name next year. Additional projects or papers will not be required.



Retreat

This is an experience for the candidate to grow personally in their relationship with God. It is also a chance for the class to grow together. There will be many activities planned for the candidates to grow spiritually. Hopefully, the retreat will make the student excited for the Sacrament and eager to stay involved with the Church. This retreat is usually held at the 4-H camp by Schram Park. It will be held next November on a Saturday into Sunday (tentatively scheduled for Nov. 4th-5th). Students should plan on attending the entire retreat. If one cannot attend the entire retreat, they cannot attend at all. If one does not attend the overnight retreat, other options will be available.

Service

Service projects are done to emphasize that the candidate, through Confirmation, is becoming an active member in the parish and community. These service opportunities will teach the candidate to be a man or woman for others. It is good that this work is done before Confirmation so that the candidate may learn what kind of service he/she will continue as a full and witnessing member of the Body of Christ.

Candidates do not complete 'service hours.' Instead they will be doing service projects. Doing projects shows the candidate the importance of community since some projects will be completed as a group. Within the coming year, they will finish 4 service projects. They will serve the poor, the elderly, the parish, and the family. Students will serve the poor & elderly in the summer by helping with the sack lunch program at Holy Family parish and BINGO at GCLC. Sign up for these projects will in April and reminders will be sent when each student's event is approaching. (At that time a child can change to a different date if he/she needs to.) Each student is responsible for helping at some parish function, too. Below is a list of parish events. (There will be no sign-ups for these so please keep the list below for reference or check the bulletin.) Finally, each student will need to help his/her family in a special way. Below is an outline of the different service projects:

Poor & Elderly

Summer Service Days – 6 or more days that are Mondays-Thursdays in May/June after school is out (depart St. Patrick's 8:00am pick up from GCLC 3:00pm)

Parish

Parish Breakfast – usually the 2nd Sunday of each month

All Saint's Day Celebration – Oct. 29th

KC Turkey Dinner – Nov. 6th

KC Babysitting – Dec. 10th

Parish Center Christmas Mass set up - December

Preschool fundraiser – February 11th

Fish Fry – Fridays, March 3rd- April 7th

Hooley – March 15th

Parish Center Easter Mass set up - April

Senior Honor Breakfast – May 7th

Mother's Day Breakfast – May 14th

Parish Picnic – June

Father's Day Breakfast – June 18th

Totus Tuus, VBS – last two weeks of June

Family

Each child will do this on his/her own for any family member. It must be something that is done for free and not an ordinary chore. The child will write up what he/she did and have his/her parent sign it or the parent will email/call/or send a note about what their child did. Ideas: clean the garage/basement, make dinner for family, rake Grandma's leaves, babysit cousin or sibling for free, etc.

Other

Interview Each candidate will also schedule an interview with Fr. Mike in the month before Confirmation. There, they will discuss the meaning of the Sacrament, what effect Confirmation will have on the life of the student, and other information such as the gifts of the Holy Spirit. They will sign up for this in December of next year. The times are usually after school or during the Christmas break.

Letter The candidates will also have to write a letter to the Archbishop expressing their desire for Confirmation and why they wish to receive it. They will be given to the Archbishop the day of Confirmation. More information will be given on this as Confirmation becomes closer.

Pictures Arrangements will be made for a photographer to take pictures the day of Confirmation. Information on this will be sent home next year.

Dress Each student will have a 'banner' with their Confirmation name on to wear at Confirmation. These will be made for them. Aside from that, dress clothes are appropriate: dress pants and ties for the boys, skirts or dresses for the girls.

Baptismal Certificates If your child was not baptized at St. Patrick's, we will need a copy of the baptismal certificate.