

St. Matthew & Shepherd of the Hills Catholic Parishes



2019-2020

Confirmation Handbook

Religious Education Program

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Called To Mercy

2019-2020 Confirmation Program

St. Matthew's & Shepherd of the Hills

Confirmation Date: Thursday, March 19th 7pm @ SOTH

Called to Mercy: a new kind of Confirmation program

Called to Mercy is a Confirmation program that combines the best of all learning experiences, tapping the strength and appeal of online learning with the power of interspersed, gathered, face-to-face sessions. This Confirmation curriculum offers ten online learning modules, five gathered community-building sessions, and a retreat. The result: engaging, relevant, and deeply reflective opportunities for a true spiritual conversion to lives that give witness to Jesus' call and the Church's mission of mercy.

Responsive Design

Called to Mercy is a responsive eLearning website that allows young people to easily access the online learning modules anytime, from anywhere, on any device that connects to the internet.



Mobile



Tablet



Desktop

Online Modules

Called to Mercy's online learning modules can be accessed from any browser or device, allowing leaders to reach young people despite their busy schedules. Each module engages participants with learning activities and real-life scenarios that will grab young people's attention, regardless of their learning style or personality type. And the digital platform breaks down social inhibition and welcomes deeper and more honest sharing by removing any sense of social pressure and judgment.

Online modules must be completed by 11:59pm (midnight) of the dates below. Students are more than welcomed to work ahead, but to help keep the Gathered Sessions on track, an outline of module deadlines has been provided below. Each module takes roughly 10-15 minutes to complete. Please contact the DRE if you are having difficulty completing the modules in a timely manner.

<u>Module</u>	<u>Due Date</u>
Module 1: Nice to Meet You!	Sat, Aug 24 th , 2019
Module 2: True Happiness	Sat, Sep 21 st , 2019
Module 3: The Gift of Happiness	Sat, Sep 21 st , 2019
Module 4: Doing What We Believe	Sat, Oct 19 th , 2019
Module 5: Guides along the Way	Sat, Oct 19 th , 2019
Module 6: When We Hurt	Sat, Nov 9 th , 2019
Module 7: What's It All About?	Sat, Nov 9 th , 2019
Module 8: It's Me and We	Sat, Jan 18 th , 2020
Module 9: Beyond These Walls	Sat, Jan 18 th , 2020
Module 10: Confirmed to Witness Mercy	Sat, Apr 4 th , 2020

Gathered Community Sessions

The following Gathered Community Sessions are the **required sessions that teens must attend in person**. Different from the modules, the five gathered sessions are interspersed throughout the preparation process to reinforce themes from the Confirmation curriculum, build community, and help teens put into practice the things they have been learning.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Session</u>	<u>Location</u>
Sun, Aug 25 th , 2019	11:30-12:30am	Session 1	Shepherd of the Hills
Sun, Sep 22 nd , 2019	9:00-10:30am	Session 2	Shepherd of the Hills
Sun, Oct 20 th , 2019	9:00-10:30am	Sessions 3	Shepherd of the Hills
Sun, Nov 10 th , 2019	9:00am-5:00pm	Retreat	Shepherd of the Hills
Sun, Jan 19 th , 2020	9:00-10:30am	Session 4	Shepherd of the Hills
Sun, Apr 5 th , 2020	1:30-2:30pm	Session 5	Shepherd of the Hills

Session 1: Parent/Guardian and Young Person Introductory Session

- Overview and introduction to *Called to Mercy*

Session 2: Called to Serve

- Choosing a work of mercy that the group will engage in through a communal day of service

Session 3: Putting into Practice

- Community building and reflection on the call of living faith

Session 4: Service Day

- All-day service session (planned during Session 2)

Session 5: Mystagogia

- Post-Confirmation gathering to reflect and consider “what’s next?”

High School Formation Attendance

St. Matthew’s and Shepherd of the Hills juniors are expected to also attend high school formation the first Sunday of the month. *Called to Mercy* was purposefully chosen as the Confirmation curriculum because it does not interfere with the High School schedule by requiring students to come in weekly (or even bi-weekly) for classes. Therefore, it is expected that Juniors attend formation on a regular basis. SMSA teens must complete *Called to Mercy* and attend all Confirmation in-person sessions.

Additional Due Dates

The following documents are due to the Religious Ed office NO LATER than the due dates below.

<u>Item</u>	<u>Due Date</u>
Confirmation Registration Form	July 1 st , 2019
Sponsor/ Confirmandi Take-Home Interview	Sun, Nov 10 th , 2019
Service Hours (15 Parish & 15 Community)	Sun, Dec 8 th , 2019
Letter to the Bishop	Sun, Jan 19 th , 2020

Log-In and Access Code Information



Returning Religious Ed Teens:

Teens who already have an mlearn account will be enrolled by the DRE in Called to Mercy **once they have officially registered for Confirmation for the current school year.** If your teen has forgotten their user name and password, please contact the Religious Ed office to have it reset.

SMSA Juniors:

SMSA students will be enrolled in Called to Mercy once they have registered for Confirmation and have provided a teen email address to the DRE.

Other:

1. Go to mlearn.smp.org/enroll.
2. Enter access code: Please contact DRE .
3. Enter parent/guardian information and young person information.
4. Read and agree to the terms of service. If the young person is under 13 years of age, a parent/guardian must agree to the terms.
5. Receive a confirmation e-mail. (Both the parent/guardian and the young person will receive this.)
6. Open the e-mail and click on the link to reset your password. Create a new password and save changes. Then click "Continue."
7. Log in with your e-mail address and password.
8. Select your course and begin with learning module 1.
9. Move through the 10 modules sequentially, completing them by the dates indicated on the handout.

Website to Login:

<https://mlearn.smp.org/login>

WHAT IS CONFIRMATION?

Confirmation is the strengthening and fullness of the Holy Spirit already received in Baptism. When we were baptized we became children of God. As children of God we share the life of God, the life of three persons in one love. The Spirit is the love between Father and Son. The Spirit acts in us urging us to move beyond our individual selves into making the community on Earth like the community of love that is God. Confirmation calls us to a great participation in the mission of Jesus and the Church. Through Confirmation our relationship with God is deepened and we are incorporated more completely into the body of Christ. Confirmation obliges us, as true witnesses of Christ, to spread and defend the faith by word and deed.

WHY BE CONFIRMED?

When a youth reaches their mid-teens, they begin to realize that life is bigger than them. They sense a need to reach beyond their own personal world and into the world of caring for others. They find themselves inclined in that direction. That inclination is God's Spirit alive and moving in them. Being confirmed is the Church's recognition that the Spirit is moving in a person. Thus the Church "confirms" what is going on. To step forward and ask to be confirmed is for an individual to recognize that the Spirit is moving in them, and then ask the larger faith community if they too recognize that Spirit. If so, then someone is ready to be confirmed. It takes recognition from two directions – from within oneself and from the faith community as well.

We say the Sacrament of Confirmation brings the gifts of the Spirit. Actually, the sacrament "confirms" that those gifts have already begun. If you wonder if you should be confirmed, look for those gifts beginning to blossom:

Wisdom	A true knowledge of how to act and live based upon God's viewpoint. Look for the ability to see things as they truly are in an open-minded manner.
Understanding	A deeper insight into what we believe by faith. The ability to draw out consequences from the significance of events.
Right Judgment	The ability to make good and wise decisions dealing with everyday problems.
Courage	The strength to overcome fear when called to do what you sense is right and to stand up for one's beliefs.
Knowledge	The ability to comprehend the truths of the universe and being aware of that truth in one's life.
Reverence	A deep respect for God and all creation because one recognizes the presence of God in all that is.
Wonder and Awe	The realization that our great and powerful God loves me and is close to me, and so also in all of God's people and all of God's creation.

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION:

- Must be 16 years of age or older or entering their junior or senior year of high school.
- Must have received the Sacraments of Baptism, Reconciliation and Eucharist.
- Regular attendance at Mass.
- Regular attendance and participation in high school faith formation
- Completion of an interview with one's sponsor
- Completion of 30 hours of service - 15 Parish & 15 Community.
- Attendance at the required Confirmation preparation sessions, and the Confirmation retreat.
- Completion of the online Called to Mercy Modules
- Selection of a Saint name for Confirmation
- A letter to Bishop Schuerman requesting the Sacrament of Confirmation

ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS

All those planning to be confirmed, **including St. Mary's Springs students**, are required to have:

1. REGULAR MASS ATTENDANCE

It is expected that someone who is seeking to be confirmed has reached the point in their life when they take personal responsibility for attending weekly Mass. In fact, Mass attendance may be a good barometer for one's readiness for Confirmation. Consequently, it is expected that a confirmand is coming to Mass regularly. If this is not the case, one should examine their motive for Confirmation.

2. REGULAR FORMATION ATTENDANCE

It is expected that someone who is seeking to be confirmed accepts the responsibility to adequately prepare by attending the high school formation sessions offered by Shepherd of the Hills/St. Matthew's Religious Education Program. The full calendar can be found at sothparish.org and stmatthewofcsp.org. SMSA students should regularly and actively be participating in class discussions in Theology class.

SERVICE HOUR REQUIREMENTS

Why Service Hours?

Why are service hours a requirement for Confirmation? To be a Catholic Christian, we need to be more than people who participate in Mass on Sunday. We must be people of action, people of service. Preparing for Confirmation is a process of becoming a fully committed member of the Christian community, sensitive to how the Spirit is moving in one's life. The Spirit moves us to make wise and fair decisions, moves us to pray, and to connect with others and build community. The Spirit also stirs us to serve one another and to free people from injustice as Jesus did. Service is a way of life for committed Christians. In preparing for Confirmation teens are helped in recognizing the service they already do and they are encouraged to try new ways to use their talents and interests in making a needed difference to people around them. As teens recognize that the service they do makes a difference in others' lives, they gain strength in their commitment.

The Requirements

A total of 30 service hours is a requirement for Confirmation. Of these 30 hours, 15 should be for the community and 15 should be for the parish. Many opportunities for service were presented in Module 0 of the online formation class and are available in the e-newsletter each month.

Because the junior year of high school can be rather busy, the 30 required service hours are HIGHLY ENCOURAGED to be spread out over three years but it is not required to do so.

If there is no paper record in the Religious Education Office, credit will not be given for hours. **All 30 service hours for the Confirmand's 9th-11th high school years must be completed and submitted to the Religious Education Office by December 8th, 2019.**

- Participating in a summer mission trip will fulfill 5 community service hours.
- Log of Service Hours forms can be downloaded from the Religious Education page at www.sothparish.org
- Service hours completed for another organization may be counted towards youth's community service hours.
- Failure to complete your service hours by the deadline may result in a delay of Confirmation.
- For local volunteer opportunities log onto www.fdlvolunteer.com or contact your school guidance office.
- If you have difficulty finding activities for parish service hours, contact the Religious Education Office.

CHOOSING A CONFIRMATION SPONSOR

According to the Sacramental Guidelines for the Archdiocese of Milwaukee, Sponsors must:

- A. Be designated by the one who is to be confirmed.
- B. Be at least 16 years old.
- C. Be a Catholic who has received the sacraments of Baptism, Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation.
- D. Lead a life in harmony with the Catholic faith and the role that is to be undertaken.
- E. Cannot be the father or mother of the one who is to be confirmed.

The Church encourages candidates to choose one of their baptismal godparents as their sponsor because the Confirmation sponsor continues the godparents' role of helping young people fulfill their baptismal promises.

While parents are not to serve as sponsors, their role in the faith development of their child is not to be underplayed or minimized. A proxy may fill in for a sponsor who is unable to attend Confirmation.

After choosing a sponsor, please have them complete the back of the [Confirmation Registration Form](#). Sheets are due to the Religious Education Office by July 1, 2019.

CHOOSING A CONFIRMATION NAME

Parents introduce you to the Church at baptism when you receive your name. Parents and godparents agree to share their faith with you, to support you in learning about Christian beliefs, and to help you develop spiritually. Confirmation completes your initiation into the full life of Christians.

At Confirmation, you choose a saint name or affirm the name given to you at baptism. Every candidate should have a saint's name. If you wish to choose a name other than your baptismal name, here are some ideas to help you choose a Confirmation name:

- Choose the name of a saint who represents a cause you find important.
- Choose the name of someone in the bible whom you admire.
- Choose the name of someone in your life who has influenced your faith or has been a living witness of the Spirit to you. It should also be a saint's name.
- Affirm the name your parents gave you at baptism.

Resources on Saints and Saints' names can be found in the Religious Education Office and on the Called to Mercy App.

CONFIRMATION RETREAT

All Confirmation candidates are required to attend a retreat. This year's Confirmation Retreat will be held **Sunday, November 10th, 2019** at Shepherd of the Hills. A team from SPIRITUS Ministries will be facilitating the retreat.

The retreat will include breakfast, 10:30am Mass at SOTH, lunch, Reconciliation, and many opportunities to dive deeper into one's faith. Lunch is provided for the teens. Teens may wish to bring other snacks. However, food and drink are not allowed in the classrooms and will need to be kept in the gym or cafeteria.

Should there be a reason or an emergency and a student cannot make this retreat, the teen will need to find another retreat and attend with another group. There is no permission slip needed for this retreat because we are hosting the retreat at our own parishes.

WHAT TO BRING:

- Comfortable clothes for both indoors and outdoors
- Walking shoes
- A Bible

WHAT NOT TO BRING:

Alcoholic beverages, recreational drugs, guns, knives, weapons, fireworks and pets of any kind are not allowed anywhere on the premises.

CONFIRMATION REHEARSAL

Sunday, March 15th 2020 7:00-8:30pm at Shepherd of the Hills Parish

Attendance at Confirmation practice is required for all confirmands and sponsors. If a sponsor is from out of town and cannot attend the practice, a parent must take his/her place at practice.

DATE OF CONFIRMATION

7:00pm Thursday, March 19th 2020 at Shepherd of the Hills Parish

Confirmands and sponsors need to be at Shepherd of the Hills an hour before Mass time.

WRITING A LETTER TO THE CONFIRMING BISHOP (DUE SUN JAN 19, 2020)

Prior to Confirmation, each confirmation candidate is required to write a letter to the confirming bishop. **Bishop Schuerman** will be the confirming president.

The letter should include:

1. A brief introduction of yourself
 2. An expression of your desire to be confirmed and why
 3. The name of the saint chosen as the Confirmation name and why you picked this name
 4. An explanation of the service projects you participated in -- what did you learn through your experiences about those you served? about yourself? about the Church? about the message of Jesus?
 5. Some words about your personal faith growth – past, present, and future
 6. An explanation of how you will live out the commitment made through Confirmation
- The letter should be typed. Be sure to type your name at the bottom and SIGN your letter by hand above your name.
 - Letter length should be at least a half page and no more than two pages.
 - The letter should be neatly folded and placed into an envelope labeled “[*Confirmation name*] Bishop Letter”
 - A. DO NOT fold the envelope.
 - B. DO NOT include anything other than the letter to the bishop in the envelope.
 - **Letters to the Bishop are due in the Religious Education office by January 19, 2020 so they can be forwarded to the bishop.**

Below is an example of what you might write in your letter to the bishop. Please DO NOT copy the letter word for word, but do try to include the six points mentioned above. Write to the bishop with seriousness and respect – but also write ‘from your heart’.

Dear Bishop Schuerman,

I have been preparing for the celebration of the sacrament of Confirmation for quite some time, and I would like to be confirmed in my faith. I would like to be ‘sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit’.

As a teenager, I realize that more and more maturity will be expected from me. This is true of my faith life also. I would like to be strengthened by the gift of the Holy Spirit as I continue on my journey of faith.

To prepare for this sacrament, I have faithfully attended the catechetical instructions at my parish, and tried to be of service to others by (list here the specific ways you have been of service to others). In the future, I intend to continue serving my community by (list ways you intend to continue being of service after you have been confirmed). I have chosen St. [your saint name here] as my Confirmation name because [explanation].

As you can see, I have chosen to be part of the mission of Christ. I am now formally requesting the sacrament of Confirmation.

Thank you very much.

Gratefully,

(Your full name)

Confirmation candidate of _____ Parish

Confirmation Date: Thursday, March 19th, 2020 7:00pm @ SOTH

Sponsor's Side (To help take notes) Due Nov 10, 2019 Name_____

The following questions are to be asked during a conversation between the sponsor and confirmand. It is recommended the conversation take place in the church or another special place of prayer.

The questions below are for the sponsor to ask the confirmand during the conversation

1. Why have you decided to be confirmed?

2. How do you think Confirmation will help you in life?

3. Your parents had you baptized in the Catholic faith. Why do you want to continue being Catholic?

4. How have you seen God working in your life?

5. Do you feel close to God right now? Why?

6. What is your prayer life like?

7. Where are you on Church participation? Do you attend regularly, occasionally, or seldom? What do you get from the Mass when you attend?

8. With Confirmation you will become an adult member of the church. What does this mean to you?

9. How do you think you will live your life as an adult member of the church?

10. What talent or gift can you bring to the community?

Confirmand's Side (To help take notes) Due Nov 10, 2019 Name _____

The following questions are to be asked during a conversation between the sponsor and confirmand. It is recommended the conversation take place in the church or another special place of prayer.

Sponsor Interview Questions (ask these questions to your sponsor during your conversation)

1. Why have you decided to stay Catholic?

2. What was your Confirmation like?

3. Who is Jesus for you?

4. How has God worked in your life?

5. How do you show in your daily life that you have accepted your responsibility as a confirmed Catholic?

6. Do you feel close to God right now? Why?

7. What is your prayer life like?

8. How have you been involved in Church activities? Why have you chosen to be active/not active in the Church community?

9. How have you furthered your faith life since being confirmed?

10. How can we grow in our faith together after I am Confirmed? Will you come with me to Mass?