



Confirmation Preparation Program 2020-2021

"It is not enough to love the young; they must know that they are loved." – St. John Bosco

Dear Parishioners,

We will be making some changes this coming year to our Sacrament of Confirmation Preparation, some due to COVID-19, some due to a desire to go deeper with Candidates in genuine conversation about the faith.

Importantly, we are putting an emphasis on *journeying together*, building community with our teenagers and getting to know them, as an important way to grow and ready them for receiving the Sacrament and embarking on a lifelong commitment as disciples of Jesus Christ. Jesus formed His disciples by having them walk beside Him and one another before sending them into their ministries after His Death and Resurrection. We ultimately want to walk with your teenagers, helping them to encounter Jesus and see along the way the beauty and importance of the Catholic faith in their life's journey.

In this spirit, Grade 10 will be meeting a total of 14 times throughout the school year: mostly every other week, October through April. Grade 9 will be meeting a total of 8 times, October through May. The increase of meeting days allows for the building of relationships, alongside the learning component of equipping the candidates with the tools and resources to draw upon in life as a disciple. We will start the year with a parent/candidate meeting so that I can fill you in on the way we are approaching preparation this year.

Also flowing out of the desire to journey deeper with your sons and daughters, parents will not be asked to attend the Confirmation Prep sessions this coming year. We intend, instead, to have some adults, hopefully a mix of younger and older, act as small group leaders with our Candidates. The hope is to get the kids in a space where they feel comfortable being themselves, a place they know they belong and are comfortable looking at the faith in the context of their peers and a few guides.

As always, I am available to answer any questions and receive feedback on any part of our faith formation program. I am always trying to listen to the community while prayerfully considering the best road forward. Please pray for our program and our teens: that their hearts are touched and moved to a great desire for Heaven and love for Jesus. This is ultimately what I am here for and why our Parish exists.

Sincerely, in Christ,

Aaron Giard

Director of Lifelong Faith Formation

Collaborative Confirmation Prep Schedule – REVISED 9/16/2020

Please note: We have had to move the September Parent/Teen Sessions for Grades 9 and 10 to a Zoom meeting rather than in person, due to the size of the group that is RSVPing. 100+ people in the parking lot does not appear wise during COVID, even with proper social distancing.

Grade 9 – Year II

One Parent and Teen Session for ALL groups

Sun. September 27th @ 3:30 PM – 4:45 PM

ONLINE, ZOOM ONLY. E-mail agiard@newburyportcatholic.org for the Zoom link.

***In-person Option – Sunday afternoons, 3:30 PM – 5:00 PM; Church of the Nativity Hall, Merrimac**

October 25th, November 22nd, December 13th, January 10th, **January 31st**, March 7th and April 11th,
May 9th

Online Option – Tuesday evenings, 6:30 PM – 8:00 PM; via Zoom

Dates: October 13th, November 10th, December 8th, January 12th, February 9th, March 9th, April 6th,
May 11th

Grade 10 – Year II

One Parent and Teen Session for ALL groups

Sun. September 20th @ 3:30 PM – 4:45 PM

ONLINE, ZOOM ONLY. E-mail agiard@newburyportcatholic.org for the Zoom link.

***In-person Option – Sunday evenings, 6:30 PM – 8:00 PM; Church of the Nativity, Merrimac**

Dates: October 4th and 18th, November 1st and 15th, December 6th and 20th, January 3rd and 24th,
February 7th and 28th, March 14th and 28th, April 11th and 25th

Online Option – Tuesday evenings, 6:30 PM – 8:00 PM; via Zoom

Dates: October 6th and 20th, November 3rd and 17th, December 1st and 15th, January 5th and 19th,
February 2nd and 23rd, March 2nd, 16th and 30th, and April 13th

* NOTE: In-person sessions will only occur if MA COVID-19 regulations and restrictions allow it. There is a maximum capacity of 25 people (21 teens and 4 adult leaders) for in-person gatherings at this time. If there is a spike in cases in our area, we will transfer sessions either outdoors (weather permitting) or online until they go down. In-person sessions will be held at **Nativity Church Hall in Merrimac** due to its wide-open main space, allowing for easier social distancing. Candidates who attend should expect to wear masks, have their temperature taken when they arrive and practice appropriate social distancing guidelines, depending on recommendations from the state at the time.