



## **CONFIRMATION**

### **OFFICE OF YOUTH MINISTRY**

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Dear Parents and Candidates:

Welcome! We are looking forward to sharing this journey of faith with you and your family as you prepare to receive the sacrament of Confirmation. As you will see, Confirmation preparation involves learning, sharing, serving, spiritual growth, and fellowship! You will be given the opportunity to learn more about your Catholic faith and what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ.

Confirmation is the Sacrament in which one is enriched by the gift of the Holy Spirit and bound more perfectly to the Church. It strengthens us and obliges us to be witnesses to Christ by word and deed and to spread and defend the faith.

Confirmation is the Sacrament that perfects Baptismal grace; it is the sacrament which gives us a fuller participation in the Holy Spirit in order to root us more deeply as children of God, incorporates us more firmly into Christ, strengthen our bond with the Church, associate us more closely with her mission, and help us to bear witness to the Christian faith in words accompanied by deeds.

Confirmation, like Baptism, imprints a spiritual mark or indelible character on the Christian soul; for this reason one can receive this sacrament only once.

A Christian does not live as a child of God through his or her own efforts alone, but through the grace of God. We see this in a practical way when we look back on our own lives and the lives of others, even the lives of saints. Therefore, it is our duty to seek the grace that God offers us in order to live our lives as Christians in the way that God intends. When we fully participate in His Church through the Sacraments and through our involvement in our community, we ARE the Body of Christ.

Holy Name of Jesus unequivocally recognizes the parents' role as primary educators of their children in the faith. The Church has a responsibility to not only support parents in this role but to assist parents, as well. We have attempted to create a program designed to best support and assist our parents. We do not want the faith formation program at Holy Name to be a replacement of the parents' role as primary educator. Instead, we hope to stand beside and partner with our parents in helping to lead your teen closer to Christ. What follows in the next few pages is what we offer at Holy Name to assist you in leading your teen in forming their faith, in sacramental formation, and in active parish life through Confirmation.

The program that our parish has developed, as listed below, is the norm or standard whereby we can see if our youth understand the necessary material, participation, and spiritual life beneficial to being confirmed.

Thank you for allowing us to assist you in preparing for Confirmation.

Sincerely in Christ,

Aaron Slayback

*Aaron Slayback*

Youth Minister

Maria Lewis

*Maria Lewis*

Confirmation Co-Coordinator

Pia Elsesser

*Pia Elsesser*

Faith Formation Director

## **Who May Be Confirmed?**

Confirmation candidates:

- will be entering the 9<sup>th</sup> grade for the 2016-17 school year
- have received the sacraments of Baptism, and Eucharist.
- are practicing their faith
- are in the state of grace
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the responsibilities of a member of the Catholic Church
- are aware of the initiation aspect of the Sacrament of Confirmation and be committed to continuing the faithful practice and study of their religion
- **have a sincere desire to receive the sacrament as well as an appreciation of sacramental life.**
- **register with their parish for the sacrament of Confirmation (using the Faith Formation registration form)**

### **Confirmation Candidate Expectations at a glance:**

- participate in weekly Mass
- participate in Life Nights and other activities within the parish community.
- participate in the once a month Candidate sessions
- choose a qualified sponsor and meet regularly with him/her.
- research select and create a presentation on your Confirmation name due by the retreat.
- participate in Rite of Enrollment Mass on December 11 2016
- schedule an interview time with Fr. Steve
- create a letter addressed to Bishop Parkes due at your interview
- participate in Confirmation retreat March 24-25 2016
- be regularly involved in service to the parish, their school and their community.

## **Detail of Expectations**

### **Weekly attendance at Mass**

At the center of the Catholic Christian faith is the celebration of the Eucharist, the real presence of Christ in the bread, wine and the people who eat His body and blood. It is at Mass, at Liturgy, where we come together with all of our Catholic Christian friends to celebrate as one church. It is only fitting for the people of our parish community to celebrate and walk with you on your journey toward being a full member. Weekly attendance at Mass is therefore, expected of candidates and their families.

### **Service & Outreach**

We are called as Christians to the service of others. In years past, candidates have had to fulfill a certain number of service hours and have the person they volunteered to help sign a sheet showing their service. We do not ask our candidates for this. Instead, we ask that each candidate do some service each month, and do a one paragraph summary to be turned in each session.

### **Confirmation Sessions**

We will have monthly gatherings in small groups for learning, sharing, serving, spiritual growth, and fellowship. In these small groups we will break open the teaching on a more intimate level. We will be using the series *Decision Point* by Matthew Kelly for teaching and discussion each meeting. Each session will begin at 12:30pm and will end no later than 3:00 pm. We ask that any questions or turn in of paperwork be done before 12:30 to ensure we will start on time and end on time. We ask that every effort be made to attend each one, since there are only 6 classes in one year, missing just one session means missing an incredible amount of information, not to mention getting to spend time with other Catholic teens in the process.

### **Life Nights**

Life Nights are from 6:30 PM until 8:00 PM Sunday nights (please see our calendar). We encourage our youth attend any Mass they prefer, we especially encourage youth to attend with their families, whichever Mass that may be. Weekly Mass attendance and frequent reconciliation are encouraged.

Our evening begins with a Youth Mass at 5:00PM directed specifically towards teens, which is followed immediately by the Life Night. The primary objective

is to encourage teens to realize a deeper relationship with Christ and to challenge them to live their faith as they carry out their daily lives. Teens experience this sharing in an atmosphere of love and acceptance from their peers and the adult leaders who are there to assist them in their journey.

### **Mini-Retreat and Confirmation Retreat**

Retreats are such an important part of the Confirmation process; they are even important in life. How many times do we look forward to a vacation from school or from our everyday lives? We go to the beach, or the mountains, Hawaii, Disney World, just about anywhere to “get away” and recharge our batteries.

Retreats are intended to do the same. They give people the chance to “get away” from things that prevent them from focusing on our Lord. Retreats allow candidates to go away to have fun, relax, but more importantly, to recharge the spiritual battery. When you return from retreat, you can be guaranteed that your life will be changed.

Each Candidate must attend the one mini- retreat on Dec 10th and one retreat specifically for Confirmation the on March 24-25, 2017

### **Sponsors**

Sponsors are people who you can rely on during your faith journey. They should be people with a deep commitment to the Catholic faith and who are active, confirmed members of their parish. They should be willing to listen to you, help you answer questions, and be willing to share their faith and example with you. Sponsors are expected to maintain REGULAR contact with their candidate to not only pray, but to socialize and develop a stronger relationship.

Please take time to discern your Sponsor and have them complete the Sponsor Information Form in this Registration Packet. All Sponsors must have their Sponsor Information Form signed and sealed by their parish pastor.

We ask that each candidate chose their Sponsor and have the form turned in no later than December 10<sup>th</sup> 2016.

## **Patron Saint**

Each Candidate will be asked to pick a Confirmation Saint, or Patron, Saint. Your Confirmation Saint will be a patron for you throughout your year of formation. You will pray alongside your Saint as you prepare for this beautiful sacrament, and your Saint should serve as a reminder of the faithful examples that go before us and an example of a life committed to love and sacrifice. The Saint can bear special relevance in your life and your gifts. For example, if music is very important to you, St. Cecilia, the Patron Saint of Music, might be a good choice. There are literally thousands of Saints who remind us of what an ordinary person can become. You will take the name of this Saint in the official record of the church, and this is what the Bishop will call you when he seals you with the gift of the Holy Spirit at Confirmation. Please take the time to thoughtfully choose a saint who will represent something important to you, and who you will look to for inspiration of faith.

Each candidate will be asked to create a presentation which includes the following:

- A. Explain who this Saint is, where they were from, and what you learned about him or her.
- B. Write about what about this Saint inspires you and why you chose him or her.

## **Questions Frequently Asked**

### **About Holy Name's Confirmation Program**

#### **What is the Sacrament of Confirmation?**

Confirmation is a sacrament in which those who have been baptized receive the fullness of the Holy Spirit, Whom the Lord sent upon His apostles at Pentecost. It is a sacrament that celebrates God's special strengths and gifts in those who have been baptized. Confirmation is the completion of Baptism, one step in the process of initiating new members into the community of faith. It is a time to affirm one's Christian identity and commit to serving the community.

#### **How often is the Sacrament of Confirmation celebrated at Holy Name?**

Bishop Parkes celebrates the sacrament of Confirmation at Holy Name of Jesus every year. The next scheduled time to celebrate the sacrament is April 22<sup>nd</sup> 2017 at the 5pm Mass. Bishop Parkes sets the date for Confirmation we are usually notified of the date during the summer prior to Confirmation.

#### **Who is eligible to celebrate Confirmation?**

A person who has been baptized, celebrated first Eucharist, is in the 9th grade or older, and is properly prepared may celebrate Confirmation.

#### **What happens if a person older than the usual age for Confirmation?**

Students up through the 12th grade will join the normal Confirmation class. Those who have graduated from high school need to speak to the pastor and Faith Formation Coordinator to enter the RCIA program.

#### **Does the parent(s) of the student need to be a practicing Catholic?**

According to Canon 843, if the youth's parents are not practicing Catholics but wish to have their child celebrate the sacrament, the youth should not be kept from experiencing the sacrament providing the youth is practicing the faith.

Parents are encouraged to participate in the sacramental preparation with their son/daughter.

## **Who gives permission for the youth to celebrate the sacrament if the youth is not living with his/her parents?**

If the child is living with someone other than the parent or legal guardian, the parent or legal guardian must be asked to grant permission before the child prepares to celebrate Confirmation. In the case of joint custody, both parents must grant permission.

## **How do I know if my child is ready to begin the preparation program for the Sacrament of Confirmation?**

Look for these signs of readiness in your child:

- A developing sense of personal responsibility for duties at home, school & church.
- A willingness to help and serve others.
- A personal interest in learning about and practicing the faith.
- A desire to identify himself/herself with Christ in the Catholic Church through the Sacrament of Confirmation.

## **How is the readiness of a youth to celebrate Confirmation determined?**

Before celebrating Confirmation, candidates should be “expected to have undergone a conversion in mind and in action and to have developed a sufficient acquaintance with Christian teaching as well as a spirit of faith and charity” (RCIA 120). The closing interviews with the youth at the end of the year of preparation will help determine the readiness of the youth. If the determination is made that the youth is not ready, the celebration of Confirmation may be delayed until some future time.



### **Should a person be forced by their parents against their wishes to be confirmed?**

Parents should strongly encourage their youth to participate in the preparation process for Confirmation and make their decision about being confirmed at that time. No one should be forced to be confirmed. In fact, celebrating a sacrament against one's will would make the sacrament invalid. If a youth does not want to be confirmed, after discussion with his/her parents and the pastor, the wishes of the youth should be respected. There are many reasons for which a person may decide not to be confirmed. It is not automatically a sign that the person has rejected the faith. There will always be another opportunity to celebrate Confirmation at a later time.

### **When should Confirmation be delayed?**

The sacrament of Confirmation should not be delayed unless lack of readiness is clearly indicated. If lack of readiness is clear, Confirmation may be delayed but not refused. If it is delayed, students and parents will be told clearly what aspect of readiness needs to be demonstrated, how that might be accomplished, and when Confirmation might be expected.

## **Instilling a lasting faith beyond the teen years, PARENTS ARE CRUCIAL.**

- Parents are the No. 1 influence in helping a teen remain religiously active as a young adult.
- Catholic teens with parents committed to practicing their faith are 8 times more likely to be very religious as young adults.
- Catholic teens who say religious faith is important in shaping their daily lives are 5 times more likely to be very religious as young adults.
- Catholic teens who attend faith formation (Life Teen, retreats, etc.) are 1.5 times more likely to be very religious as young adults.
- Catholic teens who have had their own religious experiences are nearly 3 times more likely to be very religious as young adults than those who don't.
- Research in the US has shown that when young people have genuine relationships with adults other than their parents and youth leaders they are more likely to stay involved in their church communities.
- Research shows that the greater a sense of 'belonging' that children and young people feel in their church, the more often they participate in church activities and the more likely they are to remain in the church as they grow up.
- Having a relationship with adults who know your name and are available to listen or provide support and advice when needed would go a long way to strengthening a sense of belonging.
- Young people who are involved in the youth ministry at their local parish and can name five adults in the church other than their youth leaders with whom they have some sort of relationship are more likely to remain religious as young adults.
- Teens who had at least one adult from church make a significant time investment in their lives also were more likely to keep attending church. Youth who stayed in church - by a margin of 46 percent to 28 percent - said five or more adults at church had invested time with them personally and spiritually."

## Checklist for Successful Parents

Below is a checklist of some ways you can be a successful Catholic parent. Check all those statements you already do. If some remain unchecked, you may want to consider making them part of your family routine in the future. God bless you in your sacred vocation of parenting!

- 1) Attend weekend Mass as a Family each Sunday.
- 2) Discuss the meaning of Scripture readings and/or the homily after Mass with your children.
- 3) Regularly go to Confession with your family.
- 4) Discuss the beauty and meaning of the Sacraments with your family.
- 5) Say morning/evening prayers and/or the Rosary as a family or individually.
- 6) Read the Scriptures and discuss them.
- 7) Visit Church or participate in a weekday Mass with your children.
- 8) Share what your Catholic faith means to you personally with your family.
- 9) Take an active part in your child's Sacramental preparation and faith formation.
- 10) Try to provide ongoing faith formation for your children.
- 11) Say grace before each meal.
- 12) Demonstrate the importance of ongoing faith growth and instruction in your own life by participating in adult faith formation programs, Holy Hours, XLT, Parish Missions, etc.
- 13) Speak often and lovingly of your faith, especially when you feel particularly close to God.
- 14) Take an active part in parish life and encourage your children to do the same.
- 15) Openly share your values and discuss them with your children, listening carefully to their comments.
- 16) Help them develop moral decision making powers appropriate for their maturity by sharing your insights and guiding them without making all the decisions for them.
- 17) By word and example, teach your children how to love and value one another, and seek/offer forgiveness.
- 18) Pray for your family, and ask them to pray for you.