



Confirmation Preparation

A Guidebook for Confirmation Candidates and Parents

...that their hearts may be encouraged as they are brought together in love, to have all the richness of fully assured understanding, for the knowledge of the mystery of God, Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." Col 2, 2-3

Dear Candidates, Parents and Sponsors,

Welcome to St. Thomas the Apostle's Confirmation Program.

We are looking forward to sharing with you this journey of faith. Confirmation preparation involves learning, sharing, fellowship, spiritual growth and fun!

It is an 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. It is the Sacrament in which one enters into full membership in the Catholic Church. Confirmation perfects the grace we received at our Baptism; it is the sacrament which gives us the Holy Spirit in order to root us more deeply as children of God, incorporate 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 actions.

Sincerely,

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Confirmation Candidate Expectations

- Participate in weekly Mass and Holy Days of Obligation
- Participate in Sessions according to calendar
- Choose a qualified Sponsor
- Participate in Rite of Enrollment Mass.
- Participate in Confirmation Retreats
- Participate in the Confirmation Rehearsal
- Participate in the Confirmation Liturgy
- Participate in the Saints and Service Fair
- Participate in Living Stations of the Cross

Expectations in Detail

The following explains each of the Confirmation expectations in detail and in some cases, the reasons and requirements are important to the formation of the candidate. Please remember that while in many cases we list a minimum requirement for Confirmation, the candidates should be encouraged to make many of these activities a regular part of their faith practices.

Participate in Weekly Mass and Holy Days of Obligation

The Confirmation candidate should have a sincere intention of participating in Mass every week. Participating in the Eucharistic life of the community is both a privilege and an obligation of Confirmed Catholics. When we worship as a community we build up the Body of Christ.

Participate in Saints and Service Fair

Confirmation candidates should prepare a presentation board of service projects as well as their saint paper. The saint paper should be at least a 200 word biographical essay of their saint.

More details for the fair are under separate cover.

Participate in Confirmation Sessions

Attendance at the Confirmation sessions is extremely important in preparing the candidates for reception of the sacrament. When a session is missed, the candidate loses time for fellowship and prayer as well as the material covered that day. Students are expected to approach Confirmation sessions with openness and a readiness to get involved. It is also expected that the candidates will respect all catechists, mentors and their fellow candidates for Confirmation.

- **Please Note**

If a candidate is unable to attend a session, they should inform the catechist/mentor, so that a catch up session can be arranged.

Excessive absenteeism can affect the candidate's ability to enter fully into this important period of preparation.

Choose a Qualified Sponsor

The confirmation sponsor should be a person who has been a strong role-model as a faith-filled Catholic. This person will be a companion in the candidate's faith journey and will vouch for his/her readiness to receive the sacrament. The sponsor should therefore be able to meet regularly with the candidate, spend time strengthening a bond with him/her and help him/her prepare for the sacrament through prayer and discussion. The sponsor must be in physical attendance at the confirmation.

The sponsor:

- Must be a practicing Roman Catholic who attends Mass regularly (Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation)
- Supports the person to be confirmed in their commitment to a Christian life
- Must know the candidate and be willing to serve as a committed and lasting Christian influence on the candidate
- Must be fully received themselves, into the Catholic Church, having received Baptism, Confirmation and First Holy Communion.
- May be either male or female for any candidate
- Accompany the candidate to special liturgies and/or preparation classes
- May not be the parents of the candidate
- Assists in determining the candidate's readiness for the sacrament
- Presents the candidate to the minister of Confirmation

Choose a Saint Name and write a Biography of that Saint

In both the Old and New Testament, when God had a new mission for someone, He often gave them a new name. Even without a new name, your name has always told others who you are. God calls on each of us to fulfill a special mission. It may be converting nonbelievers, helping the poor, being a peacemaker or one of many other callings.

Confirmation may be the continuation of a mission you began at Baptism, or the beginning of a new mission.

If you believe it is a continuation of your mission from baptism(provided your baptismal name is that of a saint) you may use that name which would show the integral link between Baptism and Confirmation.

If you perhaps see Confirmation as a fresh beginning for you or a new mission in your faith journey then you would choose a new name for Confirmation.

Your Confirmation name should be that of a saint you admire or the saint name of someone you know and look up to as a Christian role-model.

There are many helpful websites available to assist you in gathering information about the saints. Here is one to get you going

www.theworkofgod.org/saints<http://www.catholic.org/saints/>

Once the candidate has chosen his/her Confirmation name, they must complete a 200 word biography of that saint, why they have chosen him/her and then present the saint at the saints and service fair.**

Participate in the Rite of Enrollment Mass

All candidates, parents and if available, sponsors should plan to attend the Rite of Enrollment Mass on May 31, 2020.

During the Mass the candidates will declare their intent to seek the Sacrament of Confirmation with the parish community as witness.

In return the community agrees to support and pray for all those involved in this faith journey.

Participate in the Confirmation Retreats and Other Special Events

Retreats provide a unique opportunity for the candidates to spend an extended time in discernment and reflect on the gifts of the Spirit and their relationship with God. It is therefore required that each candidate attend all Confirmation retreats.

Attend Confirmation Rehearsal

All candidates must attend the Confirmation Rehearsal which will take place prior to Confirmation.

Participate in the Liturgy and Rite of Confirmation

The Rite of Confirmation will take place in the fall of 2020.

Rite of Confirmation Roles and Responsibilities of Parents

“As the primary educators of their children; parents are to be intimately involved in the catechesis for Confirmation. This will help them renew and strengthen their own faith, besides enabling them to set a better example for their children.” (NCD, no. 119)

Because parents are the primary educators of their children, they are responsible for initiating their children into the sacramental life. They serve as models for their child by being committed Christians.

Parents should expect to:

- Worship with their families regularly
- Be actively involved in the Confirmation preparation of the candidate.
- Engage discussions about the material being studied including your own personal reflections.
- Encourage their child to reflect and thoughtfully consider the decision to receive the sacrament of Confirmation
- Pray for their child's spiritual growth every day.
- Support and encourage completion of assignments, activities and expectations

- Emphasize the importance of the sacrament of Confirmation by taking an active part in the celebration of Confirmation.

Thoughts and Reflections of Our Confirmation Journey

“All-powerful God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, by water and the Holy Spirit you freed your sons and daughters from sin and gave them new life. Send your Holy Spirit upon them to be their Helper and Guide. Give them the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of right judgment and

courage, the spirit of knowledge and reverence. Fill them with the spirit of wonder and awe in your presence.”