

St. Nicholas Church

Confirmation Preparation



“All who are led by the Spirit, are children of God.”
Roman 8:14

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WHAT IS CONFIRMATION?

It is one of the **3 Sacraments of Initiation** (the other 2 being: **Baptism and Eucharist**) in which the recipient is blessed with the **Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit**. It helps a person become a better Catholic Christian by bearing witness to the Lord and continuing to grow in faith, strength, wisdom and courage.

“It is the completion of a person’s Baptism: (Parents & Godparents spoke for the person as a child, now the person speaks for himself and affirms the decision & promises made by his parents at Baptism.) Baptism, the Eucharist, and the sacrament of Confirmation together constitute the “sacraments of Christian initiation,” whose unity must be safeguarded. The reception of the sacrament of Confirmation is necessary for the completion of baptismal grace. For “by the sacrament of Confirmation, the baptized are more perfectly bound to the Church and are enriched with a special strength of the Holy Spirit. Hence they are, as true witnesses of Christ, more strictly obliged to spread and defend the faith by word and deed.”

***1285: The Sacrament of Confirmation: Catechism
of the Catholic Church***

DESCRIPTION OF CLASSES

CONFIRMATION I (9TH – 11th Grade): Students in this first year of the two-year preparation for Confirmation must be in at least the 9th grade of high school. Confirmation I classes meet approximately twice a month on Tuesday evenings from 7PM to 8:30PM. All teens who desire to be confirmed will be asked to commit to engage in a lifelong practice of their faith to be demonstrated over the next two years by participation in instruction, formation, Christian Service and leadership and attendance at scheduled retreats. In other words, the proof of the candidate's readiness will be determined by the actions and attitude of each individual candidate.

CONFIRMATION II (10th – 12th GRADE); Tenth grade students (or older) may enter Confirmation II if they have completed Confirmation I classes. Confirmation II classes meet once or twice a month on Tuesday evenings from 7PM to 8:30PM. Candidates are also required to attend the following events: Rite of Welcoming Mass, scheduled retreats, and Rite of Acceptance Mass (see calendar for dates). Community involvement and a review of Catholic Christian tradition are stressed during this year. (Students who attend a Catholic high school must still enroll in this class in order to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation at our parish.)

CANDIDATE REQUIREMENTS

Class and Program Expectations:

In order to maintain the integrity of our Religious Education Program, we have set up certain requirements regarding attendance and conduct. Though we recognize the possibility of illness or family emergencies, we have determined that it is impractical and difficult to define excused or unexcused absences. **Therefore, any class missed for whatever reason will be considered an absence.** A student may make up a class by attending another approved activity, i.e. bible study, youth day, prayer service, etc.

Each candidate for Confirmation will be asked to participate, as fully as possible, in class discussions and assignments. No one will be asked to give more than he/she is capable of giving.

It is expected that each student will conduct him/herself as a young Catholic man or woman. Any deviation from this conduct will be considered worthy of attention and on occasion, parents may be contacted regarding problems of conduct. If a situation becomes intolerable, dismissal will be considered.

Mass Attendance:

As Catholics, the core of our faith experience is the Holy Mass in which we receive the Eucharist. All students should be attending Mass regularly with their families and, as often as possible, receive God's graces, blessings and forgiveness in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Priest Interview/Retreat:

Each candidate will schedule a private meeting with one of our parish priests, a deacon or a confirmation catechist to help the candidate assess his or her readiness to celebrate the sacrament. Interviews will be scheduled in the spring.

Letter to Bishop:

In the spring, candidates will write a letter to the Bishop stating their desire to be confirmed and asking him to confer the Sacrament of Confirmation. Candidates will be asked to read and write a reflection on the Gospel that will be read at their Confirmation Mass.

Retreats/Days of Reflection:

Each candidate will be required to attend the scheduled retreats (one in the beginning of year and another scheduled in early spring). If unable to attend the St. Nicholas Retreats, the candidate may arrange to attend a Confirmation Retreat from another local Catholic Church. More information about these retreats will be provided well in advance of the schedules dates.

CHRISTIAN COMMITMENT TO SERVICE

Jesus came “not to be served, but to serve” (Mt. 20:28).

The church is a servant community and all those accepting full membership in the church are also accepting the responsibility to serve. Candidates for the reception of Confirmation are asked to select service projects that are geared to their own special talents and abilities. Candidates are asked to perform at least 2 projects (per year) of Christian service to others as part of their preparation for Confirmation. The service should be performed freely and willingly and it can be within the parish, neighborhood, or local community. These service projects are meant to represent the candidates' intentions of becoming full members of this servant community, the church. These projects will also count for graduation requirements at the various high schools. Opportunities for service projects will be offered throughout the year. Students will be asked to submit written reports on the projects they choose.

SPONSORS

Sponsors play an integral part in the Confirmation process – as representatives of the parish community. Each candidate only has ONE sponsor who should be willing to support the person to be confirmed in their commitment to a Christian life and may assist them in choosing and carrying out the candidate’s service project(s) and attending liturgies and other special activities with them.

Sponsors:

- should be at least 16 years of age (we strongly recommend an adult)
- should live locally so attendance to the various activities is possible
- must be a fully initiated, practicing Catholic themselves
- may be either male or female
- must obtain a statement of eligibility from their pastor (a form will be provided)
- may be a baptismal Godparent
- may NOT be a parent of a candidate
- must be present at the Confirmation celebration (or provide a proxy “stand-in”)

Sponsor’s Name must be submitted by the beginning of the Confirmation II Year.

CONFIRMATION NAMES

If the candidate’s Baptismal name is that of a recognized saint of the Church, then there is no need to select a new name for Confirmation. (Students should know which saint they are named for and be prepared to state the full name, i.e. John the Baptist, to the Bishop at the time of Confirmation.) Using the baptismal name for Confirmation is preferred because it highlights the relationship between the sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation. If the candidate chooses to take a new name for Confirmation, it should be a name selected in honor of Jesus or Mary or from a list of recognized saints of the Catholic Church. Candidates should choose a patron saint whose Christian life or virtues can be imitated, thereby serving as patrons and models in their life journey.

SAFE ENVIRONMENT TRAINING

During the school year, in response to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' "Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People", we will offer a program for the safe environment education of our young people. During one class, we will have either an approved diocesan presenter who will speak on healthy relationships, a DVD called "Breaking the Silence" produced by the Orange Diocese, or a lesson plan (which has been approved by the diocese) dealing with recognizing potential problems and what to do if confronted with uncomfortable or dangerous situations. The content of these lessons are all age-appropriate and non-threatening presentations.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

In order for a Student to be enrolled in our Confirmation Preparation Program, we must have the following on hand:

- *Copy of Baptismal Certificate**
- *Copy of First Communion Certificate**
- *Sponsor's Name and Address**
- *Proof of Sponsor's Eligibility to be a Sponsor**

All tuition fees should be paid upon registration or a payment plan may be set up. In case of extreme hardships, there are scholarships available.