



CONFIRMATION HANDBOOK
ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC CHURCH
Date TBD 2019

"We can study the whole history of salvation, we can study the whole of Theology, but without the Spirit we cannot understand. It is the Spirit that makes us realize the truth or – in the words of Our Lord – it is the Spirit that makes us know the voice of Jesus"

~ Pope Francis

Confirmation establishes us more deeply in our relationship to God as his children, unites us more closely to Jesus Christ, enriches us with a special strength of the Holy Spirit, strengthens our bond with the Catholic Church, and gives us the power we need to be true soldiers of Christ through living, sharing, and defending our Faith. This handbook is intended to help with the process of this journey of faith for the confirmation candidates.

The Sacrament of Confirmation confers special graces of the Holy Spirit upon the person being confirmed, just as such graces were granted to the Apostles on Pentecost. Like Baptism, it can only be performed once, and confirmation increases and deepens all of the graces granted at Baptism. Each confirmand must have been baptized and in the state of grace. As a successor to the apostles, upon whom the Holy Spirit descended at Pentecost the first confirmation, the bishop is the minister of confirmation. The Church stresses this connection of confirmation, through the bishop, to the ministry of the apostles.

The Form of the Sacrament of Confirmation

Many people think of the laying on of hands, which signifies the descent of the Holy Spirit, as the central act in the Sacrament of Confirmation. The essential element, however, is the anointing of the confirmand with chrism accompanied by the words “Be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit” The Rite of Confirmation includes the Renewal of Baptismal Promises. Confirmation completes our initiation into the life of the Church as children of God. During confirmation we reaffirm the promises made at our baptism, speaking now for ourselves, by accepting God and rejecting sin.

How to Choose a Confirmation Saint

The first thing you should do is pray. Ask the Holy Spirit for guidance in choosing a saint that will be best for you. Then do some research, browse a library of patron saints online or get a good book of saints to read. Don't treat this as a box to check off and pick St. Francis just because you have a vague idea about his life. When you choose a confirmation saint, you get someone to emulate for his/her holiness and someone to intercede for you in Heaven. Look at all of the saints as part of your extended family – who are praying for you and rooting for you to get to Heaven. You might consider: Saint of the day of your birth; a parent's or grandparent's name; patron saint of a hobby, trade or special interest; the saint name of a relative particularly important to you.

When reading about the saints, ask why you are drawn to some more than others. Is it because they were courageous in speaking about the Faith? Were they drawn to helping the poor? Did they have an occupation that you are interested in or have a family like yours? As you narrow down the list of saints, think again about the reasons to choose one. Once you have decided on your saint, see if there is a good book just about your selected saint. Start asking for guidance and courage to take your reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation seriously.

How to Choose a Sponsor

It is a great honor to become a confirmation sponsor. A sponsor is someone who will guide you and share the story of faith with you. A good sponsor will make this process a little easier and more fun. Look for someone you trust, whose faith you admire and who will be there for you. There are certain requirements that a confirmation sponsor must meet: Must be a confirmed Catholic; at least 16 years old; practicing member of the Church; Not your parents or a step-parent.

Service Is Faith in Action

Each confirmation candidate is required to complete a minimum of **20 service hours** by **April 8, 2019**. The participation in service projects is an answer to the Gospel challenge to love your neighbor as Jesus loves us. This time will be spent sharing your love of Jesus Christ with others who may or may not be as fortunate as you are. It is the opportunity to show that you believe in Jesus and what He taught us by your actions and deeds. Service opportunities may be found in your family, neighborhood, parish, school or community. Try to participate in any group service projects planned for your confirmation class.

Confirmation Service Essay

Each candidate will be expected to write a three paragraph essay to be submitted by April 8, 2019. What impact has service to your community had on you? What have you learned about yourself? What are the needs of our community? What gifts has God given you to use in His service for others?

Confirmation Catechists:

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"You will be my Witnesses" Acts 1:8

Confirmation Dates and Requirements

Saint Joseph Catholic Church

2018-2019

A fee of \$130 may be submitted to the Church Office or payed online through e-giving. This fee covers the Confirmation Retreat at The Pines Catholic Camp.

December 10, 2018	Select confirmation saint
January 22, 2019	Select confirmation sponsor
February 8, 2019	Retreat registration due, Sponsor Commitment due
March 4, 2019	Copy of Baptismal Certificate with verification of First Communion (if not baptized at St. Joseph)
March 8 – 10, 2019	Confirmation Retreat, the Pines Catholic Camp Big Sandy, Texas We will need parent drivers and chaperones To participate must take Protecting God's Children training. To register for training go to www.virtusonline.org
April 8, 2019	Service Essay and 20 Service hours completed Sponsor's Pastor Verification (if needed) due
TBD	Reconciliation service
May 11, 2019 (tentative date)	Confirmation St. Joseph Catholic Church

