

# **Confirmation Handbook**

## **Our Lady, Mother of the Church**

### **2021-2022**

To our Sacramental Students and Parents,

In the Sacrament of Confirmation, the baptized person is “sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit” and is strengthened for service to the Body of Christ. We celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation when a person has reached the age of reason. To properly prepare our candidates for this age of reason, we employ the use of a two-year preparation program.

In their first year of preparation, candidates will focus on what the Catholic Church believes the Sacrament of Confirmation does to affect their faith journeys. The second year will be spent helping candidates prepare to embrace these faith journeys. During this second-year students will be using Matthew Kelly’s book *Decision Point* published by Dynamic Catholic Institute to engage and inspire them to respond to God’s grace.

Over the course of the two years, they will study important doctrines of the Catholic Church and will learn what it means to continue to shape their own faith as they prepare to take the final step into becoming an adult in the Church’s eyes and henceforth continue on their journey of faith.

There will be many different aspects of the Sacramental preparation throughout the year. This handbook will outline some of those aspects so that students and parents will have a resource to turn to for questions during their time of preparation. However, questions may still arise, so please keep an open line of communication with your student’s Catechist and the Office of Religious Education.

We are looking forward to meeting everyone!

Thank you and God Bless,

Father Andrzej Bartosz  
Pastor  
Our Lady, Mother of the Church

9-14-21

## Requirements for Confirmation

### ***Before Beginning Classes:***

#### Baptismal Certificate

All students must provide the Rectory Office with a Baptismal Certificate by October 2, 2021. Failure to provide the documentation may result in the enrolled student being dropped from the class until the following year. All tuition and fees paid will be held for the next year's enrollment.

#### Level 7 Class Completion for Enrollment in Level 8 Class

For students who studied their Level 7 Class outside of the program at Our Lady, Mother of the Church, documentation must be submitted before October 2, 2021 that clearly outlines the student's completion of a Level 7 Class program and two prior years (Level 5 and 6) at another parish. Failure to provide the documentation may result in the enrolled student being dropped from the class and added to the Level 7 Class for the 2020-2021 year.

#### Payment of All Tuition and Fees

Payment for all tuition and fees must be received by December 4, 2021. If tuition and fees will cause hardship for an enrolled family, please speak to the Director of Religious Education to set up a payment plan or to talk about available financial assistance.

### ***During Class Enrollment:***

- Maintain regular class attendance and complete all student workbook activities assigned by the student's Catechist (Level 7 & 8)
- Select a Sponsor (Level 8)
- Attend weekly Mass
- Celebrate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation (once per enrolled year)
- Research/select a Confirmation Name and write a Reflection paper on a Saint of your choice (Level 7)
- Participate in 5 hours of service work for Level 7 and participate in 10 hours for service work for Level 8.
- Write a Reflection Essay on the types of service work you participated in during the Confirmation preparation process (Level 7 & 8)
- Submit a letter to the pastor of Our Lady, Mother of the Church and the Bishop presiding over the Sacrament of Confirmation (Level 8)
- Attend all specially scheduled retreats, meetings (including an end-of-the-year interview), rehearsals and Masses (Level 7 & 8)

## **Parent/Candidate Covenant**

### *Commitment to the Confirmation Preparation Process*

The Confirmation process is a two-year journey in which candidates will explore different aspects of the Catholic Faith, including ministry and service. This process necessitates a full commitment from the Candidate, parents/guardians, and sponsor as this is a sacrament that calls for a time of reflection on personal faith and a more active participation in the life of the Church.

The requirements of the Confirmation preparation process are outlined in this Confirmation Family Handbook.

#### **Candidate Covenant:**

I desire to enter into this process of preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation. I am ready to enter into this journey leading me into the Sacrament of Confirmation with my fellow candidates, parents, sponsor, and faith community. I will complete the requirements set forth in the Confirmation Family Handbook and allow the Holy Spirit to lead me to Confirmation.

Candidate Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Parent Covenant:**

I am ready to support my child in their journey and encourage them in their commitment to the process. I realize that this includes their attendance at all Religious Education classes and Holy Mass every weekend.

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## Important Dates to Remember

(All Dates and Times are Subject to Change -Notice will be given)

The Religious Education Handbook contains a calendar of Religious Education events. Other pertinent due dates are listed below:

### **2021-2022 – Level 7**

Sat.	Oct 2	Submit Baptismal Certificate (or check that it is on file)
Sat.	Feb 5	Step 1: Researching a Confirmation Name Worksheet Due
Sat.	Mar 5	Step 2: Choosing My Confirmation Name Saint Reflection Paper Due
<b>Various dates</b>		Submit 5 Service Hour Records
Sat.	Apr 2	Service Reflection Essay Due

### **2021-2022 – Level 8**

Sat.	Sep 11	Opening Mass, 11:00 am
Sat.	Sep 18	Attend on-site class and Mass at OLMC (9:30 am-noon)
Sat.	Sep 18	Confirmation & Pre-Confirmation Parents Meeting, 12 pm
Sat.	Oct 2	Attend on-site class, Eucharistic Adoration & Rosary (9:30 am-noon)
Sat.	Nov 6	Attend on-site class— <b>Holy Fire (9 am-noon)</b>
Sat.	Dec 4	Attend on-site class (9:30 am-noon)
Sat.	Dec 4	Letter to the Pastor Due
Sat.	Jan 8	Attend on-site class, Safe Environment Training (9:30 am-noon)
Sat.	Jan TBD	Confirmation Interview, TBD
Sat.	Feb 5	Attend on-site class and Reconciliation (9:30 am-noon)
Sat.	Feb 5	Letter to the Bishop Due
Sat.	Mar 5	Attend on-site class and Mass at OLMC (9:30 am-noon)
Sat.	Mar 5	Confirmation Sponsor Form Due
<b>Various dates</b>		Submit 10 Service Hour Records
Sat.	Apr 2	Service Reflection Essay Due
Sat.	Apr 2	Attend on-site class and Mass at OLMC (9:30 am-noon)

**All plans are subject to change to follow COVID 19 pandemic restrictions.**

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **How many classes must my student attend, and will there be required Mass attendance outside of regular class times?**

All students enrolled in a Sacramental preparation year are allowed only one excused absence. To ensure that your student is receiving the best possible preparation, they must be present and participating in the scheduled on-site classes. We do acknowledge and understand that emergencies and illnesses do occur, and these special cases will be handled on a case-by-case basis per the advisement of the Director of Religious Education.

Mass attendance is expected for all students of the Religious Education program. Students and families are encouraged to attend Mass every weekend, especially considering the importance of learning what it means to actively participate in the Catholic faith.

### **My child needs a modified lesson plan/extra academic help – what is the penalty for being unable to complete the given work?**

If any child needs a modified lesson plan, a parent/guardian should not hesitate to reach out to their student's Catechist to discuss options to help their student succeed. It is our goal to adapt to our student's learning abilities, and we are all working together to make sure each student knows and understands what it means to participate in this important Sacrament. It is up to the parent/guardian to acknowledge and bring forward any academic concerns regarding a student enrolled in the class so that we can work together in providing the best educational experience possible for the student.

### **How will my child/I know they are ready to receive a Sacrament?**

As a Catholic, we believe that we are all called to be Christ-like and to emulate His words and actions in all aspects of our lives. Loving God is not an IQ or memorization test. For students who may find difficulty in completing any assigned tasks, their Catechist and the Director of Religious Education will have a discussion regarding whether that student's heart is ready to receive the Sacraments they are preparing for. Parents will be included in this discussion, and if for any reason a parent or guardian decides they do not believe their student is ready to receive the Sacrament, further preparation is available to help both the parent/guardian and student feel confident in taking this important step in the student's faith.

## Choosing a Confirmation Name

***“Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name: you are mine.” Isaiah 43:1***

What is a name? Parents and guardians choose a name for their child at birth. Oftentimes, a name can be in honor of a special person in their life: a grandparent, aunt or uncle, or close friend. Or, the name may have just had a very special meaning; perhaps a name was chosen that has a close connection to a holy man or woman of our faith, like one of the saints.

A name is an identity that tells us who we are. Throughout our lives, we identify ourselves with many names – a mascot at our school, the region where we live, or even the title of our career!

Now, it’s your turn to pick a name that identifies you. As part of the preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation, you have the privilege and responsibility to choose a name. However, there are some guidelines that must be followed for the selection of a Confirmation name.

Your name should reflect your closer identification as a member of the Catholic Christian community.

The name you select can be associated with someone in your life, parish, or community whom you respect and admire. Candidates often select a name of a parent or grandparent, honoring them for their examples of love and holiness.

*However, your Confirmation name should be the name of a saint.*

You can choose your Baptismal name or a completely new name.

Before choosing your name, PRAY! Just as you should pray about any decision, ask the Holy Spirit to guide you as you choose your Confirmation name.

Remember: Do not choose a name just for the name’s sake – have a reason and a story behind the saint. Don’t forget to think about how this saint can help you as you move forward in your faith journey.

Make sure your saint is Roman Catholic – just because there is a “Saint” in front of the name does not mean he or she is Catholic.

# Step 1: Researching a Confirmation Name

*Worksheet Due: Feb. 5, 2022*

## Looking for a Confirmation Name

In your search for a Confirmation name, you should begin by looking at the many books that outline the lives of the saints. You can ask your Catechist for suggestions. Some books go into great detail about a particular saint, while others give brief stories about the lives of numerous holy men and women.

You can also check online to research saints. Start by using Google, but always double check that the source is reliable (DO NOT USE WIKIPEDIA; **check if the saint is Catholic**). Here are a few links to help you:

<http://saints.sqpn.com/>

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

<http://www.catholic-saints.info/>

<https://www.franciscanmedia.org/saint-of-the-day>

## My Possible Confirmation Names:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

What I liked about this saint: \_\_\_\_\_

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2. \_\_\_\_\_

What I liked about this saint: \_\_\_\_\_

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3. \_\_\_\_\_

What I liked about this saint: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Step 2: Choosing My Confirmation Name – Saint Reflection

*Essay due: March 5, 2022*

**Hello, my name is...**

Level 7 students should submit a reflection on the saint who shares your name by March 5, 2022. This reflection should be at least one page long with size 12 font, typed (if a student does not have regular access to a computer, please speak with your Catechist to discuss another option). Good grammar will be considered in your reflection, and it should answer the following questions in paragraph format.

1. Provide a summary of your saint including:
  - a. Your saint's full name.
  - b. When and where your saint lived and the life they would have experienced.
  - c. Any difficulties or struggles your saint might have encountered.
  - d. How your saint followed Jesus in the way he/she lived.
  - e. How your saint died.When your saint was canonized or beatified in the Catholic Church.
  
2. Explain your reason for picking this saint, including:
  - a. How the saint will be a model for you in your life.If your saint's name is connected to someone in your family (this could be the main reason you picked the saint).
  
3. Include at the end of your paper:
  - a. Sources! It is important to credit where you found your information.
  - b. At least one picture of your saint (hand drawn or from the internet).A prayer to your saint (from the internet or made up on your own).

**IMPORTANT:** Make sure your paper is your own work. Presenting another person's work is considered plagiarism and is considered stealing (a sin!). If it is found you have plagiarized your work, a meeting with Father Andrew and the DRE will be scheduled, which could result in the delaying of your Sacrament.



# Confirmation Sponsors

## The Role of the Sponsor

A sponsor can make an enormous impact on the preparation of a candidate for the Sacrament of Confirmation. Therefore, it is important that a candidate take time to consider choosing a sponsor who is well suited to the role and who can be involved in the preparation process for the Sacrament.

The tradition of the sponsor has been part of the Catholic Church since early times. Sponsors acted on behalf of all Christian initiates, witnessing to the community about the initiates' readiness for the Sacraments. Sponsors were committed to keeping the relationship with the initiate throughout their lifetime, to help guide and aid the initiate on their journey of faith.

In a world where the internet and cell phones connect people in an instant, it can be quite easy to keep a connection to those involved in our lives.

When selecting a sponsor, keep in mind the sponsor:

Must be a baptized and confirmed Catholic over the age of 16, in good standing with the Church.

Cannot be the parent or guardian of the student preparing for Confirmation

Will need to be involved in meetings, retreats, and rehearsals before the Mass even occurs! This means that someone who lives far away may not be able to be as involved in the process of preparation required by a sponsor for a Confirmation student.

Will share their own experiences of being Catholic and growing in a relationship with God. Good sponsorship does not demand sainthood or perfection. A sponsor does not need to be an expert in adolescent psychology or the doctrines of the faith.

Will serve as a role model and be present on the student's faith journey both during and after preparation for Confirmation.

Is a person who can be seen living faithfully as a Catholic Christian.

Before someone agrees to becoming a sponsor, it is important to let the person know that there are some commitments that will need to be made. It is also suggested that sponsors help Confirmation students as they participate in service projects, attend Sunday Masses, and participate in activities and dialogues regarding the growth of their Catholic faith.

## Letter to Confirmation Sponsors

Welcome and thank you for taking this time to be a part of your student's faith journey as they prepare for the Sacrament of Confirmation. Your commitment as a role model and sponsor will play an important role in helping this student understand what it means to be part of the Catholic Church.

As we begin this journey, please do not underestimate the importance of your role. When the students were asked to look for a sponsor, they were asked to find someone who has fulfilled the following requirements:

A baptized and confirmed Catholic over the age of 16.

A person who is in good standing with the Church. Your pastor must attest to this on the sponsor form.

A person who is not the parent or guardian of the student preparing for Confirmation.

A person who can serve as a role model and be present on the student's faith journey both during and after preparation for Confirmation.

Most importantly, a person who can be seen living faithfully as a Catholic Christian. You should be honored that your life has spoken to your student in this way!

The preparation process for our Confirmation class is a two-year process. The students explore the many important doctrines and teachings of our Catholic faith, and we help them build skills to continue on learning and following these teachings even after they have completed their time in our program.

Your role is that of both mentor and witness. It is our hope that candidates will not only find inspiration from you but that you will act a faithful, moral Catholic model for them. As they prepare, it is our hope that you will be there to share your own faith stories and to answer questions they may have along the way. Occasionally these questions are meant to challenge, but most often they are sincere attempts to understand the faith and how it relates to their lives.

As a sponsor, you will need to **complete the Confirmation Sponsor Form before March 5, 2022.** You will also need to attend all scheduled sponsor and candidate meetings. Confirmation date and rehearsal are still to be determined. Confirmation will take place at Divine Savior parish to meet the confirmandi quota.

On behalf of Father Andrew and the OLMC parish community, thank you for mentoring your confirmand through their discovery of the Catholic faith.

## Confirmation Sponsor form

Please have your sponsor complete the following information.  
Students must return this signed form no later than **March 5, 2022**.

### Sponsor Requirements:

Specific criteria contained in Canon Law 874 defining who may be a sponsor:

Must be 16 or over.

Must be Confirmed in the Catholic Church and has received the Holy Eucharist.

Must not be bound by any canonical penalty.

Must live a life of harmony with the Catholic faith.

Cannot be a parent of the candidate.

### Additional requirements:

Must take an active role in deepening the formation of the candidate's faith life.

Should serve as companion, guide, model and faith witness to the candidate.

Must attend the Confirmation Mass (date to be determined).

### *Sponsor Info:*

Candidate's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsor's Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to Candidate: \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsor's Complete Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Are you Confirmed? \_\_\_\_\_ At which Parish? \_\_\_\_\_

Current Parish: \_\_\_\_\_

Parish Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I attest that the information provided on this form is true. I am a practicing Catholic; I believe and accept the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. I understand that an inquiry to confirm my good standing in the Catholic Church may be made for individuals named as sponsors who are unknown to the Pastor of Our Lady, Mother of the Church. I also understand and accept the responsibility which I undertake as a sponsor to support this candidate.

Signature of Sponsor: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Attested by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Signature of Sponsor's Pastor*

## **Level 8 Confirmation Pastor Letter and Interview**

Candidates will be interviewed at the end of their second year of preparation. The point of this interview is to allow the students to express their desire to be confirmed and to show their clear understanding of what it means to be confirmed as a Roman Catholic.

Before the interview, students must submit a letter to the pastor of Our Lady, Mother of the Church outlining the following information:

- Chosen name and brief summary of reason for choice.
- What steps you have taken in your life to prepare for confirmation.
- Why you believe you are ready to take this step forward in your faith.

The letter to the pastor will be due one month ahead (**December 4, 2021**) of the scheduled interview date. Students should be ready to demonstrate their understanding of the sacrament as well as basic prayers and doctrines of the Catholic faith. The interview will help to ensure that the candidates have met all requirements and are ready to be confirmed. Each student will be interviewed by either the Confirmation Catechist, the DRE, or the Parish Priest.

### ***REMINDER***

The Sacrament of Confirmation is not conferred on demand. Instead, the student should prepare well and *ask for the Sacrament in humility*. The Confirmation ministry team (Catechist, DRE, and Pastor) has the authority in the name of Christ to recommend any student to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. Please keep in mind that each student's personal commitment (attendance and participation in classes and other activities) will be the deciding factor for the Confirmation ministry team's recommendation. With your help and support, we will accomplish great things in Christ!

## **Level 8 Confirmation Letter to the Bishop**

Students must write a Letter to the Bishop to be considered for the Sacrament of Confirmation. This letter will describe the student's preparation and what it means to them to be a Confirmed member of the Church. It should be submitted by **February 5, 2022**.

### **Letter to the Bishop – due Feb 5, 2022**

**Greeting:** Begin your letter with a formal greeting such as: Most Reverend... or Dear Bishop...

**Body of the Letter:**

Paragraph 1: Introduce yourself (include family and background information).

Paragraph 2: Request the Sacrament. List the reasons why you would like to be confirmed.

Paragraph 3: Explain how you prepared (include aspects of your prayer life, other Sacraments, your service to others, etc.).

Paragraph 4: Explain how you will continue to carry out a life of service after Confirmation.

Explain the steps you will take to keep your faith alive in your life as you journey forward.

**Conclusion:** Sign and date.

## Service Projects Ideas

Our Level 7 and Level 8 students need to participate in service projects each year. They can be in support of the family, the community, or the parish. Additional volunteer work is always encouraged. Here are some suggested ideas for service projects:

- Letters to residents in nursing homes
- Letters to veterans
- Specific contributions to your family life (specific, detailed things you did and the dates you did them)
- Journal reports (1 page) on any aspect of parish life (see Catechist for guidance and specific suggestions)
- Research paper on what a good citizen looks like (1 page)
- Community or parish services that can be accomplished while following safety and health restrictions under pandemic guidance.

## Service Reflection Essay Guidelines – due April 2, 2022

A Confirmed Christian is called to be a living example of Jesus' teachings – God calls us to serve and we respond! In preparation for living a life of service to others, each student is required to participate in different service projects throughout the parish and community. **Level 7 students must complete 5 hours of service and Level 8 students must complete 10 hours of service.** To receive credit for the service work finished, all students must have a leader in charge of that service opportunity to fill out the form found in this handout (additional copies can be found in the RE Office or online), and at the end of the year, all students must submit a paper detailing the work they did.

Here are some questions to help you in your completion of the reflection essay:

- Why do you need to serve others?
- What were your service projects? Describe your experiences.
- What parish event did you volunteer for?
- What were your responsibilities and what did you actually do?
- Was it difficult/easy?
- How did your actions make you feel?
- Do you think your help made a difference? How?
- What did you learn about yourself in participating in service work?
- Which Corporal and/or Spiritual Works of Mercy were reflected in this project?
- When/where did you see the face of Christ?
- Would you select these projects again?
- How did service enhance your experience of Confirmation?

**Service Hours Record (copies of this form available on parish website)**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Level: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Organization/Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Address of Organization/Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number of Organization/Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail of Organization/Agency Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Brief description of community service performed:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Number of Hours Performed: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Supervisor/Advisor/Coach: \_\_\_\_\_