

Confirmation Guidelines

Confirmation Class of 2017

St. Bernard Catholic Church

Introduction

Confirmation is the sacrament by which we receive the fullness of our baptismal graces. According to the Catechism (#1285) Confirmation is the sacrament by which “the baptized are more perfectly bound to the church and are enriched with a special strength of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, they are more strictly obliged to spread and defend the faith by word and deed.” Therefore, we ask the student to show their readiness to receive this grace before the celebration of confirmation. While we know it is important to have knowledge of the faith, this knowledge is only valuable if we act according to our faith in Jesus Christ.

The following is a list of what we as a confirmation team, would call signs of readiness (requirements). We ask that these signs are fulfilled to show that a teen understands what graces they are going to receive, recognizes how these graces call them to participation and action within the community, and desires these graces (this Sacrament) which are a gift from God.

We also wish to bring to your attention a few things that are very important, so that your teens gift of confirmation is received well. First, to prepare for one sacrament you must stay close to all other sacraments you are able to receive. Therefore, during your teens confirmation preparation, it is expected that they will have a regular Mass attendance (every Sunday) and receive reconciliation on a regular (monthly) basis. Also, as outlined below please be sure to attend Wednesday evening classes. Please know that this is for the purpose of submersing your teen more deeply into the Catholic traditions and teachings for the purpose of giving them a fuller experience of the Catholic faith.

Service to the Parish:

After receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation, Catholics should take an active role in their parish communities. The following projects are aimed to helping Confirmation Candidates find various opportunities to be an active member of the parish community. Three projects of two hours should be completed. Projects can include:

- Helping set up for Parish Celebrations (Christmas or Easter)
- Helping with Parish Cleaning days
- Helping in the Parish office
- Helping with Parish Events

Corporal Works of Mercy:

As a member of the Catholic faithful, we are called to care for our neighbors. Each Confirmation Candidate should complete three projects focusing on an area of the Corporal Works of Mercy which include:

- Feeding the Hungry (work at a soup kitchen, coordinate a food drive, etc.)
- Give Drink to the Thirsty (help with global water initiatives, give water bottles to the homeless)
- Clothe the Naked (work a clothing drive, help at a thrift store whose profits benefit the poor)
- Shelter the Homeless (Help elderly neighbors maintain their homes, volunteer at a homeless shelter,)
- Visit the Sick (visit a hospital, make cards for a children's hospital, visit a nursing facility, serve those with disabilities)
- Visit the Imprisoned (write letters to those in prison and pray for them)
- Bury the Dead (help with a cleanup at a cemetery, write letter to a grieving family, serve for a funeral)

Please note: projects used for other service requirements (school, Boy Scouts, etc.) will not be accepted for these projects.

Acts of Faith

Each confirmation candidate should be looking at ways to grow in their faith. Each candidate should participate in at least three of the following options

- Liturgical Ministry (serving, singing in the choir and other such involvement counts as 1)
- Jr. High Youth Rally in February
- Mission Trip
- One Thing Remains in December
- Day of Reflection
- Other activities as approved

Retreat

We will be participating in an overnight retreat at Prairie Star Ranch October 1st and 2nd. There will be a cost of \$30 to cover food and lodging. This is an important part of the process as the candidate will have an opportunity to grow in deeper relationship with Christ. Parent volunteers are needed with driving and cooking.

Saints Paper

The student will be asked to write a short paper (a few paragraphs) on the saint they pick to be their patron saint. Some suggestions for the paragraph are: why you picked this saint to be your patron saint, any miracles related to this saint, how did this person's life reflect holiness, what is he/she the patron saint of.

Student's Confirmation Sponsor

A sponsor can be a student's grandparent, aunt, uncle, family friend, older sibling or godparent. The sponsor **MUST** be a practicing Catholic **in good standing**, already confirmed themselves, and at least 16 years old. Parents are restricted from being a sponsor. **The Sponsor must be selected during the summer before the Extra sessions begin.**

Letter to Archbishop Naumann

The student will write to Archbishop Naumann explaining why he/she wants to be confirmed, who the student's sponsor is, who the student picked for their patron saint and why, and whether or not the student feels that he/she is ready to receive the sacrament of Confirmation. This should be typed and limited to one full page. We have an outline available to assist the student.

Class Attendance

These "classes" are on Wednesday nights from 6:30 to 7:45pm and will be in conjunction with all other students from 7th through 8th grades. This is the "On-Going Religious Education" part of Confirmation. It is our hope that you attend as many as possible. We do realize things happen and a missed class or two won't be the end of the world. However, a regular pattern of absence would be a concern and would be an indication of, or sign of readiness, which may indicate the need for further understanding on the part of Joe and Father Mike. If you know you are going to miss please give Joe a call. 785-844-2813

Extra Sessions

These are the **mandatory** sessions for confirmation. These will only take place during the second year of confirmation prep. They will be held once a month on the second or third Sunday of the month from 1pm to 3pm. These will begin in Sept and go through May, meaning there are 9 of them. These sessions are the "meat" of the program; here we will specifically address confirmation theology and preparation. Therefore we **require** that either the sponsor or a parent attend all sessions.

End of year meeting with Father

As pastor of our parish, Father Mike is personally and canonically responsible for providing Catechesis education and sacramental preparation to his parishioners. Although Joe has been hired to do much of this, Father is very interested to know what is being taught and how effective it is at providing for our community's religious education needs. Therefore he wishes to meet with each confirmation teen and their parents and/or sponsor to determine what they have learned and to share in their excitement for the sacrament. These meetings will be scheduled beginning in June 2015.

Practice before Confirmation Celebration

Approximately one week before the celebration we will have a rehearsal with Father and Joe to ensure everyone knows how to move and what to say throughout the liturgy.

Baptismal Certificate

If your teen was not baptized at St Bernard's or St. Joseph's then we will need a copy of the baptismal certificate.

Quick Check List

- 3 projects in service to the Parish (Due June 30)
- 3 projects in Corporal Works of Mercy (Due June 30)
- 3 Acts of Faith (Due June 30)
- Retreat on October 1-2
- Saints paper (Due February 12)
- Sponsor forms (Due September 11)
- Letter to the Archbishop (Due June 30)
- Class attendance
- Extra sessions attendance
- Meeting with Father
- Rehearsal attendance
- Baptismal certificate