

St. Cyprian Catholic Church
Confirmation Preparation Program

A RESOURCE BOOK FOR
CANDIDATES AND PARENTS

“...But it is God who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us, by putting his seal on us and giving us his Spirit in our hearts as a first installment.”

2 Cor 1:21-22



INTRODUCTION

The Catechism of the Catholic Church states

Preparation for Confirmation should aim at leading the Christian toward a more intimate union with Christ and a livelier familiarity with the Holy Spirit – his actions, his gifts, and his biddings – in order to be more capable of assuming the apostolic responsibilities of Christian life. (1309)

Welcome! We are looking forward to sharing with you this journey of faith as you prepare to receive the sacrament of Confirmation. As you will see, Confirmation preparation involves learning, sharing, serving, fellowship, spiritual growth and even fun! You will be given the 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 gifts of the Holy Spirit and bound more perfectly to the Church. It strengthens us and obliges us to be witnesses to Christ by our words and actions, and to spread and defend the faith. It is the Sacrament in which one enters into full membership in the Catholic Church.

Confirmation perfects Baptismal Grace; it is the sacrament which gives us the Holy Spirit to root us more deeply as children of God, incorporate us more firmly in 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 our deeds.

Confirmation, like Baptism, imprints a spiritual mark or permanent character on the Christian soul; for this reason, one can receive this sacrament only once.

EXPECTATIONS – At a glance

- Participate in weekly Mass
- Participate in **ALL** Confirmation Preparation classes which **INCLUDES** attending the **9:00am Mass** on class days.
- Choose a qualified sponsor (due in September).
- Choose an appropriate Confirmation name (due in October).
- Write a letter of intent (due in January).
- Participate in the Confirmation Retreat
- Be regularly involved in social justice/service activities (service hours due by the last class meeting in March).
- Attend the Confirmation Rehearsal
- Participate in the Confirmation Liturgy



EXPECTATIONS IN DETAIL

The following explains each of the Confirmation expectations in detail and in some cases, the reasons the 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 religious practices.

Participate in Mass on Saturday evening or Sunday each week

The Confirmation candidate and his or her parents (along with the rest of the family) must 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. This is also an important way that parents demonstrate to their children the importance they place on the faith they are handing on to their children. Worshipping as a community we build up the Body of Christ. If your family has not been attending Mass regularly in the past, we are confident that by doing so you will notice many benefits by the time Confirmation approaches. Our classes will be held after the 9:00 am Mass on Sundays. Candidates are expected to be at **BOTH** the Mass and class.

Choose a qualified sponsor

The role of the sponsor is a powerful aspect of the sacrament of Confirmation. In a similar role as godparents in Baptism, the sponsor agrees to journey with youth not only in your process of preparation, but throughout your adult life in the church. For these reasons, selecting the right sponsor is crucial to a meaningful experience of this sacrament.

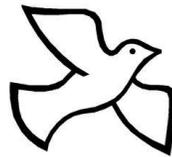
The following general principles should be considered when selecting a sponsor: (as set forth in canon law)

- A sponsor must be a fully initiated Catholic (one who has celebrated Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist), and a practicing Roman Catholic who attends Mass regularly and leads a life in harmony with the teachings of the church.
- Because of the connection between Baptism and Confirmation, you may wish to consider one godparent to fulfill this role.
- A sponsor may be either male or female for any candidate
- A sponsor may not be the parents of the candidate
- A sponsor must be at least 16 years of age at the time of Confirmation

Some additional thoughts to consider in selecting a sponsor:

- Your sponsor should be someone who accepts and actively lives the teachings of the Catholic church in a consistent and life-giving manner
- Your sponsor should be someone who is seriously interested in not only helping you grow in your faith, but is constantly pursuing their own faith development
- You should definitely choose someone with whom you are comfortable and have a positive relationship with, yet someone who can and does challenge you
- You may want to consider someone who lives nearby, to ensure an opportunity for consistent involvement in the process and your life beyond the sacrament. This is only a suggestion, not a requirement
- Attendance by proxy is allowed in certain situations, such as the sponsor living out of town and being unable to travel to the celebration. If you find yourself in the situation where you are using a proxy sponsor, he/she must also meet the above criteria
- Lastly, to echo all the above, your sponsor must be committed to support the person wanting to be confirmed, know the candidate and be willing to serve as a strong and long-lasting Christian influence, and assist in determining the candidate's readiness for the sacrament

After prayerful consideration on these principles and thoughts you should seek out the individual you wish to share in this faith experience with you. Be sure to invite and not force or pressure anyone into this role. There is not one specific or best way to ask someone to be your sponsor. You may choose to do this face to face, over the phone, or by means of a written invitation. Choose what is most comfortable for you to clearly express your wish. Once the individual has agreed to serve as your sponsor, please complete the attached form “Sponsor Information Sheet” and return it on the first meeting in October.



Complete the Summer Saint Survey Packet

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. Confirmation is the continuation of a mission that was begun for you at Baptism, but it is also the beginning of a new mission.

Therefore, there are two options when deciding on a Confirmation name:

- Because Confirmation is the strengthening of the work that God began in your life at your Baptism, you may choose to use your Baptismal name for Confirmation. This shows the integral link between Baptism and Confirmation.
- Perhaps you would like to focus on Confirmation as the start of a new mission for you and a fresh beginning in your faith journey. Then, you

may 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. Just a few recommended are:

catholic.org/saints
theworkofgod.org/saints
saints.sqpn.com
americancatholic.org
catholic-saints.info



Once the candidate has chosen his/her Confirmation name, they must complete the “Choosing your Confirmation Name” which is due at the last class meeting in October.

Write a Letter of Intent

Each candidate must write a letter of intent, addressed to, **Fr. Bill Promesso and the Director of Religious Formation, Mrs. Stacey Shurtz**. The purpose of this letter is for the candidate to demonstrate in writing his/her desire to be Confirmed, and willingness to make this commitment. Please use the following as a guide for the letter:

First – begin with your greeting: Dear Father Bill and Mrs. Stacey

Second – Introduce yourself and share some information about yourself, such as your family, your interests and hobbies, and a little about your background.

Third – state that you would like to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation and explain (in one or two paragraphs) why you want to be confirmed. It

may help you to think about 1) the ways in which this sacrament will strengthen your relationship with Christ, 2) the role of faith in your life, 3) what it means to you to be a part of our parish community and/or 4) how the Holy Spirit empowered the apostles to be witnesses for Jesus.

Fourth – include in your letter your chosen Confirmation name and explain why it is significant to you, why you chose this name.

Lastly – wrap up your letter with a final thought about why you wish to be Confirmed and sign your name.

This letter of intent must be submitted no later than the last meeting in January.



Participate in the Confirmation Preparation Sessions

The candidate and his or her parent/guardians must attend the first Confirmation Preparation Session. Only the candidate is required to attend the remaining Confirmation Preparation Sessions unless otherwise noted.

Participate in the Confirmation Retreat

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

Be regularly involved in Social Justice/Service Activities

By the virtue of our Baptism, and affirmed in Confirmation, we are called to live a life of service. Our faith comes alive by the works we do for the least of our sisters and brothers. A life of service, therefore, is essential to the life of discipleship that we are called to live out through the sacrament of Confirmation. We do not do service to “get confirmed”. We do service because we recognize the presence of Jesus in all persons and in all of God’s creation, and to show that we are ready and willing to live the life of a fully initiated Catholic Christian.

Students are expected to participate in a minimum of 20 hours of service

Attend the Confirmation Rehearsal

All candidates and their sponsors (or a proxy) **MUST** attend the Confirmation rehearsal which is typically set within the week prior to the Confirmation Liturgy. The date for the Confirmation rehearsal will be determined once we receive a date for the Confirmation Liturgy from the Archdiocese of Detroit.

Participate in the Liturgy and Rite of Confirmation

Confirmation will be in the Spring of the 9th Grade year. The exact date will be announced as soon as we receive it from the Bishop.

“The Spirit of the Lord
shall rest on him, the
spirit of wisdom and
understanding, the spirit
of counsel and might,
the spirit of knowledge
and the fear of the Lord.”
Isa 11:2



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
- Are responsible for initiating their children into the sacramental life
- Serve as models for their child by being committed Christians

Parents should expect to:

- Worship with your families each weekend
- Be actively involved in the Confirmation preparation of the candidate
- Engage in discussions about the material being studied, including sharing your understanding and perspective
- Pray for your 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
- Assist in retreats, service work, meetings, classes, spiritual events and social events
- Faithfully bring your child (and when necessary yourself) to meetings, programs, and prayer services that are planned to help your child prepare for the sacrament of Confirmation



GIFTS AND FRUITS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Gifts of the Holy Spirit help Christians live their lives more fully committed to Christ.

These gifts are:

Wisdom

Understanding

Right Judgment

Courage

Knowledge

Reverence

Wonder & Awe in God's Presence

The Fruits of the Holy Spirit are:

Charity

Joy

Peace

Patience

Kindness

Goodness

Long-suffering

Mildness

Chastity

Faith

Modesty

Continence

THE RITE OF CONFIRMATION

The Sacrament of Confirmation:

- ◆ Is celebrated during Mass
- ◆ Begins after the Liturgy of the Word
- ◆ Is presided over by the Bishop

There are four parts to the rite:

- ◆ Renewal of Baptismal Vow
- ◆ Laying on of hands
- ◆ Anointing with oil
- ◆ Sign of Peace

PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful.
And kindle in them the fire of your love.
Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created.
And you will renew the face of the earth.

Lord,
By the light of the Holy Spirit
you have taught the hearts of your faithful.
In the same Spirit help us to relish what is right
and always rejoice in your consolation.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

We strive here at St. Cyprian to assist parents in their role as primary educators in the faith formation of their children. Once again, we look forward to sharing this journey of faith as you prepare to receive the sacrament of Confirmation.

Attendance to the following sessions is a **required** part of the sacramental preparation program. While we understand that circumstances may arise such as illness or a death in the family, these sessions should be given a priority. If you **must** make other arrangements, it is **your** responsibility to notify the Religious Education Office. *Any absence from any preparation event is subject to make up work in addition to the requirements stated above.*

There is a **\$80 class fee** that can be paid at registration or by the **first class** meeting in **September**. This fee covers the cost of all materials and the required retreat.

- ❖ Stacey Sutowski-Shurtz
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