Confirmation Preparation

A Guidebook for
Confirmation Candidates
And Their Parents
2016-2017

Catholic Church of St. James
1071 Academy Drive
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Phone 843-347-5168  FAX 843-347-1212

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you.  Acts 1:8
We look forward to sharing your journey of faith as you prepare to receive the sacrament of Confirmation next October. This preparation involves spiritual growth, learning, service to others, and fellowship with other Catholic teens.

Confirmation, together with Baptism and Eucharist, form the Sacraments of Initiation. 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. When you were baptized, your parents promised to raise you in the Catholic faith. At Confirmation, you will receive and celebrate the transforming grace of the Holy Spirit.

**The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) Guidelines Regarding Confirmation**

The bishops clearly state in the *National Directory of Catechesis* that:

- Confirmation preparation must call Christians to a real relationship with Jesus, the Father, and the Holy Spirit through a “vigorous sacramental life, prayer, study, and service.”
- The Faith Community, made up of the pastor, parents, and other committed adults, has the primary obligation to provide programs and participate in preparing those to be confirmed.
- Parents are called to renew and strengthen their own faith. They must set an example of mature faith and involvement in their parish through their own efforts to grow spiritually and be of service to others.
- The program should include hours of service, retreats and renewal experiences, a letter of request, longer periods of preparation, and adult supervisors.

**Who May Be Confirmed?**

**The Confirmation Candidate:**

- Has received the sacraments of Baptism, Reconciliation, and Eucharist.
- Has a sincere desire to receive the sacrament.
- Participates weekly in the Eucharist.
- Is open to growing in faith.
- Has an adequate grasp of the basic content of the Catholic faith.
- Recognizes that he/she is a unique individual with gifts to offer and a willingness to share these gifts with the faith community.
Preparing for Confirmation

☐ Participate in Mass on Saturday evening or Sunday EVERY WEEK and on Holy Days of Obligation.
☐ Sign the Confirmation Covenant.
☐ Participate in Confirmation classes, including a minimum of 5 LifeTeen Masses and LifeTeen in grade 9. A candidate may miss only four classes per year, unless documented by a medical excuse.
☐ Attend the Junior High Rally in the fall of grade 8.
☐ Attend Confirmation Family Class with parent(s).
☐ Participate with parent(s) in an interview with Fr. Tim to determine the candidate’s readiness and desire to receive the sacrament.
☐ Attend the Confirmation Retreat in the fall of grade 9.
☐ Create a biography and a poster of the saint chosen to be one’s Confirmation name.
☐ Write a letter to Bishop Guglielmone and Fr. Tim, requesting Confirmation.
☐ Choose a sponsor.
☐ Attend the Confirmation rehearsal with sponsor or proxy.
☐ Participate in Confirmation.
☐ Complete and document stewardship and spiritual activities:
  • 5 hours or more of community and/or school service. Service must be done as a volunteer. This could include mowing a neighbor’s yard, picking up litter on the beach, helping at a school carnival, babysitting for a neighbor, helping a teacher after school, or tutoring, among other things.
  • 8 hours of parish service. This can include helping decorate the church for Christmas, Lent, Easter, etc.; helping with the Feast of St. James, with Vacation Bible School, helping with the Ladies Guild Rummage sale; babysitting at church during retreats; being an altar server, lector, usher, or greeter at Mass; helping in the Religious Education office, participating in service projects with the Youth Group.
  • 2 additional spiritual activities, such as Eucharistic Adoration, attending a daily Mass or Ash Wednesday, participating in any of the Triduum services (Holy Thursday, Good Friday, or Easter Vigil), praying all five decades of the Rosary for nine consecutive days (a Novena), attending the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe or a Posada. It does NOT include going on the Jr. High Rally or going to a regular Sunday Mass, since those are already required. Although the minimum requirement for spiritual activities is 2 hours, we hope the candidate will have more than that!
  • Attend at least 5 LifeTeen Masses and Youth Group in the fall of grade 9.

Please turn in paperwork by Oct. 15, 2017, or before.
Roles and Responsibilities of Parents

“Parents have the first responsibility for the education of their children. (CCC 2223) Parents make that initial promise to raise their child in the Catholic faith when their child is baptized. Preparation for Confirmation continues that commitment.

Because parents are the primary educators of their children, parents are expected to:

- Worship with your family regularly.
- Encourage your child to complete assignments and activities.
- Encourage your child to pray about the decision to be confirmed.
- Pray for your child’s spiritual growth every day.
- Bring your teen, and when necessary yourself, to meetings, programs, etc.
- Be involved in church activities.
- Explain that Confirmation is not graduation. By making the decision to be confirmed, students are agreeing to remain active in their faith and their parish community.

The Holy Spirit is waiting to rain down upon the entire family, along with your Confirmation candidate!

But grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory now and to the day of eternity. Amen. (2 Peter 3:18)
Candidate’s Letter of Request for Confirmation to the Bishop

First Draft due to Religious Education Office by January 29, 2017 or Before

The purpose of the letter is to give you the opportunity to express why you want to be confirmed.

The letter will be mailed to the bishop after being reviewed by the pastor.

Letter guidelines:

- Letter can be typed or written legibly in ink. It needs to be personally signed.

- Begin the letter by writing

Date

Dear Bishop Guglielmone and Father Tim,

- Write three paragraphs:
  1. Tell why you want to be confirmed.
  2. Name the gift of the Holy Spirit that you want to receive more of, and explain why. (Choose from Wisdom, Understanding, Courage, Wonder and Awe, Knowledge, Right Judgment, Reverence.)
  3. Explain how you have prepared for Confirmation. Remember to include the acts of stewardship that you have performed, and how the project(s) helped you understand the value and importance of Christian service.

- Sign the letter with your full name.
Confirmation Sponsor Requirements

Your sponsor should be someone with strong faith, someone you are close to, someone you admire. Your sponsor can be from St. James, but they are not required to be.

A sponsor:

- Must be a fully initiated member of the Catholic Church, which means the person has received the sacraments of Baptism, First Communion, and Confirmation. If married, must be married in the Catholic Church.
- Must be an active, registered member of a parish, attending Sunday Mass and Holy Days of Obligation, and receiving Holy Communion regularly.
- Must be at least 16 years of age.
- Must be present at Confirmation.
- Must be a good role model to give a good example of mature Christian faith in action.
- Can be male or female.
- Must NOT be the parent of the candidate.

The sponsor will:

- Bring you forward to receive the sacrament.
- Present you to the Bishop for anointing.
- Help you to fulfill your baptismal promises under the influence of the Holy Spirit (From The Rites of the Catholic Church, vol. 1, p. 480.)

After you have chosen your sponsor,

1. Complete the top section of the Confirmation Sponsor Form and give it to your sponsor.

2. The Sponsor will fill out the “Sponsor’s Statement of Faith” section and then send it to his or her parish to fill out the “Sponsor’s Parish Certificate” section. Return the completed form AND a copy of his/her confirmation certificate, to the St. James Office of Religious Education, Attn. Paulette Flench, no later than Sunday, January 29, 2017.

3. Please call Paulette Flench at 843-347-5168 or email her at pflench@stjamesconway.org if you have questions.
For the Sponsor

You have been chosen to be a Confirmation sponsor. How wonderful! This Confirmation candidate admires you for your strong Catholic faith, and believes that you will be supportive as he/she continues his/her journey of faith. Here are a few suggestions on how to be the best possible sponsor you can be:

- **Confirmation Sponsor’s Form.** Please fill out the “Sponsor’s Statement of Faith” section and then send it to your parish to fill out the “Sponsor’s Parish Certificate” section, *complete with parish seal*.  

  **The completed form AND the Sponsor’s Confirmation Certificate and Marriage Certificate needs to be sent back to the St. James Office of Religious Education, attn: Paulette Flench, by January 29, 2017 or before.**

- **Be a good example of how a mature Catholic Christian lives.**

- **Pray for your candidate and yourself.** Your prayers are important. Attend Mass together whenever possible.

- **Be generous.** Please write a letter of encouragement and support to your candidate. Offer a gift of spiritual significance – a new Bible, rosary, or book about our faith or about the saint the candidate has chosen for a Confirmation name.

- **Attend the Mass of Confirmation.** At that Mass, you will bring your candidate forward to receive the sacrament, place your hand on your candidate’s shoulder, and act as a witness when he/she is anointed by the bishop.

- **Remember to stay in touch with your newly confirmed Catholic after the big day.** Suggestions include remembering birthdays and the anniversary of this special day by sending a card or email or making a phone call. Encourage him/her to continue attending Mass, be a member of Youth Group, and stay involved in activities at church.
I, ________________________________, a practicing member of ____________________________________________________________
(NAME OF SPONSOR/GODPARENT) (NAME OF PARISH)
testify by my answers and signature below that I am qualified to serve as a

___ Baptism
___ First Communion
_x_ Confirmation

sponsor/Godparent in the Catholic Church for _________________________________________________
(NAME OF BAPTISM/FIRST COMMUNION/CONFIRMATION CANDIDATE)

Please circle either YES or NO for each statement below. (Canon 874)

YES  NO  I am a Roman Catholic.
YES  NO  I am at least 16 years old.
YES  NO  I have received Confirmation and Holy Eucharist in the Catholic Church. Please attach
Confirmation certificate.
YES  NO  I am free to receive Holy Communion when I come to Mass.
YES  NO  I am someone other than a parent of this candidate.

Answer the following ONLY if married:
YES  NO  Was your present marriage celebrated in the presence of a Catholic bishop, priest or
deacon or if celebrated outside a Catholic Church was done so with the written
permission of a Catholic bishop? (If not, please provide a written explanation.) Please attach
Marriage Certificate.

Answer the following ONLY if unmarried:
YES  NO  Are you living with another person in a romantic relationship or as a couple?

I sign this document in the presence of a Catholic priest or deacon or a representative of the pastor of a
Catholic Church and understand that by my signature that what I have answered above is truthful.

Sponsor/Godparent Signature

Sponsor Address and Phone

Church Representative Signature

Church Representative Title

Church Representative Parish

Church City/State

Date
I, ___________________________, and ___________________________, will help my child prepare to be ready to receive the sacrament of Confirmation by supporting my child’s efforts.

__________________________________________  ______________________
Parent Signature  Date

__________________________________________  ______________________
Parent Signature  Date

I, ____________________________, will work with my family and sponsor to follow the guidelines in this guidebook and will complete all the requirements expected of me to the best of my ability. I promise to be an active Catholic and will participate in Sunday Mass every week, as well as pray every day. I understand that if I do not complete the requirements, the sacrament of Confirmation may be delayed.

__________________________________________  ______________________
Student Signature  Date
**P. 1 Record of Stewardship and Spiritual Activities**

Candidate’s Name ________________________________

The candidate must commit to complete a **minimum** of 12 hours of stewardship activities and participate in a **minimum of** two spiritual activities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community or school service</th>
<th>Hours</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Supervisor Signature</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minimum of 5 hours, such as mowing a neighbor’s yard, picking up litter on the beach, helping at a school carnival, babysitting for a neighbor, helping a teacher after school, tutoring, etc.</td>
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<td><strong>Total hours</strong></td>
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<th>Spiritual Activity-minimum of 2, such as Eucharistic Adoration, daily Mass or Ash Wednesday, Holy Thursday, Good Friday, or Easter Vigil, praying all five decades of the Rosary for nine consecutive days (a Novena), the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, or a Posada. It does NOT include going on the Jr. High Rally or going to a regular Sunday Mass, since those are already required.</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Signature of Adult Present</th>
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<td><strong>Total Activities</strong></td>
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Return to Religious Education Office by Oct. 15, 2017 OR BEFORE.
### P. 2 Record of Stewardship and Spiritual Activities

**Candidate’s Name ________________________________**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parish stewardship service</th>
<th>Minimum of 8 hours, such as decorating for Christmas, Lent, Easter, helping with the Feast of St. James, with Vacation Bible School, helping with the Ladies Guild Rummage sale; babysitting at church during retreats; being an altar server, lector, usher, or greeter at Mass; helping in the Religious Education office, participating in service projects with the Youth Group, etc.</th>
<th>Hours</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Supervisor Signature</th>
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<tr>
<th>LifeTeen Mass and Youth Group</th>
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<th>Youth Minister Signature</th>
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<td><strong>Total LifeTeen Mass and Youth Group</strong></td>
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<th>Service/Spiritual Activity</th>
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<td>Spiritual Activity</td>
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<td>Parish Stewardship</td>
<td>8 Hours</td>
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<tr>
<td>Life Teen Mass and Youth Group in grade 9</td>
<td>5 events</td>
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<td><strong>Total = 20</strong></td>
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*Return to Religious Education Office by Oct. 15, 2017 OR BEFORE.*
QUICK CHECK LIST for Grade 8

______ Junior High Rally Saturday, Nov. 5, 2016

______ Saint biography and poster due January 29, 2017, or before

______ First draft of Letter to Bishop due January 29, 2017, or before

______ Sponsor form and sacrament certificates due January 29, 2017, or before

______ Record of Stewardship due October 15, 2017, or before

______ Interview with Fr. Tim – date to be determined

______ Confirmation retreat, autumn of 2017

______ Confirmation rehearsal, date and time to be determined.

______ Confirmation, date and time to be determined