

# You Shall Be My Witnesses

**Confirmation Policy**  
**Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph**



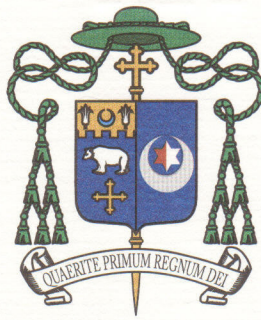
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We are grateful to the Archdiocese of Baltimore (pp. 11-17) and the Diocese of Fargo (pp. 10, 18-21) for permission to adapt portions of their Confirmation policies.

Thank you!



Office of the Bishop

April 12, 2009

Easter Sunday

Dear Friends in Christ,

The gift of the Holy Spirit is an unfathomable treasure. In Baptism we received the grace of adoption as God's own sons and daughters, being recreated in the image of Jesus Christ. The same Holy Spirit, given in a new way in Confirmation, empowers us to live and die as Christ did - in complete fidelity to the Father's will. This participation in the *identity* and *mission* of Christ is made possible because we receive the same Spirit with which Jesus Christ is filled (cf. CCC 1294). The Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation correspond to this two-fold nature of God's gift: first, entrance into His family, and second, living as witnesses of that relationship.

The unique grace of Confirmation is to spread and defend "the faith by word and action as a true witness of Christ, [confess] the name of Christ boldly, and ... never [be] ashamed of the cross." (cf. CCC 1303) There is a great need for this kind of witness in our world today! Our youth can give powerful witness to the faith, hope and love that all people need and long for. Through their example of chastity, courage, service, and commitment to truth, they lead others to the source of their joy - Jesus Christ.

Parishes, as communities of faith, have a unique responsibility to support our youth and their families in helping them develop and sustain a deep and lasting faith. This assistance cannot be limited merely to the period of preparation for receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation, but must extend throughout their high school years. This is part of the parish's commitment to the religious education of children and youth over all grade school years. This new policy, then, is designed to be but one component of a comprehensive approach to parish youth ministry.

Just as there is no evangelization without generous sacrifice, so too the resources and investment in youth ministry will be demanding. There is also joy, because this effort comes from a love for our young people and faith in Jesus Christ who leads us. May the Holy Spirit be our strength and guide!

In Christ and Mary,

Most Reverend Robert W. Finn  
Bishop of Kansas City-St. Joseph

Diocese of Kansas City - St. Joseph

300 East 36th Street • Kansas City, Missouri 64111 • 816-756-1850 • Bishops Fax: 816-756-2105 • [bishopsoffice@diocesekcsj.org](mailto:bishopsoffice@diocesekcsj.org)

## **Purpose of the Handbooks**

*You Shall Be My Witnesses* is designed to assist pastors, catechists and parents in the preparation of candidates for Confirmation. It contains an overview of the theology of Confirmation, the substance of the diocesan policy regarding its administration, and some helps for the parish preparation process.

## **Policy for Confirmation**

In the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph, those baptized Catholic as infants should normally receive the Sacrament of Confirmation either in 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> grade, with the preparation for reception of the Sacrament normally encompassing a period of catechesis and evangelization of about one semester or six months in length. Confirmation preparation represents only one of several aspects of the ongoing religious education of youth entrusted to parents and assisted by the parish.

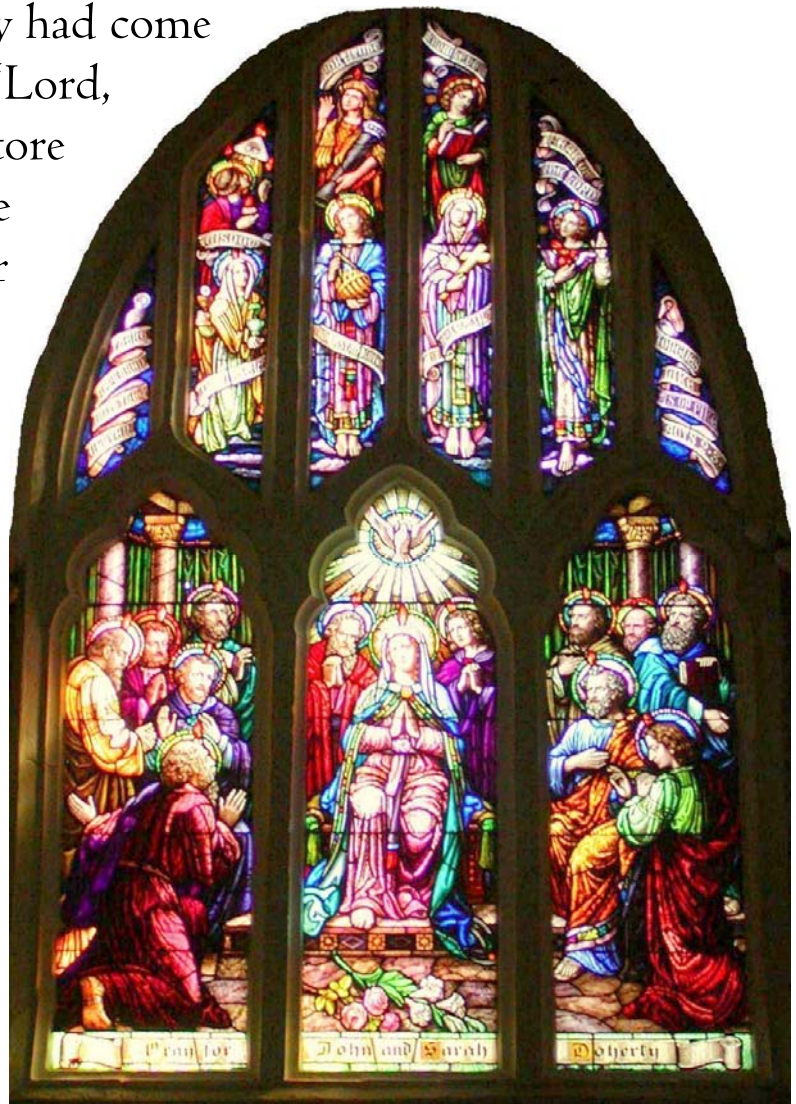
“[The youth] ask us to lead them to Christ,  
the only One who has the words of eternal life (cf. Jn 6:68).  
Listening to young people and teaching them,  
requires attention, time and wisdom.  
Youth ministry is one of the Church’s priorities  
on the threshold of the third millennium.”

-Pope John Paul II



“And while staying with them he charged them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, ‘you heard from me, for John baptized with water, but before many days you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’ So when they had come together, they asked him, ‘Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?’ He said to them, ‘It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has fixed by his own authority. But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth.’”

-Acts of the Apostles I:4-8



The “promise of the Father” to send the Holy Spirit was fulfilled at Pentecost, giving birth to the Church. Immediately, the apostles went into the streets to proclaim the saving message of the Gospel: repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins. The primary proclamation of the Gospel lies at the core of what it means to witness to Christ and is perennially important in catechesis. The gifts of the Spirit, represented by the seven figures above, assist us in this mission.

-Stained glass window from Our Lady of Peace, Kansas City

## BACKGROUND AND CURRENT SITUATION

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The sacrament of Confirmation bestows the Holy Spirit upon the faithful in a way which completes Baptism and charges the Confirmed to be an apostolic witness, enabling them to bear witness to Christ. From 1983 to 2009 in the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph, the minimum age for the Confirmation of those baptized as infants has been the second semester of tenth grade. Initially, preparation for the sacrament was to span three semesters. This policy was implemented under Bishop John Sullivan (1977-1993), who had experience with it from his previous work as the bishop of Grand Island, Nebraska.

Prior to that time, Bishop Charles Helmsing (1962-1977) had permitted the Confirmation of children before first communion. Bishop Helmsing had been involved with the ecumenical dialogue of the Second Vatican Council, and he thought this practice was more in keeping with the Eastern Rites. Although the diocese permitted Confirmation at this young age under Bishop Helmsing, it was not widely practiced.

Bishop Raymond Boland (1993-2005) implemented no changes to the policies of Bishop Sullivan. He acknowledged that the age of Confirmation was much debated, and until there was more clarity about it, it was best to follow the past practice. That allowed continuity within the diocese, and it also kept in force an age that was similar to the one observed in the neighboring Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas.

Bishop Robert Finn (2005) has expressed a desire to strengthen youth ministry in the diocese, while being open to lowering the age of Confirmation. He was unwilling, however, to authorize a much lower age for the sacrament until youth ministry is more firmly in place. Bishop Finn appointed a commission to study the situation. The Commission favored lowering the age of Confirmation, but agreed on the need for stronger youth ministry first.

The Commission has made a distinction between youth ministry and Confirmation preparation. It believes that preparation for the sacrament of Confirmation can be focused to a briefer span of time, whereas youth ministry needs to be available for a broader range of ages. This principle – distinguishing Confirmation preparation from youth ministry – has guided the formation of this policy.

## THEOLOGICAL AND CATECHETICAL PRINCIPLES

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“By signing us with the gift of the Spirit, Confirmation makes us more completely the image of the Lord and fills us with the Holy Spirit, so that we may bear witness to him before all the world and work to bring the Body of Christ to its fullness as soon as possible” (Christian Initiation, General Introduction 2).

The meaning of Confirmation is sometimes misunderstood by Catholics. It is common to hear that Confirmation is one’s acceptance into the Catholic Church, that it is one’s personal commitment to the Church, or that it is one’s admission to adulthood in the Church. None of these opinions is defensible from the Church’s liturgical, canonical or catechetical documents. Instead, the Church has constantly affirmed that Confirmation is the gift of the Holy Spirit, given for the sake of helping a Christian bear witness to the faith. **It is more about God’s gift than about a person’s commitment.** It has more to do with the grace that follows the reception of the sacrament than about the preparation that precedes it.

"Baptism, the Eucharist and the sacrament of Confirmation together constitute the 'sacraments of Christian initiation,' whose unity must be safeguarded. It must be explained to the faithful that the reception of the sacrament of Confirmation is necessary for the completion of baptismal grace (Rite of Confirmation, Introduction I). For 'by the sacrament of Confirmation, [the baptized] are more perfectly bound to the Church and are enriched with a special strength of the Holy Spirit. Hence they are, as true witnesses of Christ, more strictly obliged to spread and defend the faith by word and deed' (Lumen Gentium 11)" (Catechism of the Catholic Church 1285).

In the long and varied history of Confirmation, the sacrament has been made available to Christians of all ages. Infants were commonly confirmed from the early centuries through the middle ages, as long as the bishop was present for their baptism. Only after the 13<sup>th</sup> century did the minimum age for Confirmation begin to rise to seven. In time, the sacrament became linked with the desire to offer catechetical preparation for its reception. After the age of first communion was lowered from about twelve to about seven in 1910, the age for Confirmation in many places started to rise to the one first communion had left behind.

Even today, however, the canonical requirements for the preparation for this sacrament are rather minimal because the Church still approves the Confirmation of young children. "Outside the danger of death, to be licitly confirmed it is required, if the person has the use of reason, that one be suitably instructed, properly disposed and able to renew one's baptismal promises" (Canon 889/2).

There is no minimum length of time for preparation. The age of the candidate determines the length of preparation; the complexity of the preparation does not determine the age of the candidate. Although many conferences of bishops around the world have authorized the Confirmation of adolescents, Rome has always been cautious about letting the minimum age for Confirmation rise too high.

"Although Confirmation is sometimes called the 'sacrament of Christian maturity,' we must not confuse adult faith with the adult age of natural growth, nor forget that the baptismal grace is a grace of free, unmerited election and does not need 'ratification' to become effective" (Catechism of the Catholic Church 1308).

For these reasons, the Confirmation Commission of the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph believes that the preparation for Confirmation can become more focused. In the past, many parishes have joined Confirmation with youth ministry and the preparation for this sacrament has been constitutive of youth ministry. Many youths have participated in activities only during the period of their preparation for Confirmation. It is hoped that by concentrating the preparation for Confirmation to a shorter period of time, that more young people will take the opportunity to be confirmed, that youth ministry will have an opportunity to expand, and that the meaning of Confirmation will become clearer. It is a gift of the Holy Spirit which completes Baptismal grace for the purpose of bearing witness to Christ.

*The effect of  
confirmation is a  
special outpouring of  
the Holy Spirit like  
that of Pentecost ...It  
roots the recipient  
more deeply in divine  
sonship, binds him  
more firmly to Christ  
and to the Church and  
reinvigorates the gifts  
of the Holy Spirit in  
his soul. It gives a  
special strength to  
witness to the  
Christian faith.  
- Compendium #268*

# POLICY SUMMARY

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## Age of Confirmation:

- Confirmation may normally be conferred at any point in either 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> grade.
- Parishes should not defer Confirmation to any time after the spring of the sophomore year.
- Confirmation preparation should be seen as a component of a comprehensive youth ministry in grades 9-12.

## Length of Preparation:

So that Confirmation preparation does not become the predominant method of providing catechesis to teens and to encourage comprehensive youth ministry, the length of preparation should normally be limited to 8-10 sessions held within a span of 4-6 months, or one semester. Parishes may retain a longer program, not to exceed three semesters, until a more comprehensive youth program is established. The diocese will make every effort to help parishes establish a comprehensive youth ministry.

It will be up to parishes to decide when to begin the program between 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade and how many sessions will take place during that time. Parishes who opt for a shorter program may offer it more than once if desired to optimize recipients of the sacrament, but all parishes will be limited to one ceremony per year. In smaller parishes the program may be staggered every other year if desired.

Regardless of parish size, resources formerly devoted to longer Confirmation preparation should be utilized to expand high school youth ministry programs to include all four years, where they do not already exist. It is understood that it may be necessary to enlist additional staff or volunteers for this program. In consultation and cooperation with the pastor and parish community, the Youth Office will work to provide the training and resources to develop leaders for youth ministry programs through consultation, workshops and other support necessary to make this vision a reality in every parish.



# NORMS FOR THE RECEPTION OF THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION

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## Diocesan Norms

### **Age of Confirmation:**

- Confirmation may normally be conferred at any point in either the 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> grade.

### **High School Youth Ministry Programs:**

- Confirmation preparation should be seen as one component of a comprehensive parish youth ministry program comprising grades 9-12.

### **Length of Preparation:**

- In order to integrate Confirmation preparation into a larger High School Youth Ministry program, parishes should have as their ultimate goal a Confirmation program not to exceed six months. This will not be implemented, however, until it has been demonstrated that parishes have, in fact, succeeded in establishing four year high school Youth programs.
- During the transition period, parishes should not exceed the current limit (since 1983) of three semesters for Confirmation preparation.

## Universal norms

For an adolescent to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation, the following requirements are to be observed in accord with the norms of universal Church law (Acts 1:14; CIC 889, CCC 1310 and 1319). The candidate:

- Must be baptized and not previously confirmed
- Must be Catholic
- Must be in the state of grace
- Must be prepared for and celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation
- Must have the intention of receiving the sacrament
- Must be properly instructed
- Must be capable of renewing the Baptismal promises
- Must be prepared to assume the role of disciple and witness to Christ
- Must have a more intense prayer life to prepare to receive the strength and graces of the Holy Spirit

# PERSONS INVOLVED IN PREPARATION FOR CONFIRMATION

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## The Role of All Baptized Catholics

*"Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewal of your mind." (Romans 12:2)*

All baptized Catholics are responsible for contributing to the evangelization and catechetical formation of the entire world. The world needs the baptized to be witnesses of Jesus Christ both in word and deed, so that all peoples may be put "not only in touch but in communion, in intimacy with Jesus Christ" (CT 5, cf. CCC 900, RCIA, General Introduction 9). The life of each one of the faithful needs to be transformed so that they learn "more and more within the Church to think like Him [Jesus], to judge like Him, to act in conformity with His commandments, and to hope as He invites us to" (CT 20). This transformation into living images of Jesus Christ will enable the faithful to be true witnesses. In regard to teens preparing for the Sacrament of Confirmation the adult faithful should themselves be living a sacramental life, that is, weekly attendance at Sunday Mass and holy days, regular reception of the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and a life of prayer and charity.

## The Role of Parents

*"For children ought not to lay up for their parents, but parents for their children." (2 Corinthians 12:14b)*

The work of sacramental preparation naturally happens in the family where parents exercise their right and responsibility to form children in the faith. As young people approach the proximate age for reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation, it is appropriate that the parish provide catechesis as a help to parents and to their child so that the reception of the Sacrament may be fruitful.

Parents and other family members should be included in the catechetical process through regular communication of the catechetical activities, support roles or direct participation.

The initiation of children into the sacramental life of the Church is primarily the responsibility and concern of parents (CIC 890, RC 3). Even though teenagers have been baptized and have received Holy Communion for years, without the Sacrament of Confirmation, they have not yet been fully initiated. They lack the full outpouring of the Holy Spirit and the strength to be an official witness and disciple of Jesus Christ. Parents must assist their child in the life of holiness through their own witness of love for God and neighbor, prayer, reading Scripture and participation in the sacramental life. Parents are the first teachers of their children in the ways of faith. In Baptism, parents accept the responsibility of training their children in the practice of the Faith and to make it "their constant care." As stated in the Rite of Baptism (n. 120), parents are to see that "the divine life which God gives them [their children] is kept safe from the poison of sin, to grow always stronger in their hearts."

*"The Christian community must give very special attention to parents. By means of personal contact, meetings, courses and also adult catechesis directed toward parents, the Christian community must help them assume their responsibility- which is particularly delicate today- of educating their children in the faith" -GDC #227*

## The Role of the Godparent/Sponsor

*“Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil.” (Ecclesiastes 4:9ff)*

Every teen preparing for Confirmation needs a sponsor. It is desirable that the same people who served as godparents for baptism return to fill the role of Confirmation sponsors. In the Baptism of infants, godparents represent both the expanded spiritual family of the one to be baptized and the role of the Church as mother. As occasion offers, godparents help the parents so that children will come to profess the Faith and live up to it (cf. RCIA, General Introduction 8).

It is expected that each confirmand have one sponsor (cf. canon 892) who fulfills the requirements set out in Canon Law and the diocesan guidelines (cf. canons 872-874, 892-893). Whether the sponsor is male or female is in itself of no consequence. The practice of having one parish sponsor for the whole group of confirmandi is not appropriate.

Pastors/coordinators will see that the sponsors, chosen by the candidates or their families, are spiritually fit to take on this responsibility and have exhibited the following qualities:

- (a) Sufficient maturity to fulfill their function (at least 16 years of age);
- (b) Practicing Catholic in good standing with the Catholic Church;
- (c) Having received Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist;
- (d) Freedom from any impediment of law to their fulfilling the office of sponsor;
- (e) May not be the natural or adoptive parent of the confirmand (cf. canon 893 (874))

If a candidate's baptismal godparents are not available to serve as the Confirmation sponsor, parish leaders should help the candidate find a suitable sponsor. The sponsor, however, need not be a member of the same parish as the confirmand.

## The Role of the Bishop

*“Then [Peter and John] laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit.” (Acts 8:17)*

The ordinary minister of Confirmation is the bishop. The bishop's administration of the sacrament corresponds with the tradition of the Latin Church and properly manifests the special outpouring of the Holy Spirit which has been handed down to the Apostles and their successors. Outside of extraordinary circumstances, the bishop should confer the sacrament.

Law makes provisions for the bishop to grant faculties to other priests to administer the sacrament “if necessity so requires” (c. 884 §3). The rite furthermore gives the minister of Confirmation authority to associate other priests to administer the sacrament with him “for a serious reason” (*Introduction: Rite of Confirmation*, 8). This will not occur in the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph unless exceptional circumstances warrant it is called for by the bishop.

Although it was praiseworthy in principle, the custom of candidates writing letters to the bishop is no longer necessary. Confirmation Coordinators are charged with the responsibility of verifying the readiness and suitable preparation of the candidates through interview, the sessions, and the retreat. The readiness of the candidates is then attested to the bishop by the coordinator during the celebration.

## The Role of the Parish Priest

*“As each has received a gift, employ it for one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace.” (1 Peter 4:10ff)*

“Pastors of souls and other members of the Christian faithful, according to their respective ecclesiastical function, have the duty to take care that those who seek the sacraments are prepared to receive them by

proper evangelization and catechetical instruction, attentive to the norms issued by competent authority” (CIC 843 § 2).

Priests are to “devote their best efforts” to catechesis (CT 64). They have the duty of preparing the parents, sponsors and adolescents through catechetical, liturgical and pastoral means. The pastor must be both an evangelizer and catechist, acting in accord with diocesan policy and appropriate diocesan offices. He must establish a complete evangelization process and catechetical formation program. These should include:

- providing for the sacramental lives of the faithful
- supporting parents as the first evangelizers and catechists of their children
- training others to be evangelizers and catechists for the parish
- providing supplies, equipment and facilities for catechesis
- enabling the entire community to live out their roles

### **The Role of the Confirmation Coordinator and Catechists**

*“Him we proclaim, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man mature in Christ.” (Colossians 1:28)*

Confirmation Coordinators and Catechists, under the guidance of the pastor, are delegated to do the work of evangelization and catechesis. They are **co-workers** of the Gospel. With regards to preparation of youth for Confirmation, the coordinator and catechists may formally prepare youth including preparation of parents, teaching of the curriculum, providing the retreat, conducting the interviews, and organizing the liturgy. In short, the coordinator and catechists are the ones who assist the parents, sponsors, pastor and entire parish in carrying out their specified roles.

### **The Role of the Parish**

*“And they held steadfastly to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of the bread and to the prayers.” (Acts of the Apostles 2:42)*

The parish is the pre-eminent place for catechesis (CT 67). Family catechesis should be extended within this broader Christian home, the community of the faithful. Before, during and after the youth’s preparation for the Sacraments of Confirmation every parishioner should work to create:

- a community leading a sacramental life and growing in a life of prayer
- a community demonstrating the role of disciple and witness to Christ in every situation
- a community willing to sustain one another in moments of hesitancy and anxiety
- a community that is welcoming, where the Gospel is lived with joy

Candidates for Confirmation are expected to be regular participants in Sunday Mass and other liturgical prayer of the parish. Parishes may consider introducing the confirmandi to the entire community through a ritual blessing during a Sunday celebration, publication of names in parish bulletins and other publications, or other means. It is valuable for the candidates to be known by the community so that parishioners may pray for their fruitful reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation and so that the candidates may know of the care and support of the parish community during their time of preparation.



## Candidates

*"In him you also, who have heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and have believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit." (Ephesians 1:13)*

## Conditions

"Persons who are to receive Confirmation must have already received baptism. Moreover, those possessing the use of reason must be in the state of grace, properly instructed, and capable of renewing the baptismal promises." (*The Rite of Confirmation* #12, cf. Canon 889)

It is essential that all forms of the liturgy be completely accessible to persons with disabilities, since these forms are the essence of the spiritual tie that binds the Christian community together.

## Age

The canonical norm for the reception of Confirmation is the age of reason, or about the year seven. However, Canon Law clearly allows bishops to determine another age. In the United States, effective July 1, 2002, the Congregation for Bishops approved the complementary norm which decreed that "the Sacrament of Confirmation in the Latin Rite shall be conferred between the age of discretion and about sixteen years of age, within the limits determined by the diocesan bishop and with regard for the legitimate exceptions given in canon 891."

Therefore, it is essential that parishes do not intentionally delay Confirmation beyond an adolescent's sixteenth year. For this reason, spring semester of sophomore year should be the latest that Confirmation celebrations are scheduled.

## Numbers

The number of persons to be confirmed should not be so great as to preclude the following:

- The celebration of the sacrament within mass
- The use of individual sponsors
- The presence of the parish community
- The presence of the family, relatives and friends of those being confirmed

If the number to be confirmed is few, the parish is requested to celebrate Confirmation with another parish for the celebration of Confirmation.

## Records

The names of those confirmed, as well as the names of the minister, parents, sponsors and a notation of the place and date of the Confirmation conferred, are to be entered into the registry of Confirmation kept in the parish archives. The pastor must inform the pastor of the recipient's place of baptism that Confirmation has been conferred, so that this may be recorded in the baptismal register, according to the requirements of the law. (*The Rite of Confirmation* #14, Canon 895, 535 #2). It is the responsibility of those being confirmed to provide the parish with a copy of their baptismal certificate prior to the Confirmation. This record is needed to establish proof of Baptism and to allow for the appropriate transfer of Confirmation information to the recipient's place of baptism.

In accord with Canon Law, when the Bishop visits the parish for Confirmation, it is appropriate for him to review the sacramental registries. These record books of the hosting parish should be available at the place where the Bishop vests and should always be up to date. The Bishop will initial and date his inspection of all the current sacramental registries.

It is the responsibility of each pastor to see that the notice of Confirmation is supplied to the church of Baptism for each parishioner confirmed.

### Names

Parishes have retained the custom wherein a young person preparing for Confirmation selects a "Confirmation name." This pious practice, although never a part of the official rite, may be retained. Points of consideration in choosing a Confirmation name are as follows:

- Each of those to be confirmed may choose an appropriate Confirmation name. One name only is chosen.
- This name should not be foreign to Christian sensibilities.
- Because this is a significant sacramental celebration, names that are very unusual or contrary to Catholic tradition should be discouraged.
- Names should be of like gender to the confirmed.
- The names should be submitted to the Confirmation Coordinator for approval.
- The Confirmation name should be presented in its proper form, rather than in the diminutive (e.g. **John**, instead of Jack; **Susan**, instead of Sue.)
- The (one) Confirmation name should be legible on a name tag or given clearly by the sponsor
- The name received at baptism may be used again for Confirmation.

Please certify that all Confirmation names meet above guidelines by completing form on page 42 and sending it to the Office of the Bishop.

“But now thus says the LORD,  
he who created you, O Jacob,  
he who formed you, O Israel:  
"Fear not, for I have redeemed you;  
I have called you by name, you are mine.  
every one who is called by my name,  
whom I created for my glory,  
whom I formed and made."

-Isaiah 43:1, 7

# PLANNING THE PARISH PROCESS

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## Goals and Components of Confirmation Preparation:

These goals summarize what should be expected by any Confirmation preparation program. Preparation needs to be thorough, yet it does not need to include everything one hopes a young person to know about the Catholic faith.

“To receive Confirmation licitly outside the danger of death requires that a person who has the use of reason be suitable instructed, properly disposed, and able to renew the baptismal promises” (Can. 889 §2).

“*Preparation* for Confirmation should aim at leading the Christian toward a more intimate union with Christ and a more lively 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. To this end catechesis for Confirmation should strive to awaken a sense of belonging to the Church of Jesus Christ, the universal Church as well as the parish community. The latter bears special responsibility for the preparation of confirmands” (CCC 1309).

### A. Families

The work of sacramental preparation naturally happens in the family where parents exercise their right and responsibility to form children in our faith. As young people approach the proximate age for reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation, it is appropriate that the parish provide catechesis as a help to parents and to their child so that the reception of the Sacrament may be fruitful. Parents and other family members should be included in the catechetical process, through regular communication of the catechetical activities, support roles, or direct participation.

### B. Faith sharing between Candidates and Sponsor

Regular meetings between the candidates and the sponsor should happen, with sharing of faith as a natural topic of conversation. Discussions of the content of catechetical meetings, Scripture readings from the lectionary cycle and sharing of faith and life experiences will strengthen the faith of both.

### C. Celebrations with the Parish Community

Candidates for Confirmation are expected to be regular participants in Sunday Mass and other liturgical prayer of the parish. Parishes may consider introducing the confirmands to the entire community through a ritual blessing during a Sunday celebration, publication of names in parish bulletins and other publications, or other means. It is important that the candidates are known by the community so that parishioners may pray for their fruitful reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation and that the candidates may know of the care and support of the parish community during their time of preparation.

### D. Catechesis

Candidates should be suitably instructed, according to the norms of the Church. Suitable Instruction includes these components:

- **Teach them about the Holy Spirit.** “*For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God*” (Romans 8:14). When candidates renew their baptismal promises at the Confirmation liturgy, they get an extra question about the Spirit. Catechesis should include the various ways we understand the working of the Holy Spirit.

- **Know the Scriptures.** “*All Scripture is inspired by God*” (2 Timothy 3:16). (Candidates should know well the story of Pentecost as well as other primary texts on the Holy Spirit. These may include those from the Confirmation liturgy or any that refer to the Holy Spirit and life in the Spirit (cf. page 20).
- **Offer liturgical catechesis.** “*You have come to Mount Zion*” (Hebrews 8:5ff). Candidates should learn about the primary symbols of Confirmation: imposition of hands, Anointing with Chrism, the sevenfold gift of the Holy Spirit, and the role of the bishop in the diocesan church.
- **Prepare candidates to renew baptismal promises.** “When Confirmation is celebrated separately from Baptism, its connection with Baptism is expressed, among other ways, by the renewal of baptismal promises” (CCC 1321). Spending time discussing and meditating on each affirmation of the Baptismal promises is a powerful means of strengthening Christian identity and helps teens know *of Whom* and *to what* they are called to witness.

## E. Service and Prayer

- **Called to Witness:** While Confirmation strengthens many graces received at Baptism, its unique characteristic is that “it gives us a special strength of the Holy Spirit to spread and defend the faith by word and action as true witnesses of Christ, to confess the name of Christ boldly, and never to be ashamed of the Cross” (CCC 1303). Candidates should be immersed in witness through prayer and service throughout their lives; the preparation process provides opportunities to introduce candidates more fully to the necessary relationship between prayer and service.
- **Service:** “*Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others*” (Philippians 2:4). Rather than requiring a minimum number of service hours that could detract from the gift character of Confirmation, this component should be encouraged and/or integrated into other areas of the candidate’s life, i.e. Scouts, school, youth group or other programs. Sponsors and parents can provide support for service activities, and ideally serve alongside the candidate. Catechetical meetings should include regular opportunities for reflection and discussion of service candidates are doing.
- **Prayer:** “More intense prayer should prepare one to receive the strength and graces of the Holy Spirit with docility and readiness to act.” CCC 1310 In addition to regular participation in Sunday liturgies, candidates should become acquainted with the prayer tradition of the Church as articulated in the Catechism (CCC 2558-2865) and expressed in such treasures such as *lectio divina*, the Rosary, the Liturgy of the Hours, novenas, the Chaplet of Divine Mercy, etc. . .
- **Reconciliation:** To receive Confirmation one must be in a state of grace. Every effort should be made to provide candidates this opportunity as a group as the Confirmation ceremony draws near. “One should receive the sacrament of Penance in order to be cleansed for the gift of the Holy Spirit” (CCC 1310).
- **Retreat Experience:** “*Here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city which is to come*” (Hebrews 13:14). The Confirmation retreat is pivotal moment in the preparation to receive the sacrament. If at all possible, retreats should incorporate Mass and Reconciliation. Several options of schedules could be used. The Youth Office can assist parishes in creating these retreats, connecting with another parish to do a combined retreat, or finding retreats offered around the diocese.



# CONFIRMATION COORDINATOR RESPONSIBILITIES AND RESOURCES

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Coordinating a Confirmation program is a challenging task. The following responsibilities and resources are offered both to encourage uniformity of preparation in the diocese and as an aid to your preparations.

## Parish Checklist for Confirmation Preparation

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Our hope is that, as a diocese, all youth will be prepared for Confirmation in a similar fashion. Following is a checklist of the elements that are required for each program:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Catechists are trained and equipped
- \_\_\_\_\_ Parents are provided copies of the church's documents on Confirmation
- \_\_\_\_\_ Parents and children attend Mass on Sunday and holy days
- \_\_\_\_\_ Parents take an active role in modeling and encouraging the religious education of their son or daughter
- \_\_\_\_\_ Sponsors are chosen and approved
- \_\_\_\_\_ Confirmation are names chosen or Baptismal names used instead
- \_\_\_\_\_ Confirmation retreat for youth and sponsors held
- \_\_\_\_\_ Conduct the interview for Confirmation
- \_\_\_\_\_ Baptismal Information Form is completed and turned in
- \_\_\_\_\_ Celebration of Reconciliation offered with a month prior to Confirmation
- \_\_\_\_\_ Practice for Confirmation
- \_\_\_\_\_ Celebration of Confirmation
- \_\_\_\_\_ Record Confirmation on Baptismal Certificate
- \_\_\_\_\_ Encourage continued Sunday Mass, reception of the Eucharist and regular Reconciliation
- \_\_\_\_\_ (optional) Service Projects
- \_\_\_\_\_ (optional) Parish Prayer Partners assigned
- \_\_\_\_\_ (optional) Parish Novena to the Holy Spirit

“More than that, we rejoice in our sufferings,  
knowing that suffering produces endurance,  
and endurance produces character,  
and character produces hope,  
and hope does not disappoint us,  
because God's love has been poured into our hearts  
through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us.”  
-Romans 5:3-5

**Checklist**  
Catechists check  
as completed

# Coordinator and Catechist Checklist

## Preparation for Those Who Will Be Preparing the Teens

### I. Church Documents

Parents, catechists and other persons designated to prepare children for Confirmation must know and observe the teachings of the Church. To prepare themselves, these “teachers of the faith” should be encouraged to read and study the following key documents regarding Confirmation:

1. Scripture passages pertaining to Confirmation, specifically the Holy Spirit and anointing. See next page.
2. *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC) passages on Christian Initiation 1212, 1229, 1275, 1533, 1680; Confirmation 1285-1321; the Holy Spirit 687-747 and those paragraphs listed in the index.
3. *Code of Canon Law*, CIC, can. 840-848 and can. 879-896
4. Pope Paul VI’s Apostolic Constitution *On the Sacrament of Confirmation* (*Divinae consortium naturae*) August 15, 1971
5. Christian Initiation, General Introduction
6. Rite of Confirmation, Introduction
7. *Gifts of the Holy Spirit*  
Papal Sunday Addresses, April 9 through June 11, 1989
8. *Confirmation Perfects Baptismal Grace*,  
Papal General Audience, September 30, 1998
9. *Confirmation Seals Us With the Gift of the Holy Spirit*,  
Papal General Audience, October 14, 1998

## Detailed Checklist - Scripture Passages On Confirmation

**Checklist**  
Catechists check  
as completed

Parents, catechists and other persons designated to prepare children for Confirmation must know and observe the teachings of the Church. To prepare themselves, these “teachers of the faith” should be encouraged to read and study the following Scripture passages with regards to the Confirmation:

### Readings from the Gospels

_____	Mt 5:1-12	Theirs is the kingdom of heaven
_____	Mt 16:24-27	If anyone wishes to follow me, let him deny himself.
_____	Mt 25:14-30	You have been faithful in small matters, come into my joy.
_____	Mk 1:9-11	He saw the Spirit descending and remaining on him.
_____	Lk 4:16-22	The Spirit of the Lord is upon me.
_____	Lk 8:4-15	Parable of the Sower
_____	Lk 10:21-24	I bless you, Father, for revealing these things to children
_____	Jn 7:37-39	From the heart of the Lord shall flow fountains of living water.
_____	Jn 14:15-17	The Spirit of truth will be with you forever.
_____	Jn 15:18-27	The Spirit of truth will be my witness.
_____	Jn 16:5-13	The Spirit of truth will lead you to the complete truth.

### Readings from the New Testament

_____	Acts 1:3-8	You will receive the power of the Holy Spirit and be my witnesses.
_____	Acts 2:1-33	Pentecost
_____	Acts 8:1-17	They laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit
_____	Acts 10:1-44	The Holy Spirit came down on all those listening to the Word of
_____	Acts 19:1-6	Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you became believers?
_____	Rom 5:1-8	The love of God has been poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit.
_____	Rom 8:14-17	The Spirit and our spirit bear witness that we are children of God.
_____	Rom 8:26-27	The Spirit himself will express our plea.
_____	1 Cor 12:4-13	There is one and the same Spirit giving to each as he wills.
_____	Gal 5:16-25	If we live in the Spirit, let us be directed by the Spirit.
_____	Eph 1:3-19	You have been signed with the seal of the Holy Spirit.
_____	Eph 4:1-6	There is one Body, one Spirit and one baptism.

### Readings from the Old Testament

_____	Is 11:1-4	On him the Spirit of the Lord rests.
_____	Is 42:1-3	I have endowed my servant with my Spirit.
_____	Is 61:1-9	Anointed by the Lord God.
_____	Ez 36:24-28	I will place a new Spirit in your midst.
_____	Joel 2:23-30	I will pour out my Spirit on all.

# Essential Teachings on the Sacrament of Confirmation

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With every doctrine of the Faith there are certain elements that are essential for understanding the teaching. *This is not to say that other elements are not important or unnecessary*, rather, if the essential elements are not taught, the truth will remain unknown. Catechists cannot simply hope that students will pick these up by chance. The doctrines must be presented in a way that is appropriate to their audience.

## Confirmation

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### Premise (Foundational Truth):

The completion and perfection of baptismal grace is accomplished in this sacrament, by which the faithful are strengthened by the Holy Spirit, bound more closely to the Church and are thus more fully prepared to receive His Body and Blood. “Hence they are, as true witnesses of Christ, more strictly obliged to spread and defend the faith by word and deed” (CCC 1285, cf. 1302).

### Essentials:

1. Explain that Jesus gave us this sacrament and why.
2. Explain the seal and the “sacramental character” (CCC 698, 1295, 1296, 1304, 1306).
3. Explain spiritual maturity, being a disciple and witness (CCC 1308).
4. Explain the requirements for reception (CCC 1385-1388).
5. Explain the effects of this sacrament (CCC 1303, 1316).
6. Explain that the Holy Spirit is a Person, the Third Person of the Trinity (CCC 685).
7. Explain that a relationship with the Holy Spirit is necessary for all believers (CCC 683); He is “the interior Master of Christian prayer” (CCC 2672).

“A decisive task of pastoral ministry...consists in very carefully training the baptized who are preparing to receive Confirmation, and in introducing them to the fascinating depths of the mystery it signifies and brings about. At the same time, confirmands must be helped to rediscover with joyful wonder the saving power of this gift of the Holy Spirit.”

-Pope John Paul II, General Audience of September 30, 1998






## Choosing an Approved Resource

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In order to provide consistency in programs and a high level of quality in catechesis, the diocese has approved these resources for use in the preparation of candidates for Confirmation. Listed below are the materials, chosen for their quality of catechesis and presentation, flexibility and affordability.

Every parish is asked to select one of following programs:

-  *Confirmed in a Faithful Community, Immediate Preparation Edition*  
St. Mary's Press, Winona, MN  
[www.stmaryspress.com](http://www.stmaryspress.com)  
800-533-8095
-  LifeTeen *Oneight* Confirmation Program  
[ekleckner@lifeteen.com](mailto:ekleckner@lifeteen.com)  
[www.lifeteen.com](http://www.lifeteen.com)  
480-820-7001
-  YM Central *Kenosis Confirmation And Renewal Curriculum Version 2.0*  
By Eric Wesby, Director of Family Catechesis, Diocese of Phoenix  
[www.ymcentral.com](http://www.ymcentral.com)

## Sample Schedules

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Below are sample schedules for each resource given a six-month model. These are provided as a help to the parish but are only suggestions. Every parish is free to arrange the material and sessions in accordance with their particular needs and the guidelines in this policy.

### *Confirmed in a Faithful Community, Immediate Preparation Edition:*

December	Orientation session for candidates and parents or guardians Optional Interviews Orientation session for sponsors and candidates
January	Session 1: Guided and Strengthened by the Holy Spirit Retreat Experience
February	Session 2: Prayer: Communion with God Session 3: Christian Morality: What Does Love Look Like?
March	Session 4: Christian Service: Witnessing to God's Justice Session 5: Sacraments of Initiation Session 6: Baptism: Born in the Holy Spirit
April	Session 7: The Eucharist: Nourished Through the Holy Spirit Optional Interviews Session 8: Confirmation: Sealed with the Holy Spirit
May	Session 9: Confirmation: Celebrating the Rite An evening of reflection for candidates and sponsors Confirmation celebration

***LifeTeen Oneight Confirmation Program:***

August	Orientation session for candidates and parents or guardians Optional Interviews Orientation session for sponsors and candidates
September	Session 1: <i>Why Confirmation?</i> Session 2: <i>Called To Witness</i> Session 3: <i>The Sacrament of Confirmation</i>
October	Session 4: <i>I Am</i> and <i>The Plan</i> Session 5: <i>Gifts of the Holy Spirit</i> and <i>Truth Be Told</i>
November	Session 6: <i>More Than Words</i> Session 7: <i>Your Turn</i>
December	Optional Interviews Session 8: <i>Outward Signs</i> Session 9: <i>Supper Time</i> and <i>I Believe</i>
January	Emmaus Retreat – (with Sponsors) Confirmation celebration

**YM Central Kenosis Confirmation and Renewal Curriculum Version 2.0**

October	Orientation session for candidates and parents or guardians Optional Interviews Orientation session for sponsors and candidates
November	Session 1: “The Sacrament of Confirmation” and “The Holy Spirit and Holiness” Retreat Experience
December	Session 2: “Prayer” and the “Our Capacity for God” Session 3: “Discovering Jesus in the Sacraments” and “Baptism and the Family of God.” Session 4: “Discovering Jesus in the Mass” and “Our Relationship with Jesus as Lord”
January	Session 5: “The Tools of Holiness” and “The Trinity” Session 6: “Sexuality” and “Vocation-Plan for Life” Session 7: “The Catholic Church” and “Mary and the Saints”
February	Optional Interviews Session 8: “Fellowship and Community” and “The Gifts of the Holy Spirit” Session 9: “Servant Leadership” and “Sharing Christ’s Love with Others”
March	An evening of reflection for candidates and sponsors Confirmation celebration

# PREPARING THE LITURGY FOR THE RITE OF CONFIRMATION

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The Bishop is looking forward to celebrating the Sacrament of Confirmation with your parish. He would appreciate it if the person with the primary responsibility for preparing the Confirmation would call his Secretary during the week prior to the Confirmation at 816-756-1858, ext. 284.

## The Celebration Itself

### MUSIC

Appropriate music should be chosen for the celebration. The candidates themselves should be familiar with the music and encouraged to sing. When possible, some of the music might be recommended by them. The Gloria (if used), the Responsorial Psalm, Gospel Acclamation, Eucharistic Acclamations (Holy, Holy, Holy, Memorial Acclamation and Great Amen) and Lamb of God should generally be sung.

### PROCESSION

The ministers and servers process in the following order:

- ☐ Thurifer, if incense is used
- ☐ Cross bearer flanked by two Acolytes carrying lighted candles
- ☐ Candidates and sponsors (if in procession)
- ☐ Assisting Deacon with Book of the Gospels (or Lector)
- ☐ Concelebrants
- ☐ The Pastor
- ☐ Bishop's Master of Ceremonies
- ☐ The Bishop
- ☐ Mitre and Pastoral Staff Bearers

### INTRODUCTORY RITES

The Introductory Rites take place at the presidential chair.

### SPRINKLING/PENITENTIAL RITE

If used, these rites and prayers must follow the rubrics cited in the Confirmation Ritual.

## Liturgy of the Word

### READINGS AND RESPONSES

Under normal circumstances, the reading and responsorial psalms that are found in the Official Rite of Confirmation are the readings that are to be used. From the Old Testament five selections are given; from the New Testament, twelve; six responsorial psalms and six Alleluia verses are provided, and twelve different selections from the four Gospels. The following exceptions and comments are noted:

- I. The Mass of the Rite of Confirmation within Mass may be used at all celebrations of Confirmation *except* on the Sundays of Advent and Lent; and Sundays of Easter, Solemnities, Ash Wednesday, and Holy Week. In the exceptional cases, the readings and prayers of the liturgy for that day are to be used. Where possible, it would be ideal to avoid scheduling

Confirmation on these dates in order to avoid conflicting themes. However, practical realities may necessitate Confirmation celebrations occurring during these times.

2. Normally, because of the solemnity of the occasion, there will be two readings and a Gospel. Appropriately trained lectors should proclaim the readings before the Gospel, and the deacon will read the Gospel. If there is no deacon present, the pastor should read the Gospel.

## PRESENTATION OF THE CANDIDATES

*One of the following procedures may be used:*

Option # 1. Each candidate is called by his/her full baptismal name, stands up and remains standing after his/her name is announced. After the coordinator, pastor, or other person has announced all of the individual names, he/she can, in words similar to these, say:

*"Bishop \_\_\_\_\_, the parish community of N. \_\_\_\_\_ wishes to present to you its men and women who have prepared for and are now ready to celebrate the fullness of Christian Initiation in the Sacrament of Confirmation."*

Option #2. While it is preferable to announce the individual names, if the class is large, the coordinator/pastor can sufficiently point them out in words similar to these:

*"Bishop \_\_\_\_\_, the parish community of N. \_\_\_\_\_ wishes to present to you its men and women who have prepared and are ready to celebrate the fullness of Christian Initiation in the Sacrament of Confirmation. Each candidate has been well prepared and is accompanied by a sponsor. It is my privilege to present them to you at this time."*

All candidates then stand together.

**The candidates then sit down for the homily.**

## HOMILY

The Bishop gives a homily which may include all or part of the Confirmation instruction.

## PROFESSION OF FAITH

After the homily, the candidates stand and the Bishop asks them to renew their baptismal promises with five questions to which they answer "I do". (The baptismal promises may be printed in the program.)

## IMPOSITION OF HANDS – INVOCATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Bishop addresses the assembly, asking them to pray for the candidates. Other priests- if and only if they are ministering the Sacrament with the Bishop- extend their hands over the candidates. (cf. Rite #25) The Bishop alone says the prayer.

[**Note:** It is inappropriate for sponsors or others in the congregation to be instructed to extend hands at this time.]

## ANOINTING

The anointing should be visible to the entire assembly which is seated.

The candidate is presented to the Bishop by the sponsor.

The sponsor will announce the candidate's Confirmation name to the Bishop.

Sponsors will say the candidate's Confirmation name loud enough for the Bishop to hear it and place his/her right hand on the shoulder of the candidate before the anointing takes place.

The Bishop confirms the candidate through the anointing with chrism in the sign of the Cross on the forehead which is done through the laying on of hands and the **words "N.\_\_\_\_, be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit."** The candidate answers, **"Amen!"**

The Bishop will then extend the sign of peace to the newly confirmed saying: **"Peace be with you,"** the candidate responds, **"and also with you."**

After the Sign of Peace, the confirmed person and the sponsor return to their places.

After the last person has been confirmed, the servers approach the Bishop with a pitcher of water, basin, slices of lemon, and a towel.

### PRAYERS OF THE FAITHFUL

The general intercessions follow in the usual form of introduction, petitions, and a concluding prayer by the Bishop. Sample general intercessions are found in the Rite. However, one or several of the newly-confirmed could compose and read the intercessions.

The intercessions should come in the following order: prayers for the church, the world, the parish, the confirmandi, and particular intentions or needs. Avoid wordy or over-particular petitions, and limit the number to no more than six.

If a deacon is assisting in Holy Mass, he will normally read the intercessions.

## Liturgy of The Eucharist

### PREPARATION OF THE GIFTS

A simple presentation of the gifts is recommended. The bread and wine are to be brought forward in procession.

Gifts for the poor may also be brought forward in procession. Anything that is not an actual gift should not be included in this rite.

### EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

### HOLY COMMUNION

Along with the Bishop, all concelebrating priests and assisting deacons will serve as Ordinary Ministers of Holy Communion. Extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion can be used in the event that they are needed. ***It is proper for a priest or deacon to approach the Tabernacle to take or repose the Blessed Sacrament if needed.***

### BLESSING

### CONCLUDING RITE

Please inform the Master of Ceremonies if the newly confirmed are going to be processing out.

## PICTURES

Please inform The Master of Ceremonies about your arrangements for pictures. The Bishop is happy to take group and individual pictures.

*Once the liturgy has been planned,  
the Confirmation planning sheets  
should be sent to the Secretary to the Bishop  
at least two weeks prior to the celebration  
and before the booklet is printed.*



# PRACTICAL NORMS IN AND FOR THE CELEBRATION

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The celebration of a sacrament is an important worship event in the life of the Catholic community. The program, therefore, of preparation of candidates for this sacrament and plans for the celebration ought to be a coordinated effort of the total parish family as well as including all parishes who are participating.

## MINISTERS

The Bishop will be the principal celebrant and homilist of the Eucharist. Ordinarily, red vestments will be worn unless liturgical feasts require another color. Please have a room (rectory, sacristy, etc.), for the Bishop where he will vest before the celebration. The Bishop will bring his own red vestment and alb. He will also bring veils for the mitre and pastoral staff bearers.

All the priests present are encouraged to concelebrate with the Bishop. If there is a parish deacon, he would be welcome to assist at Mass.

If possible, concelebrants should wear chasubles that match each other, e.g. the “diocesan” stole and chasuble, or they may vest in alb and stole.

The deacon should wear a stole and dalmatic in the color appropriate for the liturgy or an alb with the appropriate color stole.

## LITURGICAL ASSISTANTS

There should be at least one reader to proclaim the Word of God.

If there are three readings, it is appropriate that the first two readings be proclaimed by two different readers.

The deacon (or the pastor) proclaims the Gospel.

The Word of God is to be proclaimed from the Lectionary itself.

There should be ministers of the Eucharist sufficient in number to expedite the reception of Communion under both species. All concelebrating priests and participating deacons are asked to help with the distribution of Communion. Extraordinary ministers of Communion should be assigned to help with the distribution as needed.

There should be sufficient altar ministers to take the following roles:

Crossbearer

Acolytes

Book bearer (could be done by one of the candlebearers)

Mitre bearer

Pastoral staff bearer

Incense is optional. If used, a thurifer is needed.

**Those to be confirmed should not have the role of a server.**

**NOTE:** There should be a seat for each altar minister. The three ministers taking care of the mitre, pastoral staff and book should be seated together. If the presidential chair is on one side of the sanctuary the three ministers taking care of the mitre, pastoral staff and book should be seated

together on that same side of the sanctuary. There should also be a chair, nearby, for the Bishop's Master of Ceremonies.

### **ADULTS TO BE CONFIRMED**

The Diocese schedules one celebration for adult confirmandi, usually in June at the Cathedral. If it is more convenient, the Bishop is pleased to have adults who have been prepared for Confirmation to be part of the parish group(s). They should choose a Confirmation name and sponsor, etc. Please inform the Bishop's Master of Ceremonies about their participation.

### **BOOKLETS AND COPYRIGHTS**

The parish may provide a booklet for the ceremony that contains references to music in a parish hymnal. It is neither necessary nor desirable to reprint the texts of readings or presider's prayers except in the case of multilingual liturgies.

Whenever a parish publishes its own participation aid for the liturgy, permission must be obtained from copyright holders for all music (words and/or music). Many publishers provide reprint blocks on purchased music to be reprinted for an assembly. Often this block may be reprinted gratis.

### **REHEARSAL**

A rehearsal is often helpful to put all those participating at ease and allows for a meaningful and reverent liturgy. During this rehearsal, all the candidates and their sponsors should have the opportunity to practice their responses and movements individually and as a group.

### **LOGISTICAL CONCERNS**

Those to be confirmed are to be seated with their individual sponsors throughout the entire ceremony. They are to be seated as a group near the front of the church.

It is recommended that the use of flash photography and videotaping be restricted to minimize distracting movement or light. Each parish should decide beforehand on these restrictions and make them, and the reasons for them, clear to those in attendance.

Group pictures should be arranged in advance. The Bishop is very happy to stay for group and/or individual pictures.

# Preparation

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## CHRISM OIL

The vessel of holy chrism, which the Bishop brings, is properly placed on or near the altar (or the credence table) before the celebration begins and remains there until the time for the anointing.

## CREDENCE TABLE

At a side table the following should be ready for the Liturgy of the Eucharist:

The chalice for the celebrant's use with corporal and purificator

A container of water (for the addition of water to the wine in the chalice and the flagon(s) and for the washing of the hands after the preparation of the gifts)

A small bowl and towel (for the washing of the hands after the preparation of the gifts)

Any necessary patens with hosts and flagons with wine that are not brought up during the presentation of the gifts

Sufficient chalices with purificators for the Communion of the assembly

A small pitcher of water, a basin, a towel, and a cut lemon (for the Bishop to remove the holy chrism from his fingers following the anointing)

If the rite of blessing and sprinkling holy water is planned, a suitable container of water to be blessed should be prepared, as well as an aspergillum.

Place the sacramentary with ribbons set appropriately on the chair for the Bishop's Master of Ceremonies. This chair should be near the chairs of the three ministers taking care of the mitre, pastoral staff and book.

# Confirmation Planning Sheet

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

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of the Primary Person Preparing the Confirmation \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number(s) \_\_\_\_\_

The planning sheets are made available to assist parishes and the Bishop's Office in providing a celebration that reflects the importance of the Sacrament. Upon completion of the planning sheets, copies should be sent to the Bishop's Office. **PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN PLANNING SHEETS AT LEAST THREE WEEKS IN ADVANCE OF THE CELEBRATION TO ALLOW SUFFICIENT TIME FOR REVIEW AND APPROVAL.** Questions concerning the celebration should be referred to the Bishop's Secretary, Bishop's Office.

## TIME AND PLACE

DAY, DATE AND TIME OF CONFIRMATION \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

LOCATION OF CONFIRMATION \_\_\_\_\_

## VESTURE FOR BISHOP AND CONCELEBRANTS

Where will the Bishop and clergy vest? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**ANOINTING:** Water, basin, cut lemon, towel on credence table or other inconspicuous but convenient place.

Person responsible? \_\_\_\_\_

## THE PEOPLE

NAMES OF CONCELEBRANTS: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

NAME OF DEACON(S): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

MINISTERS OF HOSPITALITY: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**LECTORS:** Should be regular, commissioned parish lectors, or well-prepared confirmandi or family members.

\_\_\_\_\_  
**SERVERS:** Five are needed, (six if incense is used). **Those to be confirmed should not have the role of a server.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**CANTOR/SONG LEADER(S):**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**INSTRUMENTALISTS:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**CHOIR:**

## The Order of the Mass

Prelude Music: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Gathering Rites

**MUSIC FOR PROCESSION:** \_\_\_\_\_

**KYRIE:**           ☐ Sung                           ☐ Recited                           ☐ Omitted because of Sprinkling Rite  
**SPRINKLING RITE:** if used, the music will be: \_\_\_\_\_

**GLORIA:** (Omitted during Advent and Lent; except on feast days).

\_\_\_\_\_ YES                   \_\_\_\_\_ NO                   IF YES, IT SHOULD BE SUNG.

## Liturgy of the Word

The First Reading (select one):

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ezek. 36:24-28     | <input type="checkbox"/> Is. 42:1-3                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Joel 2:23; 3:1-3   | <input type="checkbox"/> Is. 11:1-4                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Is. 61:1-3, 6, 8-9 | <input type="checkbox"/> Seasonal, or of the Sunday or Feast |

Responsorial Psalm (select one, should be sung):

- ☐ Ps. 104:1, 24, 27-28, 30-31, 33-34
- ☐ Ps. 22:23-24, 26-27, 28, 31-32
- ☐ Ps. 23:1-3, 3-4, 5-6
- ☐ Ps. 96:1-2, 2-3, 9-10, 11-12
- ☐ Ps. 117:1-2
- ☐ Ps. 145:2-3, 4-5, 8-9, 10-11, 15-16, 21
- ☐ Seasonal, or of the Sunday or Feast

The Second Reading (select one):

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Acts 8:1, 4, 14-17                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Acts 19:1-6             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Acts 2:1-6, 14, 22-23, 32-33        | <input type="checkbox"/> Rom. 8:14-17            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I Cor. 12:4-13                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Eph. 1:3-4, 13-19       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Acts 1:3-8                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Acts 10:1, 33-34, 37-44 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Rom. 5:1-2, 58                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Rom. 8:26-27            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gal. 5:16-17, 22-23, 24-25          | <input type="checkbox"/> Eph. 4:1-6              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Seasonal, or of the Sunday or Feast |  |

The Gospel Acclamation (select one, should be sung):

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> John 14:16   | <input type="checkbox"/> John 16:33; 14:26 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> John 15:26, 27   | <input type="checkbox"/> Rev. 1:5-6        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful; and kindle in them the fire of your love. |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Seasonal, or of the Sunday or Feast  |  |

The Gospel (select one):

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> John 14:23-26                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Matthew 16:24-27     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mark 1:9-11                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Luke 8:4-10, 11-15   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> John 7:37-39                        | <input type="checkbox"/> John 15:18-21, 26-27 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Matthew 5:1-12                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Matthew 25:14-30     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Luke 4:16-22                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Luke 10:21-24        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> John 14:15-17                       | <input type="checkbox"/> John 16:5-7, 12-13   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Seasonal, or of the Sunday or Feast |   |

**Homily**



As the Bishop composes his homily, is there any information about the youth preparing for Confirmation that should be highlighted? Please include this information below.

## Rite of Confirmation

### PRESENTATION OF THE CANDIDATES:

Option #1 \_\_\_\_\_

Option #2 \_\_\_\_\_

### RENEWAL OF BAPTISMAL PROMISES:

Anointing:

Music (if used): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The General Intercessions:

☐ We plan to use the prayers found in the Rite.

☐ We plan to compose our own, using the model found in the Rite.

They will be ☐ read ☐ sung by \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## The Liturgy of the Eucharist

Preparation of the Altar:

Bread & Wine will be presented by \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Music: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Where are the gifts received? ☐ at the chair ☐ in front of the altar

The musical setting for the acclamations of the Eucharistic prayer

(HOLY HOLY, MEMORIAL ACCLAMATION, AMEN):

---

Our Father & Doxology:

☐ Sung?

☐ Recited?

Lamb of God Musical Setting: \_\_\_\_\_

---

Communion Hymns: \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

### Dismissal

The closing hymn will be: \_\_\_\_\_

The Confirmed

☐ will recess

☐ will remain in place

Postlude: \_\_\_\_\_

---

If, as part of your planning process, you would like assistance and/or input from the Office of Worship, please contact the Worship Office at least three weeks before the date of Confirmation. In the event that any changes occur in the outline prior to the celebration, the Secretary to the Bishop should be notified as soon as possible.

**Contact:**

**Secretary to the Bishop**

**Bishop's Office**

**P.O. Box 419037**

**Kansas City, Missouri 64141-6037**

**816 756-1858, ext. 284**

**Office of Worship**

**P. O. Box 419037**

**Kansas City, MO 64141-6037**

**816-756-1858, ext. 257**

# APPENDICES

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## **Appendix A - Confirmation Situations**

This sheet is meant to help clarify the variety of situations that arise when someone is to be confirmed.

## **Appendix B - Confirmation Personal Information Form**

To be completed by each candidate at the beginning of the preparation program. It may be adapted to the needs and circumstances of each parish. Of particular interest to the Youth Office, however, is the number of years of religious education completed by each candidate. This information should be collected and included on the Summary Form.

## **Appendix C - Confirmation Interview Questions**

These questions are suggestions for the Interview. Feel free to add your own questions.

## **Appendix D - Confirmation Summary Form**

This information is essential to understanding how our Confirmation programs are doing around the diocese.

## **Appendix E - Baptismal Information Request Form**

## **Appendix F - What Needs to be Recorded in the Baptismal Certificate?**

## **Appendix G - Confirmation Name Approval**

# APPENDIX A

## CONFIRMATION SITUATIONS

Who is the Candidate?	Who may Confirm?	When?	Under What Conditions?	In the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph
Unbaptized adult	The priest who baptizes	Immediately after baptism	The priest must confirm in every instance (Canon 885.2)	
Unbaptized child of catechetical age	The priest who baptizes	Immediately after baptism	The priest must confirm in every instance (Canon 885.2)	
Unbaptized child under catechetical age	The bishop or his delegate	At a scheduled Confirmation Mass	After the candidate completes the Diocesan Confirmation formation process	Confirmation may be conferred at any point in either 9 <sup>th</sup> or 10 <sup>th</sup> grade
Adult baptized in another Christian denomination	The priest who receives him or her into the church	Immediately after their reception. Confirmation is integral to reception into full communion	The priest must confirm in every instance	
Child of catechetical age baptized in another Christian denomination	The priest who receives him or her into the church	Immediately after their reception. Confirmation is integral to reception into full communion	The priest must confirm in every instance	
Child under catechetical age baptized in another Christian denomination	The bishop or his delegate	At a scheduled Confirmation Mass	After the candidate completes the Diocesan Confirmation formation process	Confirmation may be conferred at any point in either 9 <sup>th</sup> or 10 <sup>th</sup> grade
Adult already baptized a Catholic	The bishop or his delegate	At a scheduled Confirmation Mass	After appropriate preparation	The bishop may confirm the candidate at a diocesan celebration, a parish celebration, or he may delegate the pastor to confirm
Child of catechetical age already baptized a Catholic	The bishop or his delegate	At a scheduled Confirmation Mass	After the candidate completes the Diocesan Confirmation formation process	Confirmation may be conferred at any point in either 9 <sup>th</sup> or 10 <sup>th</sup> grade.
Any baptized Catholic in danger of death	Any priest	Immediately	After whatever preparation is possible	

*Prepared by Rev. Paul Turner, STD for the Diocese of Kansas City – St. Joseph, March 25, 2009*

# APPENDIX B

## CONFIRMATION PERSONAL INFORMATION FORM

(please print)

---

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street City State Zip

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

### Religious Education Background:

Elementary School: \_\_\_\_\_ Parish affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

Attended: School of Religion – Grades: \_\_\_\_\_ Attended: Parish School – Grades: \_\_\_\_\_

**If you were a member or more than one parish, use the back of this sheet.**

What clubs or organizations are you a member of? (Drama, Debate, Cheer, Scouts, etc.)

What sports (if any) do you play?

Do you have a job? \_\_\_\_ Where? \_\_\_\_\_ Hours? \_\_\_\_\_

**Please answer the questions in your own words. (Use the back of this sheet if needed.)**

1. Why would you like to participate in the Confirmation process?
2. Are you aware of the time necessary to participate in this process? Are you willing to make the commitment?
3. As you think about our community and world, what are some of the needs you see? Can you imagine developing a service project around meeting or addressing these needs?
4. How can the parish help you to grow in your faith at this time? Do you have questions about God, your relationship with Jesus, or the Church's mission and teaching that you want to be sure you get a chance to talk about?
5. Do you have any questions about any part of this process or does any part worry you?
6. Who do you think will be your sponsor? What is it about this person that will make him/her a good companion on this journey? OR Do you need help in identifying/inviting someone from our parish to be your sponsor?

# APPENDIX C

## CONFIRMATION INTERVIEW

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Prior to the celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation, the parish priest or designated catechist should interview each child to assess his or her readiness and intention for receiving the sacrament. The interview **should not** feel like a test, but rather a time to understand if the teen is ready and if not, to determine what needs to be explained more completely. The interview might also be a time for the teen to explain why they chose the saint they chose.

Under no circumstance should the priest or designated catechist meet with the teen alone behind a closed door. This precaution is to avoid any chance of accusations of misconduct.

### Possible Interview Questions

Following is a list of possible interview questions. Unless there are very few confirmandi, you will not be able to ask every teen every question.

1. Ask a few questions to put the youth at ease. Consider Asking about school, sports, jobs, etc...
2. Who gave us Confirmation? When did we get Confirmation? Why did Jesus give us this?
3. What are some effects of Confirmation?
4. What does it mean to be more fully united with Jesus and with the Church? What is the Church? Who belongs to the Church?
5. How does Confirmation help us to live as disciples of Jesus? ....to live as witnesses of Jesus?
6. What is an indelible spiritual mark?
7. What does it mean to be "sealed with the Holy Spirit?"
8. What happens when you receive Baptism? What happens in the sacrament of Reconciliation?
9. Discuss the saint they have chosen. What saint did you choose? Why? How did your saint live as a disciple and witness to Jesus Christ?
10. Do you want to be Confirmed at this time? Why?
11. What are you going to do after Confirmation to stay connected with the parish?
12. What did you learn about our community, about our Catholic Church from your involvement?
13. How can our youth group help you and your friends grow closer to God?
14. What questions about the Catholic Church still remain?
15. Review the remaining elements and schedule of the process and thank the candidate for being a part of the experience.



# APPENDIX D

## CONFIRMATION SUMMARY FORM DIOCESE OF KANSAS CITY-ST. JOSEPH

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*Complete and return to the Youth Office **4 weeks** prior to your scheduled celebration of Confirmation.  
Every question must be completed. Thank you for your cooperation.*

Parish: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_

Pastor/Pastoral Administrator: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Confirmation Coordinator: \_\_\_\_\_ Day Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of candidates to be confirmed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date and time: \_\_\_\_\_ Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Of all sophomore-aged youth who should be confirmed at this time, what percentage is being confirmed? \_\_\_\_\_%

Years of religious education received by candidates at the start of Confirmation preparation since First Communion (roughly grades 3-9). List number of candidates in each category.

None: \_\_\_\_\_ 1-2 years: \_\_\_\_\_ 3-4 years: \_\_\_\_\_ 5-6 years: \_\_\_\_\_ Every year since First Communion: \_\_\_\_\_

When did your parish preparation process begin?  
(Date) \_\_\_\_\_

### **Preparation Description** (please type responses on a separate sheet.)

A) Which of the approved resources are you using? (Please include number of sessions used, topics chosen, and whether small groups in the home or large groups in the parish were used)

B) In what types of service have the candidates been involved?

C) Describe the retreat(s) offered. (When, where, theme(s), length, etc.)

D) Other activities: (Parent/sponsor involvement, sessions for parents, sponsors, etc.)

E) How are the confirmed invited into the parish life and mission? (Assisting as liturgical ministers, serving on the parish pastoral council, helping with religious education, etc.)

F) What are opportunities available for catechesis or evangelization for high school youth apart from Confirmation preparation, either in the form of youth group activities or continuing religious formation? Please describe.

*If you have questions concerning Confirmation, please contact the Office of Youth Ministry (816) 756-1850 x554*

# APPENDIX E

## BAPTISMAL INFORMATION REQUEST FORM\*

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\*In order for a child to receive First Reconciliation, Confirmation and First Eucharist, they must be baptized. The baptismal certificate provides formal recognition of Baptism. For those children baptized outside of the current parish, you will need a copy of the baptismal certificate from the parish where the child was baptized. Only the Confirmation and Marriage are recorded on the baptismal certificate. The recording of First Eucharist is optional. First Reconciliation is NOT recorded.

Child's Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ First \_\_\_\_\_ Middle \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_

Father's Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ First \_\_\_\_\_ Middle \_\_\_\_\_

Mother's Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ First \_\_\_\_\_ Middle \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Child's Birth \_\_\_\_\_

City and State of Birth \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Child's Baptism \_\_\_\_\_

Church of Child's Baptism \_\_\_\_\_

City and State of Child's Baptism \_\_\_\_\_

Child's name as it is to appear on the Confirmation Certificate

\_\_\_\_\_

-----  
(below line - for office use only)

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_Proof of Baptism Received

# APPENDIX F

## WHAT NEEDS TO BE RECORDED ON THE BAPTISMAL CERTIFICATE?

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### WHY AND HOW TO ENSURE THAT A VALID BAPTISM EXISTS

In order for someone to receive First Reconciliation, Confirmation and First Eucharist, they must be validly baptized with the proper matter and form, namely with water and the words, “I baptize you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”

The baptismal certificate provides formal recognition of Baptism. For those children and adults baptized outside of their current parish, you will need a copy of the baptismal certificate from the parish where the Baptism was celebrated. For the sake of receiving the sacraments of First Reconciliation, Confirmation, and First Eucharist, it is not necessary to obtain a recently issued certificate. However, obtaining the baptizing parish’s current mailing address is necessary in order to send them notification of the reception of Confirmation. This notification is sent after the candidate has received Confirmation.

For those baptized in another Christian church, even in mainline denominations, you will need to confirm that the proper matter and form have been used in the celebration. Most certificates will indicate the Trinitarian formula right on the paper. In those situations where the formula is not noted, further investigation is required. This may even require contacting the church itself and in some instances even the baptizing pastor. Parishes needing further assistance may also contact the Office of Worship.

In circumstances where there is uncertainty about the validity of the Baptism, a conditional Baptism should be celebrated.

### WHAT NEEDS TO BE RECORDED ON THE BAPTISMAL CERTIFICATE?

With regards to the sacraments of initiation, only Confirmation is recorded on the baptismal certificate. The recording of First Eucharist is optional. Due to the sacramental seal of confession, First Reconciliation is NEVER recorded.

In addition, the Code of Canon Law specifies:

**Can. 535 §1** In each parish there are to be parochial registers, that is, of baptisms, of marriages and of deaths, and any other registers prescribed by the Episcopal Conference or by the diocesan Bishop. The parish priest is to ensure that entries are accurately made and that the registers are carefully preserved.

**§2** In the register of baptisms, a note is to be made of Confirmation and of matters pertaining to the canonical status of the faithful by reason of marriage, without prejudice to the provision of can. 1133, and by reason of adoption, the reception of sacred order, the making of perpetual profession in a religious institute, or a change of rite. These annotations are always to be reproduced on a baptismal certificate.

Other CIC references include canons 877-878, 895, 1050-1054, 1121, 1133, and 1182.

# APPENDIX G

## CONFIRMATION NAME APPROVAL

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### Names

Parishes have retained the custom wherein a young person preparing for Confirmation selects a “Confirmation name.” This pious practice, although never a part of the official rite, may be retained. Points of consideration in choosing a Confirmation name are as follows:

- Each of those to be confirmed may choose an appropriate Confirmation name. One name only is chosen.
- This name should not be foreign to Christian sensibilities.
- Because this is a significant sacramental celebration, names that are very unusual or contrary to Catholic tradition should be discouraged.
- Names should be of like gender to the confirmed.
- The names should be submitted to the Confirmation Coordinator for approval.
- The Confirmation name should be presented in its proper form, rather than in the diminutive (e.g. **John**, instead of Jack; **Susan**, instead of Sue.)
- The (one) Confirmation name should be legible on a name tag or given clearly by the sponsor
- The name received at baptism may be used again for Confirmation.

### TO BE FILLED OUT AND SIGNED BY CONFIRMATION COORDINATORS AND RETURNED WITH THE LITURGY PLANNING SHEET

I, \_\_\_\_\_ have reviewed each Confirmation name  
and agree that they comply with the Guidelines stated above.

---

Signature

---

Date