

# *Welcome to the Confirmation Preparation Process at St. Charles Borromeo Parish Church*



We are looking forward to sharing with you this journey of faith as you prepare to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. As you know, Confirmation preparation involves learning, sharing, serving, fellowship, spiritual growth and fun! You will be given the opportunity to learn more about your Catholic faith and what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ.

Since there are a number of details and activities involved in the preparation process, we have prepared this booklet to assist the Confirmand with various requirements, as they prepare to celebrate the Sacrament. At St. Charles Borromeo Parish, the Sacrament of Confirmation is celebrated in spring of eighth grade. We ask that parents and the Confirmand study this booklet together. It is our hope that our candidates will truly understand their Confirmation is a process of life-long learning and participation in the parish and community.

***What is Confirmation?*** Confirmation is one of the Sacraments of Initiation. While Baptism is the first step of initiation into the life of the Church, Confirmation can be seen as the completion of the Baptismal commitment. According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church, “The reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation is necessary for the completion of baptismal grace” (no. 1285).

The following guide details the requirements and expectations of those youth enrolled in Confirmation preparation as well as the expectations of parents and sponsors. This commitment involves the whole family and we ask that you carefully examine the expectations.

## **WHOM MAY BE CONFIRMED?**

Confirmation candidates must:

- Have received the Sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist.
- Be between the ages of twelve and eighteen.
- Have been adequately catechized (prepared) in the Roman Catholic faith.
- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the obligations of the practicing member of the Catholic Church.
- Have a sincere desire to receive the Sacrament as well as an appreciation of sacramental life.

## Diocese of Trenton Guidelines: Confirmation

### **Immediate Preparation**

- Immediate preparation for the reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation consists of a minimum one-year program of formation designed to develop an understanding of the Sacraments of initiation as they apply to the lives of the candidates and in the life of the Church.
- It is the intent that the Sacrament be conferred in the spring of eighth grade or the fall of ninth grade.
- The immediate preparation should be separate from the regular religion curriculum.
- Readiness for the reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation proceeds in two stages: the readiness for candidacy and the readiness for the Sacrament itself.
- Immediate preparation includes elements such as a public acceptance of the candidates and an inclusion of parents, sponsors, and the parish community.
- A special effort will be made to prepare the candidates for further participation in the life of the Church after the reception of the Sacrament.

*(Diocese of Trenton: Parish Religious Education Administration Manual: 501, A-F, November 2012)*

### **Readiness**

- Candidates, their parents and sponsors, are to be informed at the beginning of the program as to the requirements for readiness or possible postponement.
- The pastor or his delegate will determine readiness for reception of the sacrament. This is most effectively accomplished by an interview.
- Readiness for candidacy will require a determination that initial catechetical preparation has taken place and that potential candidates have been faithful in participating in the liturgical and Sacramental life of the Church.
- If it is determined that a student cannot profess knowledge of their faith and do not regularly participate in the liturgical and Sacramental life of the church, a more intensive program of additional or extended preparation will be offered to them before they are accepted as candidates.
- The right of the candidate to postpone reception of Confirmation at their own request should be carefully respected by parents, catechetical leader, and the pastor.

*(Diocese of Trenton: Parish Religious Education Administration Manual: 501, A-F, November 2012)*

## Outline for Confirmation Program

### Eighth Grade Requirements

#### *Community Worship*

Confirmation students are expected to attend Mass on Saturdays or Sundays and Holy Days.

#### *Religious Education Classes*

Candidates attend regular Religious Education classes.

Knowledge of:

The Seven Sacraments

The Ten commandments

The Beatitudes

The Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit

The Corporal Works of Mercy

The Spiritual Works of Mercy

Writers of the Gospels

Story of the Passion

Act of Contrition and other prayers

#### *Confirmation Meeting*

Parents and candidates attend this meeting together in September. A time line of events for the year is presented.

#### *Sacramental Registration Form/ Grade 8 Sacramental Fee*

Parents complete the Sacramental Confirmation form for official parish record. A \$50 fee is collected at time of Religious Ed registration. This covers additional expenses such as meetings, retreats, Sacramental preparation workbooks, Confirmation gowns, and certificates.

#### *Confirmation Name*

Students will choose their Confirmation name based on a Saint or their given baptismal name.

#### *Letter to Pastor*

Each student must write a letter to the Pastor. Please return this letter to the Religious Ed office so it can be placed in the student's folder. Format of the letter is on Religious Ed website.

#### *Service Activities*

Students will complete three (3) service activities of their choice. Students must document their experiences. Service activity form is on Religious Ed website.

### ***Interview Reflection***

Students will conduct an interview with a person of service within the parish or town community. They will provide a written summary of the meeting. Interview reflection form is on Religious Ed website.

### ***Personal Reflection***

Students will write a reflection on why they want to be confirmed. Personal reflection form is on Religious Ed website.

### ***Sponsor Reflection***

Students will interview their Confirmation sponsor. Students will provide a written summary of the meeting. Sponsor reflection form is on Religious Ed website.

### ***Confirmation Retreat***

A special retreat for the Confirmands is planned for January. Specific date and other information for the event will be provided in September.

### ***Confirmation Exam***

Student must pass an exam that is based on the material that has been covered over the students Religious Ed experience.

### ***Confirmation Interview Night***

Students will be interviewed by a member of St. Charles Borromeo Parish community in January. They will discuss their preparation for Confirmation. Specific date for the interview night will be provided in September.

### ***Reconciliation***

Students must receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation before Confirmation. The Sacrament will be available same night as their Confirmation Interview.

### ***Confirmation Practice***

Students will practice for the Confirmation on the Thursday prior to Confirmation. They will review their responsibilities and duties during practice. All details of the Confirmation will be covered during practice.

### ***Dress Code for Confirmation***

Boys: Dress slacks (no jeans), white shirt and tie. Tie color should be appropriate to wear with a red robe. Shoes and socks. No sneakers please!

Girls: Dress, skirt, or dress slacks (no jeans or leggings) and blouse, dress shoes. Robes are about calf length and red. No sneakers please!

Hair for both boys and girls: Hair should be off the forehead for the Celebrant to anoint each Confirmandi with chrism.

## *Confirmation Day*

At St. Charles Borromeo Parish, the sacrament of Confirmation is celebrated in March with two services, 4pm & 6pm. Each student will be assigned a service based upon their last name.

### The Role and Eligibility of the Sponsor According to the Diocese of Trenton

#### **Role of Sponsors:**

- Individual sponsors are to be selected.
- A sponsor is a person who knows the candidate and can help them on their spiritual journey.
- Ideally a sponsor is someone who already has been involved in the spiritual formation of the candidate, such as a godparent, or member of the local parish.
- When possible the Baptismal sponsor should be chosen in order to show the relationship between Baptism and Confirmation.
- A sponsor needs to be acquainted with their responsibilities and given opportunities for inclusion in the candidate's immediate preparation program.
- A proxy sponsor may stand in for the individual sponsor if pastoral considerations warrant this. The same eligibility requirements would apply. Since parents are not eligible to act as a sponsor, to avoid confusion, it is best to avoid using a parent as a proxy.

#### **Pre-Requisites for Sponsors:**

- Be designated by the one to be confirmed, by the parents, or the person who takes their place in their absence, by the pastor or minister and have the aptitude and intention of fulfilling this function.
- Have completed the sixteenth year of age, unless the diocesan bishop has established another age, or the pastor or minister has granted an exception for a just cause.
- Be a baptized Catholic who has been confirmed and has already received the most holy Sacrament of the Eucharist and who leads a life of faith in keeping with the role/function they are about to assume.
- The sponsor must be a fully initiated Catholic who participates regularly in the Eucharist and who is not living in a marriage which the Roman Catholic Church does not recognize.
- Not be bound by any canonical penalty legitimately imposed or declared (ie. Excommunication). (Diocese of Trenton: Parish Religious Education Administration Manual: 505 5006, P505.1, November 2012)

#### **Eligibility- Canon No. 872**

- For a person to be eligible to be a sponsor he or she:
  - Must be sixteen years of age or older, and be currently practicing Catholic
  - Must belong to the Catholic Church and have been initiated in the three Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist
  - Must not be prohibited by law from exercising the role of sponsor
  - May be the same sponsor the candidate had at Baptism or a new sponsor
  - May be either male or female for any candidate

- May not be the child's parent
- Eligibility is to be verified by obtaining a *Sponsor Eligibility Certificate* from the sponsor's parish, if he or she is not a member of St. Charles Borromeo Parish