



**Confirmation Prep**  
**Parent/Student Handbook**



Congratulations! Your child has chosen to prepare for the Sacrament of Confirmation. You have been journeying with your son or daughter in this adventure of life and faith for quite a while. This is an important part of the road you are traveling: a chance to stop and view where you have been, where you are and where you are going not only on your faith journey, but on your life journey. As a faith community, we are here to support you and your family as you share life and faith with your child.

This guidebook is a resource, a guide for you continuing your journey with your teenager. It is our hope that you will gain a few insights and understandings about your teenager and your relationship. We offer an understanding of the Sacrament of Confirmation that is based on the Catechism of the Catholic Church. We also offer guidance in your teen choosing a Confirmation sponsor.

This will be an exciting year in the life of your teen. We are glad to be a part of your journey together.

Blessings!

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# **CONFIRMATION: General Information**

Confirmation is a sacrament in which those who have been baptized receive the fullness of the Holy Spirit, whom the Lord sent upon his apostles at Pentecost. It is a sacrament that celebrates God's special strengths and gifts in those who have been baptized.

In 1972, the church published The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA). The RCIA stresses the connections between the three sacraments of Christian initiation – Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Eucharist.

In baptism, a person becomes a Christian and receives grace and life from the Holy Spirit. In Confirmation, the baptismal vows are renewed and the sealing of the Spirit serves as a preparation for a mature Christian life.

In the Eucharist, the great sign of Christian unity, the faithful are nourished and strengthened. They are transformed into a more loving and united community of believers. Through these sacramental rites the faithful are officially acknowledged as Christians. They are commissioned to carry out the mission of Christ and his Church.

Confirmation is a parish community celebration. It provides an opportunity for members of the parish family to renew their baptismal commitment. Confirmation time in the parish is a time when the community celebrates the gifts of the Holy Spirit among them.

## **The Rite of Confirmation**

The Sacrament of Confirmation:

- is celebrated during Mass
- begins after the Liturgy of the Word
- is presided over by the bishop or a designated auxiliary or pastor

There are four parts to the rite:

- renewal of baptismal vows
- laying on of hands
- anointing with oil
- sign of peace

## **Candidates Preparing for Confirmation**

Candidates:

- freely choose to be confirmed and make their desire known
- be in a state of grace
- have adequate knowledge of the Catholic faith and have participated in required learning sessions
- be practicing their faith
- attend Mass and receive the sacraments of Eucharist and Reconciliation regularly
- be aware of the 'initiation' aspect of the sacrament of Confirmation and be committed to continuing the faithful practice and study of their religion
- be willing to participate in and complete the Confirmation program of study, prayer, retreat, community groups and service projects.

### **Christian Commitment to Service**

Jesus came "not to be served, but to serve." (Mt 20:28) The church is a servant community and all those accepting full membership in the church are also accepting responsibility to serve.

Candidates for the reception of Confirmation are asked to select service projects that are geared to their own special talents and abilities. Service should be performed freely and willingly. It could help the parish, neighborhood, or the local community. The service projects are meant to represent the candidate's intention of becoming a full member of this servant community, the church.

# Philosophy of the Sacrament of Confirmation

The opportunity to prepare for and to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation is being presented to you now. The choice to be confirmed is yours. As with all sacraments, it is necessary that your participation is voluntary.

The eleventh grade religion curriculum is comprehensive. It encompasses much more than the sacrament of Confirmation. As a candidate choosing to prepare for Confirmation, (one of the Sacraments of Initiation), it is crucial that you attend and participate in certain activities and accomplish certain tasks beyond what is studied in class. These requirements will, hopefully, lead you to a stronger commitment to your faith and to actively witnessing to your beliefs. The dates for events are enclosed in this folder. Mark your calendar now so that Confirmation activities receive first priority.

## Parental Responsibilities

As the primary religious educators of your children, you are a VITAL component for the preparation of Confirmation. It has been your faith and your witness that have laid the foundation for your child. While the candidate must want to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation, your opinion of this Sacrament will have a dramatic impact on your child.

As parents, you need to keep in mind the responsibility placed on your child and his/ her sponsor for this Sacrament. Encouragement and enthusiasm for this Sacrament are one of the greatest gifts you can give.

- Help your child discern if he/she is ready to make the commitment to begin preparation for Confirmation. Discuss with your child that Confirmation activities and meetings must be a priority for the next several months. Help him/her fill out the Commitment sheet.
- Assist your child in filling out the Registration sheet. Please fill these forms out completely.
- Mark your calendar NOW with all the Confirmation events. Assist your child in the timely completion of all requirements. Turn in the forms on time.
- Assist your child in the selection of a suitable sponsor. You may want to read over the sponsor's responsibilities and help your child form a list of possible sponsors. Enter into a dialogue with potential sponsors about the meaning of their role and the needs of your child.

- Support your child and sponsor through prayer.
- Serve as a proxy when the sponsor is unable to attend or complete the necessary requirements.
- Encourage and initiate meetings with your child and sponsor. Your coordination between the sponsor and your child is vital.
- Become involved in your child's Parish Community Group projects.
- Share with your child how you use your own gifts and talents in service to the church and community (time, talent, and treasure).
- Continually encourage your child to participate in the sacramental life of the church before as well as after the reception of this sacrament. Please be sure your child attends the Sunday celebration of the Mass and participates in Eucharist.
- See that your child receives the Sacrament of Reconciliation approximately one week prior to receiving this Sacrament.
- Be an attentive listener to the religious needs of your child. The Sacrament of Confirmation need not be received in the 11th grade year. Keep in constant communication with your child and his/her sponsor. Although sometimes we need to challenge their opinions and feelings, we also need to respect them.
- Encourage your child to continue to be of service to the parish and community. Guide and support them in using their gifts of time, talent and treasure within the parish community.

# Candidate Requirements for Confirmation

- A sincere desire to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation.
- A spirit of cooperation and prayerful attitude toward receiving and living out one's Confirmation.
- A sufficient knowledge of the basic beliefs of the Catholic Faith as demonstrated through:
  - ◇ Active participation in class
  - ◇ Successful completion of all assignments
  - ◇ Written/oral testing
  - ◇ Attendance at weekly Mass
  - ◇ Reception of the sacrament of Reconciliation prior to the Confirmation ceremony.
- Attendance at the following:
  - ◇ All Class periods
    - Class make up work will be at the discretion of the Confirmation Coordinator
  - ◇ Interview with parish priest
  - ◇ Fall Retreat Day or Divine Mercy Encounter (3 day retreat)
- Active participation in Community Service hours:
  - ◇ One service project designed by the small parish group
  - ◇ One service project designed for the Confirmation Class –
    - *Souper Bowl* Collection for the Christian Food Bank
- Completion of paperwork and forms:
  - ◇ Letter to the bishop (See Sample)
  - ◇ Registration form
  - ◇ Sponsor form with permission from sponsor's pastor
  - ◇ Completion of Confirmation Name Information Form

## SAMPLE LETTER TO BISHOP

*According to Diocesan Policy Guidelines, each candidate must request the Sacrament of Confirmation from the Bishop in a letter.*

*A sample appears below. Answer all questions. Please TYPE your letter and number each question.*

**THE ROUGH COPY OF THIS LETTER IS DUE TO YOUR CATECHIST ON THE LAST SUNDAY IN JANUARY.**

*He/she will then give you approval or make recommendations.*

*The final, formal letter should then be printed, signed and placed in a legal sized envelope marked "Bishop Persico" on the outside.*

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*Date of Letter*

Dear Bishop Persico,

I am writing to request the sacrament of Confirmation. This past year I have actively participated in preparation for this sacrament.

1. I feel that I am ready because.....
2. The "Works of Mercy" service(s) that I participated in was (were).....
3. Working on this (these) services(s) made me feel.....

This experience will encourage my further service(s) in the future by.....

4. The Saint's name I have chosen is.....
5. The characteristics of the person whose name I am taking that I most hope to model are...
6. The message of my Confirmation retreat was ...  
The most meaningful part of the retreat was...
7. I have chosen (full name) ... to be my sponsor. The reason I chose this person is...
8. God calls each of us to be disciples in a particular way of life. It could be marriage, single life, deacon, brother, priest, or religious sister. Have you prayed to God asking that he reveal your vocation to you?

*Answer in sentence form.*

9. Have you ever thought God might be calling you to follow him as a priest or religious? *Answer in sentence form.*

Thank you Bishop Persico.

Most sincerely,

*Sign your name in ink.*

# **Candidate Review Guide**

*The following topics should already be mastered by anyone entering a Confirmation preparation program. Parents and sponsors should assist candidates in reviewing this material.*

## **Gifts and Fruits of the Holy Spirit**

*The gifts of the Holy Spirit help Christians live their lives more fully committed to Christ. These gifts are:*

- **Wisdom**      • **Courage**      • **Reverence**
- **Understanding**      • **Knowledge**
- **Right Judgment**      • **Wonder & Awe**

*From the Gifts of the Holy Spirit come the Fruits, which are:*

- **Charity**      • **Kindness**      • **Goodness**
- **Modesty**      • **Peace**      • **Faithfulness**
- **Joy**      • **Generosity**      • **Self-Control**
- **Patience**      • **Gentleness**      • **Chastity**

## **The Commandments**

1. I am the Lord, your God; you shall not have strange gods before me.
2. You shall not take the name of the Lord, your God, in vain.
3. Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day.
4. Honor your father and your mother.
5. You shall not kill.
6. You shall not commit adultery.
7. You shall not steal.
8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
9. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.
10. You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.

## **The Sacraments**

- Baptism      • Confirmation      • Eucharist
- Matrimony      • Holy Orders
- Anointing of the Sick      • Reconciliation

## **Beatitudes**

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the land earth.

Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied.

Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

Blessed are the clean of heart, for they will see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

## **Corporal Works of Mercy**

- To feed the hungry
- To shelter the homeless
- To give drink to the thirsty
- To visit the sick
- To clothe the naked
- To bury the dead
- To visit the imprisoned



## Spiritual Works of Mercy

- To warn the sinner
- To bear wrongs patiently
- To instruct the ignorant
- To forgive all injuries
- To counsel the doubtful
- To pray for the living and dead
- To comfort the sorrowing

## The Laws of the Church

- ◇ To assist at Mass on all Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation
- ◇ To fast and abstain on the days appointed
- ◇ To confess our sins at least once a year
- ◇ To receive Eucharist during Easter

- ◇ To contribute to the support of the church
- ◇ To observe the laws of the Church concerning marriage
- ◇ To contribute to the missionary efforts of the church

## The Marks of the Church

- The Church is One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic

## Prayers the Candidate Should Know by Heart

- The Our Father
- The Glory be to the Father
- The Hail Mary
- An Act of Contrition
- The Apostles' Creed



# Sponsor Requirements for Confirmation

The role of the Confirmation Sponsor is often an overlooked and under-used source for a candidate's preparation and growth. Sponsorship is one very concrete means of sharing in the Church's teaching ministry. As a sponsor, you take on more than a casual interest in one person's spiritual life.

Your candidate is contemplating a life commitment that will influence everything he/ she does from now on. You can be a valuable instrument by listening to his/her thoughts, sharing your own experiences and understanding, and by introducing him/ her to whatever will enhance Catholic Christian growth.

For some, sponsorship is no more than the momentary "honor" a candidate bestows on someone he/she thinks highly of. Surely being a sponsor should be considered an honor, but its ministry and responsibility goes beyond the moment of Confirmation. It is our hope that our Confirmation candidates will be fortunate enough to find sponsors who care for them and are eager to participate in their preparation.

Below are the requirements for Sponsor for Confirmation at Disciples Life. Before accepting this responsibility, we urge you to weigh each requirement and to be honest with your candidate if you can or cannot live up to these needs.

- The sponsor must be sufficiently mature for the responsibility (emotionally and spiritually) and at least 16 years of age.
  - ◇ Participating in one small group meeting if requested by the facilitators
  - ◇ Confirmation Ceremony
- Complete the required Confirmation Sponsor Form and return to St. Mary's Area Catholic Faith Formation by the required date. (See included form in back of folder)
- The Sponsor must be an active member of the Catholic Church and initiated in the Sacraments of Baptism, Eucharist and Confirmation.
- Ideally, the sponsor should be the godparent at Baptism to more clearly express the relationship of the two sacraments. However, the sponsor must have experiences in common with the candidate, and be actively involved in the life of his/her parish. The parent may not be the sponsor.
- The sponsor must be someone who can commit personal time to the candidate over the next several months at the following events:
  - ◇ Individual meetings with the candidate to discuss work done in the Parish Community Group, to witness the sponsor's own faith and practice of the Catholic religion, and to encourage and develop a strong relationship with the candidate.
  - A sponsor needs to be a model of a Catholic-Christian who is active in service, faith and prayer. As your candidate prepares for the reception of this Sacrament, you too can explore the depth of your commitment and understanding of Confirmation.
  - Pray daily for your candidate and his/her family.
  - Challenge and encourage the candidate to meet the requirements asked of him/her. Please assume the responsibility for initiating get-togethers with your candidate.
  - A sponsor needs to be available as a faith companion and support to their candidate throughout your life:
    - ◇ Continue to touch base regularly with your candidate after Confirmation.
    - ◇ Celebrate the anniversary of Confirmation every year.
    - ◇ Encourage the candidate to continue service to others.
    - ◇ Continue to initiate attending liturgies and prayer services together.
    - ◇ Encourage your candidate to regularly receive the sacraments.

# Confirmation Name

The Confirmation name I have chosen is \_\_\_\_\_.

When did he/she live? \_\_\_\_\_

Where did he/she live? \_\_\_\_\_

What are the attributes of the saint (or living person) that you admire?

What is it about their lives that you would like to use as an example for your own life?

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*Please print the following names for your Confirmation records.*

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*(first)*

*(middle)*

*(Confirmation)*

*(last)*

*(Please return this completed form to your catechist no later than  
the last Sunday BEFORE Christmas.)*

You must also fill this out online at [www.disciples.life/confirmation](http://www.disciples.life/confirmation)

*Need help choosing a name? - check out the [www.disciples.life/confirmation](http://www.disciples.life/confirmation) page for some help.*

## **Sharing Stories of Faith**

As important as faith may be, it isn't a normal topic of dinner conversation in most families with adolescents. Most often young people (and their parents) need a bit of assistance and structure in order to move faith to the forefront in family discussions. This activity takes a story sharing approach to discussing faith. It helps young people and parents articulate why faith is important to them and how they find it in the ordinary experiences of their life.

### **Reflect**

Use any or all of the following open-ended sentences as a starting point for a family discussion on faith. Choose the questions together. Give people some quiet time to reflect on their responses before moving to discussion.

- Something that is really different about Catholicism today, compared to 20 or 30 years ago is....
- In my experience as a teenager, attending Mass on Sunday.....
- A person who has really influenced my faith life.... He or she influenced me by.....
- As a child, I was taught to pray..... Now I pray.....
- Something I love about being part of the Church.....
- A difficulty I have with the Church.....
- A time in my life when I really needed God was.....
- When I think about Jesus.....
- I believe faith is important because.....

### **Share and Invite family members to share their reflections with one another.**

Some may find it difficult to share aloud the first time or two, so patience is essential. Just talking about faith together reflects its importance in your life and offers family members a chance to rethink how they see or experience faith. Here are a few hints on dialoguing about faith with adolescents:

Allow and encourage young people to be honest with themselves and with you about where they are in their faith journey. For some young people faith is a certainty. For others it is a real struggle. Both faith instances can be very real. Both need to be respected.

For many young people faith is most tangible when seen through the perspective of personal relationships and/or values. Raising the issue of whom and what they believe in, and why, can be a fruitful starting point for discussions of faith.

**Be flexible in your conversations about faith.** Discussing issues and questions of immediate concern to young people, even when the issues do not appear to be explicitly religious, can be a prelude to an encounter with the deeper questions of personal faith.

**Pray** - Close your sharing of faith stories with a simple prayer or Scripture reading.

## **Confirmation Preparation Class and Event Schedule**

Each session will be from 3 ½ hours long and will begin at 4:30pm (1/2 hour prior to Community Mass) at Queen of the World. Dismissal will be at 8pm. At each class, we will participate in Community Mass.

Food will be available at each class. If you are in need of a special meal, you are more than welcome to bring a bag lunch to eat after mass.

### **CONFIRMATION SCHEDULE 2017-2018**

#### **Meeting Queen of the World for Sessions and Mass**

Updates online at [www.disciples.life/confirmation](http://www.disciples.life/confirmation) and Remind Code: @dlconfirm

<b>Date</b>	<b>Opening Session 4:30pm</b>	<b>Night 6:00-8:00pm</b>
September 17	No Opening Session	Follow Me
October 1	Identity	Who is God? Who Am I?
October 9	Retreat at Holy Cross Activity Center, Brandy Camp 8:30 am – 5	Priest, Prophet, King
October 15	Belief	The Creed
October 22	The Mass	Prayer The Church
November 12	Beauty	True Beauty: Womanhood True Strength: Manhood
November 19	Eucharist	Fest Night / ***
December 3	Advent Family Preparation	Disciplines of a Disciple
January 7	Confirmation I	Sacraments
January 28	Confirmation II	Vocations
February 11	Confirmation III	Living the Creed
February 25	Confirmation IV	Hot Topics Modern Media
March 4	Confirmation V	Pentecost
Confirmation TBD	Sacrament of Confirmation	

# **Forms and Event Checklist**

Registration Forms

October 9, 2017

Registration on-line at [www.disciples.life](http://www.disciples.life)

*Fall Confirmation Retreat*

*Monday, October 9, 2017*

*At Holy Cross Social Hall, Brandy Camp, PA 8:45 am – 5 pm*

*Family Fest in Erie, PA*

*Sunday, October 15, 2017*

*Details to follow.*

Sponsor Eligibility Form

October 22, 2017

Confirmation Name Form

January 7, 2017

Interview with Parish priest

*To Be Determined*

Letter to the Bishop

January 29, 2017

Works of Mercy

January 29, 2017

*5 hours of parish community service and full group project  
(Lap Blankets – completed at Family Fest or on your own).*

**Confirmation practice and Confirmation Mass will be announced  
when we are informed by the Bishop's office.**

It is important that you make Confirmation classes and events a priority. We understand that emergencies and circumstances do happen that you must miss a class. You must notify your catechist or the Coordinator in the event that you will miss a class. **Make up work will be assigned for all classes.** As we only have 12 classes, it is strongly suggested that if you miss more than two classes, that you may want to postpone the Sacrament to next year.

- Our website, [disciples.life](http://disciples.life), is filled with information about our Faith Formation Programs.
- On the Calendar tab, you will find links to the calendars of the Catholic churches in the area and calendars for each of the programs we offer.
- On the Handbooks and Forms page you will find links to the Faith Formation Handbook, Catechist Clearance Forms, Confirmation Forms etc. that can be printed from your home computer.
- We also have a trending page on which you will find recent news items.

## Confirmation Sponsor Information

(Due by First Session in October)

Confirmation Candidate Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship to Candidate: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Name of Church and year of Sponsor's Confirmation: \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsor's Current Church: \_\_\_\_\_ Name of Pastor at Current Church: \_\_\_\_\_

SPONSOR REQUIREMENTS: (please circle yes or no)

**Yes No** Must have received the three sacraments of initiation: Baptism, Eucharist, and Confirmation

**Yes No** Must be at least 16 years of age

**Yes No** Must know the fundamental truths of the Faith and be a practicing Catholic who goes to Mass on Sunday, and receives the sacraments regularly, and sees to the religious instruction of his/her family.

**Yes No** Must be a member of the Catholic Church, canonically free to carry out this office. This would indicate that Catholics publicly living in an invalid marriage (not according to the Church regulations), and those who are cohabiting (living together without marriage) are ineligible.

**Yes No** Must not be the father or mother of the one to be confirmed.

Being a sponsor is not just an honor given to a good friend or relative, it implies a real appreciation of the Faith, a practice of the same, and a sense of responsibility toward the teen being Confirmed.

I declare that I fulfill the requirements to be a sponsor.

Sponsor's signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Sponsor Eligibility Form

Dear Father,

A member of your parish has been asked by one of our teens to serve as their sponsor for this year's Confirmation preparation. I am writing to verify that this individual is an active participant in your congregation and is in good standing with the Catholic Church. Your signature below will give such verification and allow us to proceed with this adult as a sponsor in our program. Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Disciples Life

Name of Sponsor: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Sponsor's Home Parish: \_\_\_\_\_ Name of Pastor or Priest: \_\_\_\_\_

Priest's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_