

2020-2021  
Youth Formation

**CONFIRMATION  
ASSESSMENT**  
SUPPORTING IN-HOME  
SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION



THE DIOCESE OF  
HOUMA  THIBODAUX

Office of Parish Support

## PURPOSE AND VISION

Because of the unique circumstances surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic, our Youth Formation and sacramental preparation programs will look different than they have in past years. Because of the inability to gather together in large groups, many programs will involve either virtual components or totally in-home elements.

Because of these circumstances, and so that we might facilitate the most fruitful reception of sacramental grace at Confirmation, we want to ensure that our young people are sufficiently prepared to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation by their in-home preparation process.

Our recommendation is that this primarily be done in two ways:

- A log of materials covered, ensuring that all topics were reviewed and discussed.
- Two one-on-one assessment meetings with a priest, Coordinator of Youth Formation, or other suitable volunteer to affirm the readiness of the candidate to be confirmed. The first will happen in the middle of the program, and the second will happen at the end.

The intention of these assessment meetings is not to be a “test” the candidate has to pass, nor is it intended to prevent people from being confirmed. Through these conversations, our goal is to help the candidate further integrate what was learned and help make it more applicable to their lives. It is important to be mindful that it is essential to the growth of faith that confirmandi be given the freedom to have questions and a space to ask them. It is often through relationship and conversation that we have the most profound impacts with the Lord.

## ASSESSING READINESS

We cannot provide a comprehensive assessment that fits each parish because of the diversity of Confirmation preparation programs. Different parishes will be using different programs and curricula to prepare their young people. However, there are certain topics particular to the Sacrament of Confirmation that can be discussed across any program used.

We want to stress the importance of the conversational and relational nature of these assessments. This is not an oral exam, but rather a conversation with a mentor to see how the candidate sees God working in his or her life and why he or she desires to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation.

### **BEFORE THE MEETING**

In preparation for the assessment meeting, you may want to tell the candidates in advance of their first meeting to come ready to share:

- A little about themselves
- Three or four things they learned or found most interesting from the videos
- Three or four questions they have: these could be questions about the Sacrament or in general about God, the faith, prayer, etc. It's their chance to ask any question they have!

The way you prepare your teens for these meetings will greatly impact the fruitfulness of the meeting. Please contact the Office of Parish Support if you would like further coaching on how to prepare your teens for these assessment meetings.

### **ASSESSING THE HUMAN DIMENSION**

The natural flow would begin with the "human" elements to get to know the candidate. The following areas of conversation can be discussed to help form and develop an authentic relationship between the candidate and the mentor:

- Family life - brothers and sisters? Family dynamics (who lives at home, etc), What do your parents do? Etc.
- Social - School? Sports teams? Clubs? Hobbies? Etc.
- 'Check in' about how COVID has affected them. (Greatest blessing and greatest challenge)
- Anything else that naturally comes up in conversation... this is the time to really let them see your genuine interest in them and what's important to them.

## **ASSESSING THE SPIRITUAL AND SACRAMENTAL DIMENSION**

The conversation should eventually move to speaking about the candidate's spiritual life and understanding of the sacrament of Confirmation. The following topics are areas that can be discussed:

- Explore with the teen someone they know that is living with Jesus at the center of their life.
  - Have them share some examples of how this person shows this.
- The candidate's relationship with God in daily life
- Their relationship with the Holy Spirit and how He is active in their life
  - Related to this, their understanding of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit
- Their understanding of their mission as confirmed Catholics, such as:
  - How they can bear witness to the faith in their own lives?
  - How they can make disciples of their families or friends?
  - What will Confirmation empower them to do?
- Anything they learned or found particularly interesting from going through the program.
- Any particular questions that arose through the program

Here are some questions to help facilitate the this part of the conversation:

- What is the sacrament of Confirmation?
- What happens to someone who is confirmed?
- Why do you want to be confirmed?
- Did anything particularly stand out to you from the program?
- Did you disagree with anything? Or What questions that arose as you went through the program?
- What can you do differently to bear witness to the faith in your own life?
- What will you do to keep learning about the faith or deepening your relationship with God?
- Which of these the following statements can you relate to?
  - I need help believing God can be an active part of my life.
  - I need help learning how to pray.
  - I have lots of questions.. I need someone who I can talk to about those questions.