

St. Christopher Parish Confirmation Program



1861 Harbor Drive
Chester, Maryland 21619

Very Reverend John Gabage, V.F., Pastor
Deacon John Robinson
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CONTACT LIST

Contact	Title	E-mail
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Mrs. Katie Sukley	DRE & Confirmation Coordinator	410-643-8489/ ksukley@stchristopherski.org
Mrs. Alanna Giebler	8 th Grade/ Confirmation Wed. & Sun. 10AM Catechist	agiebler@stchristopherski.org
Mr. Ron Banghart & Mr. Gene Wesolowski	Confirmation Catechists (Sun. 10 AM)	RBanghart@stchristopherski.org
Mr. Kyle Waters & Mr. Forrest Freeland	8 th Grade/Confirmation Wednesday Catechists (Wed. 6:30-7:45PM)	KWaters@Stchristopherski.org FFreeland@Stchristopherski.org
Mr. Justin Poole	8 th Grade / Confirmation Sunday 8AM Catechists	JPoole@stchristopherski.org

OUR MISSION

For every Catholic, participation in parish life is both a right and a duty. The church is spiritually strong and vibrant to the extent that the baptized members of the parish community live their faith and share it with others. In Confirmation, the candidate is agreeing to enter into that parish community, so it is proper that he or she prepare for that serious obligation in the parish setting.

Participation in parish life includes a variety of actions including; contributions of time, talent, and treasure to parish activities; apostolic service to the needy in the parish and its outreaching communities; cooperation in the religious education of all family members; and above all a regular sharing in the sacramental life and worship of the parish community.

Confirmation brings to fullness that life in the Holy Spirit into which we were first initiated at baptism. Therefore, a comprehensive preparation for Confirmation necessitates proper planning of curriculum, serious catechist-formation, clergy participation, parental involvement, and the prayerful support of the total parish community.

Program components include liturgy, study, service, and retreat. Our parish program includes service projects, a spiritual retreat for enhanced religious formation; education in liturgy and celebration of the Eucharist; and a Confirmation interview to develop mutual relationships and understanding of the candidates' readiness and willingness to be Confirmed.

Confirmation is not a sacrament that is chosen for us as in Baptism. Reception of this sacrament is by your choice; it is a commitment you make to live in the fullness of the faith. This commitment requires careful preparation and the support of the family and parish community.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

For our Confirmation Sacramental Prep program at St. Christopher Parish, the following is taken from the student text titled, "*Come Holy Spirit*;" which summarizes what the Confirmandi in our program will be working towards this year.

"*Confirmed in the Spirit* will help you prepare to be strengthened by the Holy Spirit in the Sacrament of Confirmation. You will review many of the truths you have learned, and you will deepen your understanding of how Confirmation is linked to both Baptism and the Eucharist. More importantly, you will consider how the Holy Spirit can help you choose wisely and act responsibly as you learn how to stay attuned to the Spirit's voice and to obey it faithfully.

Two thousand years ago, Saint Paul wrote about the goals of all Christians and the challenges they face. He spoke about God's call and promise. 'Now the one who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a first installment.'" (2 Corinthians 5:5)

CONFIRMATION REQUIREMENTS

Each Candidate must clearly understand that the Sacrament of Confirmation perfects Baptismal grace; it is the sacrament which gives the Holy Spirit in order to root us more deeply in the divine filiation, incorporate us more firmly into Christ, strengthen our bond with the Church, associate us more closely with her mission, and help us bear witness to the Christian faith in words accompanied by deeds. (CCC 1316).



Confirmandi Candidates are expected to:

- Attend Mass each week & on Holy Days of Obligation. Faithful attendance at Mass weekly is a **MANDATORY requirement**. We encourage students to attend Mass with their Confirmation Sponsor when possible.
- Successfully complete class requirements as designated by catechists.
- Attendance is required at all classes.
- Come to class **on time!** Candidates coming in late are very disruptive to class. Candidates are expected to remain in class until it is over. They should not be leaving class early for "other commitments." Please plan accordingly.
- Must turn in Baptismal Certificate, if not baptized here at St. Christopher Parish.
- Must turn in **Sponsor Certification Form** on or before assigned due date.
- Letters to Fr. Gabage: Write a Confirmation letter demonstrating your desire to be Confirmed- the letter should explain how God is working in your daily life, should demonstrate an understanding of the Sacrament, and should include how Confirmation will effect your life (meaning what are your hopes and aspirations of being a full member of the Church). (This letter can be turned into the classroom catechist). Fr. Gabage DOES read these, please make sure they are typed, proofread, and signed.
- Confirmation Interview with Pastor or catechist - the Candidates will be asked questions that will demonstrate their readiness for Confirmation and their willingness and ability to spread and defend their faith as confirmed Catholics.
- Complete 3 Community Service Projects. See details on Community Service Tracking Form.
- Receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation: consult the bulletin for times.
- Attend the Confirmation Retreat **MANDATORY** (See calendar for date/time) **If a Candidate fails to go on the retreat he/she may not be confirmed until they complete a retreat.** You have advanced notice for the date of this retreat so please work all schedules around it (sports, hunting, etc. are not excuses for missing this retreat.) Students WILL NOT be permitted to come late or leave early from the Confirmation Retreat. If, for serious reasons beyond your control, you miss the retreat, contact the D.R.E. as soon as possible to make other arrangements.
- Attend the Confirmation Rehearsal (See calendar for date/time) – **MANDATORY for Confirmandi** – The Sponsor must be there if possible or at least one parent.

SPONSOR'S ROLE

A Sponsor plays an important role in preparing the Candidate for Confirmation; serving as a guide and roll model in the life long journey towards Christ and is required to participate in the Confirmation ceremony.



Sponsors should:

- Commit the time to help prepare the Confirmandi.
- Complete the **Sponsor Certification Form** with the Pastor of their parish **(See website/calendar for due dates)**
- Write a letter to the confirmandi encouraging them in their faith **(due prior to the Retreat)**.
- Attend Mass with confirmandi when possible.
- Attend Confirmation rehearsal and the ceremony **(Required see calendar for dates/times)**
- Make themselves available to guide the confirmed after Confirmation.
- Encourage the confirmed to practice their faith by frequenting the sacraments, serving as good examples to society, and living up to their commitment to spread and defend the faith.

SELECTING A SPONSOR

Just as the sponsor for baptism takes upon himself/herself the responsibility of helping the newly baptized person mature in the living a Christian life and offers his or her own life and practice of the faith as an example of faith, prayer and service within the Catholic Church, the Sponsor for Confirmation continues that work for the person who is to be confirmed.

What are the requirements of the Catholic Church for being a Sponsor?

- A sponsor must be someone other than the parent (step-parent/guardian) of the one to be confirmed.
- A sponsor must have received the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Eucharist.
- A sponsor must be at least 16 years of age.
- A sponsor must be leading a life in harmony with the faith and the role to be undertaken; therefore, if married, must be married in the Church and if single, must be striving to live a chaste life and therefore cannot be living with a person outside of marriage.
- A sponsor must be a practicing Catholic, registered in a parish, who regularly attends Mass on Sundays and Holy Days and receives the Holy Eucharist.

SELECTING A CONFIRMATION NAME

We are encouraging students to select a confirmation name. While confirmation names are not required, they are consistent with the Church's tradition of assigning new names to the faithful when they accept a new ministry (i.e. religious, St. Peter, St. Paul, etc.) and afford students the opportunity to reflect on the life of a saint they wish to emulate. There are many good books on the lives of the saints. For online information on saints, ask your catechists- there are many resources available.

CONFIRMATION LETTER TO FR. GABAGE

Write a one-page typed & double spaced Confirmation letter demonstrating your desire to be Confirmed. The letter should explain how God is working in your daily life, should demonstrate an understanding of the Sacrament, and should include how Confirmation will affect your life (meaning what are your hopes and aspirations of being a full member of the Church). This letter can be turned into the classroom catechist or D.R.E. Fr. Gabage does read these, please make sure they are proofread and signed.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Community service is a natural outflow of Catholic living. "Faith without works is dead" James 2:14-26. The act of serving others changes our hearts, broadens our perspective, and draws us closer to God and each other. Both St. Christopher Parish and our local community provide a wide variety of service opportunities.

Each candidate must complete three mandatory community service projects. We do not track hours. Keep track of your service projects on the tracking form given to you (if you lose your form you can get a new one from the parish website).

One service project must be outside the parish, examples include: helping at area nursing homes, participating in the March for Life, working at a food bank or food kitchen, or assisting at a homeless shelter. You could even run your own

coat drive or food drive for the homeless or needy. All outside the parish service projects must be approved ahead of time by your catechist or the Director of Religious Education.

One service project must be for the parish (Hospitality Sunday, Spaghetti Dinner, Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper, Christmas Pageant, or any Liturgical ministry, etc.) and the third can be for either.

Your catechists will also be consulting with the coordinator of whatever parish activity you choose; to be sure you were an active participant. Students are responsible for tracking their service projects, discussing scheduling with their parents, and turning in their tracking sheet.

Find something that interests you! We encourage all students to continue their service after they are confirmed.

CLASS TIME

Confirmation Sacramental Prep will be held during your child's weekly Religious Education classes. Students **MUST** attend the class they are originally registered for, and will not be allowed to switch between class times this year.

Please make sure you arrive on time for class and stay until class is dismissed. Please make sure to come to class prepared with any assignments from your teachers.

CONFIRMATION DRESS CODE

For Confirmandi and Sponsors: Please choose modesty when choosing your outfit. Students, keep in mind, your forehead must be uncovered for the anointing from the Bishop. You are free to wear any color you'd like for Confirmation.

Men –

- Suit
- Dress pants (NO Jeans)
- Sport Jacket, Dress shirt, and tie
- Dress socks and dress shoes (NO sneakers)

Women –

- Modest dress
- Dress skirt /dress pants and blouse
- Dress or skirt must be knee length or longer
- Chest, back and shoulders must be covered- **no exceptions**

HOME SCHOOLING POLICY

Parents who home school their children may be unsure how they wish to prepare their child for Confirmation. Pope Paul VI declared that through the Sacrament of Confirmation we are “bound more intimately to the Church” and “they are more strictly obliged to spread and defend the faith both by word and deed as true witnesses of Christ”. Because of the communal nature of Confirmation, parents must enroll their children in the church’s Confirmation Program unless you have permission to homeschool from both the Pastor and D.R.E..

ARE YOU READY?

Sometimes students feel that they are not ready to be confirmed or that they do not have the time to fully commit to the Confirmation Program.

This is an important decision to be made by the student and the parent with input from the Pastor/D.R.E./ Catechist. The Confirmation Program has been designed to help students “become ready” for the sacrament of Confirmation.

Students will be tested on their knowledge of the faith but that test alone cannot determine readiness. If there are concerns about a child’s readiness, a meeting should occur between the parents, the Pastor/D.R.E. before prayerfully making a decision.

Confirmation is the beginning of a life long journey of spiritual growth, learning, and discovery. It requires an extra time commitment and sacrifice of both students and families. If you feel that you are unable to fully commit to the preparation of Confirmation this year please prayerfully consider taking a sabbatical and coming back when you are prepared to make this commitment.



YOU ARE
CALLED
&
Chosen
BY GOD.
HOW WILL YOU
RESPOND?