OVERVIEW & PURPOSE

Confirmation Prep is a one-year process in preparing high school-aged youth for the Sacrament of Confirmation at St. Catherine of Siena Parish in Martinez, CA. The purpose of the ministry is to provide education and spiritual growth to youth who wish to complete their Sacraments of Initiation and become recognized as adults in full communion with the Roman Catholic Church.

STANDARDS

During Confirmation Prep, candidates for the Sacrament of Confirmation will be expected to attend the 11am Sunday Mass and class sessions following that Mass, as well as complete service hours, participate in an offsite Confirmation Retreat, complete a Knowledge of the Faith Assessment, and undergo an interview. Candidates will choose a sponsor to accompany them and be their guides as they journey towards Confirmation. They also have the option of choosing a Confirmation name. Candidates will be expected to participate in the sacramental and liturgical life of the parish and receive the Sacrament of Confession before being confirmed.

- **Class Sessions** Classes for Confirmation Prep will be held after the 11:00am Mass in the Parish Hall every Sunday from the end of September to June the following year, except when three-day weekends and holidays occur. Exact dates are available on the Youth Ministry Calendar updated several times a year and available on the parish website. The lesson begins with a lecture or presentation by Paul and/or Eugene. Several times throughout the program, guest speakers are invited to cover some topics. After the presentation, candidates and Team Leaders split up into their small groups for an activity or to answer discussion questions on the topic. Groups then come back together and present what they came up with or discussed to the large group. Class is dismissed around 2:00pm.

- **Attendance** Candidates will be expected to attend class and any who miss a session will be given a make-up assignment on the topic of the class missed. If a significant number of classes are missed, a meeting or phone call will be arranged to determine if the candidate should continue with Confirmation Prep.

- **Service Hours** Candidates will be expected to complete a minimum of 24 service hours. This gives the candidate the opportunity to symbolically give "one day" back to the Lord. Through these activities, candidates will begin their life of service and participate in the events of parish life. Many opportunities for service will be available throughout the year at different parish events and liturgies, which will be listed on the Youth Ministry Schedule. Up to 10 hours may be completed outside the parish with another approved organization.
Confirmation Retreat Candidates will be expected to attend a Confirmation Retreat that will take place over a weekend at an off-site retreat center. The Confirmation Retreat will be an opportunity for the candidates to deepen their relationship with God in preparation for receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation. Candidates unable to attend the Confirmation Retreat with St Catherine’s Youth Ministry must attend a Confirmation Retreat with a neighboring parish. Dates and venue of the retreat will be listed in the Youth Ministry Schedule.

Knowledge of the Faith Assessment Candidates must display an understanding of the principle elements of the Catholic faith by completing a Knowledge of the Faith Assessment to be turned in at the interview. The Assessment evaluates the candidates’ comprehension of the topics covered in classes, Youth Group, and the Confirmation Retreat. A copy of the Assessment is available on the parish website.

Interview Parents and candidates will be expected to attend an interview shortly before the Confirmation, usually during May. The readiness of the candidate will be discerned through an interview with a member of the Confirmation Prep team.

Sponsors The Diocese of Oakland requires that sponsors be active, practicing Catholics, at least 16 years of age, have already received the Sacrament of Confirmation, are not parents of the candidate, and, if married, are married in the Catholic Church. They should already have a trusting relationship of some sort with the candidate, someone in whom the candidate can confide. Sponsors are expected to maintain an ongoing relationship with the candidate in order to support the candidate’s lifelong spiritual growth. They should have good knowledge of the candidate’s readiness for reception of the Sacrament so as to testify on the candidate’s behalf. Sponsors encourage the candidate to grow in his or her understanding of the faith as the young person comes to a deeper appreciation of God in his or her life. Candidates are to choose only one sponsor. Candidates are to submit a Sponsor Information Form filled out by the sponsor, which is available on the parish website.

Confirmation Name The candidate may choose a Confirmation name. The name given at baptism is always an appropriate name for Confirmation in order to show the relationship between the Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation. However, a special name may be chosen if desired, in which case it should be that of a recognized saint. If the baptismal name is not that of a recognized saint, a new name (that of a recognized saint) should be chosen for the celebration of Confirmation.

Sacramental Life The candidates are expected to participate in the sacramental and liturgical life of the parish by actively participating in Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation, receiving the Sacrament of Penance frequently, and intending to live a sacramental life until death.

Confession Before Confirmation Candidates must be in the proper disposition to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. Just as with the Eucharist, “to receive Confirmation, one must be in a state of grace.” (CCC 1310) Candidates are to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation throughout their formation and at least once right before the Confirmation.
REFERENCE MATERIAL

Our program recognizes the importance of the relationship between sacred Scripture and sacred Tradition. From the Second Vatican Council’s *Dei Verbum* (The Word of God): “Hence there exists a close connection and communication between sacred Tradition and sacred Scripture. For both of them, flowing from the same divine wellspring, in a certain way merge into a unity and tend toward the same end. For sacred Scripture is the word of God inasmuch as it is consigned to writing under the inspiration of the divine Spirit. To the successors of the apostles, sacred Tradition hands on in its full purity God’s word, which was entrusted to the apostles by Christ the Lord and the Holy Spirit.” Candidates will each receive a copy of the Catholic Youth Bible and the YouCat. Both books are used extensively throughout the year and once distributed, candidates will be expected to bring them to every class session. Parents will also receive a copy of the complete Catechism of the Catholic Church for their use.

- **Catholic Youth Bible (NABRE, 3rd Edition)** This version, using the New American Bible Revised Edition translation, includes features that help explain and give context to the people, places, and events of the Bible.
- **YouCat** The YouCat, short for Youth Catechism of the Catholic Church, is an aid for youth to understand the Catechism of the Catholic Church and written with youth in mind using language and a format that is easier to understand.
- **Catechism of the Catholic Church** The Catechism draws on the Bible, the Mass, the Sacraments, Church tradition and teaching, and the lives of saints. It comes with a complete index, footnotes and cross-references for a fuller understanding of every subject.

CLASS TOPICS

The following is a list of the lesson topics covered in Confirmation Prep. We utilize lectures, presentations, videos, and guest speakers in teaching our curriculum.

- **Why Confirmation?** This class discusses the importance of why we do things, our motivation. We talk about the many different external reasons candidates have for joining Confirmation Prep. We acknowledge that any reason that brings them initially is valid, but that by the end of the process it should be their own personal, adult decision. We also discuss the reasons for parents wanting their children to be confirmed.

- **The Holy Bible** We discuss the Bible, how it is divided, that it is a compilation of many books instead of a single book written over a period of several hundred years, how to navigate the Bible and find passages, and the specials features of this Youth Bible.

- **The YouCat & the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC)** We discuss that our Faith is not only based on the Bible, but also includes our traditions and teachings in the Catechism of the Catholic Church. We use the YouCat to answer questions the candidates may have about the teachings of the Catholic Faith.

- **Tour of St. Catherine of Siena Church** We take the candidates on a tour of St. Catherine of Siena Church discussing the different parts and their significance.

- **The Holy Trinity** We discuss the mystery of the Holy Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We talk about the different symbols and imagery used to explain the Trinity, and that it is a mystery and beyond the capacity of the human intellect to fully comprehend.

- **The Creeds: What We Believe** We discuss the different Creeds, the Apostles’ Creed & the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed, and how they express what we believe as Catholics.
Jesus We discuss the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. We teach that Jesus has 2 natures: fully human and fully divine, and what that means.

The Communion of Saints & Choosing a Confirmation Saint Name We discuss who the saints are and why they’re important, the process of becoming a recognized saint in the Catholic Church, and the significance of choosing a Confirmation Saint name.

Prayer & the Rosary We discuss what prayer is, the different types of prayer, and how to pray. We teach about the Rosary and how to pray the Rosary.

Sacraments & Sacramentals We discuss the 7 Sacraments, what they are, and how they differ from sacramentals.

The Sacraments of Initiation/The Sacrament of Baptism We begin teaching the Sacraments with the Sacraments of Initiation: Baptism, First Holy Communion, and Confirmation with an emphasis on the Sacrament of Baptism.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation We discuss the Sacraments of Reconciliation and reconciliation of relationships.

Sin We discuss what sin is and the different types of sin.

The Sacrament of Holy Matrimony We invite a married couple to talk about their own journey to marriage, the process of getting married, and to give a glimpse into married life.

The Sacrament of Holy Orders & Religious Life We talk about the vocations of religious life and Holy Orders. We discuss the different types of ordination, and Father Anthony shares his experience of becoming a priest.

The Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick We cover what happens during the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick through our own personal experiences of healing.

Theology of the Body Fr Anthony discusses Theology of the Body, the topic of a series of 194 addresses given by Pope St. John Paul II at the Wednesday papal audiences in Rome from September 1979 to November 1984, is the Pope’s integrated vision of the human person. The human body has a specific meaning, making visible an invisible reality, and is capable of revealing answers regarding fundamental questions about us and our lives.

The Mass & the Holy Eucharist We talk about the Mass being the source and summit of the Catholic Church. We teach that Jesus is truly present in the Eucharist. We discuss what happens during the different parts of the Mass and the importance of regular Mass attendance.

Mission Ite, missa est! We teach that we are all called to be missionaries by virtue of our Baptism.

Mary, the Mother of God We talk about who Mary is, why she is special, and why she is important to us as Catholics.

The Church, one, holy, Catholic, and apostolic We talk about our Church and the four marks of our Church, briefly touching on Church history and the rich tradition of the Catholic Church.

Catholic Social Teaching We discuss the 7 Principles of Catholic Social Teaching and how they apply to different social issues of today.

The 7 Gifts of the Holy Spirit We discuss and explain the 7 Gifts of the Holy Spirit and the candidates receiving one or more of them in the Sacrament of Confirmation.

The Sacrament of Confirmation & the Confirmation Rite We explain the different parts of the Confirmation Rite, the symbols used, and explain to the candidates their role in the Confirmation.