



CONFIRMATION GUIDELINES 2020-2021

IMPORTANT DATES AND DEADLINES

Week of September 27th

Confirmation Classes Begin

October 9-11

Cancelled

January 15th

Confirmation Sponsors & Saint Chosen

January 30th: 530pm Mass

Rite of Enrollment (Sponsors or Proxys Present)

Spring 2021

Spring Confirmation Retreat (Online if not able to be in-person)

Apr. 10th

Baptismal Records Due

Letters to Archbishop Due

May 2021 (TBD)

Confirmation Rehearsal (Sponsors or Proxys Present)

May 2021 (TBD)

Rite of Confirmation (Sponsors of Proxys Present)

RETREAT EXPECTATIONS (IF POSSIBLE)

The Confirmation Retreats are the most critically important aspect of the formation process in our program. They provide candidates with the necessary time and environment away from their normal routines and schedules to really focus on strengthening their relationship with the Lord. On retreat, they will share meals together, play games, hear talks, participate in small groups, and have time to just enjoy building bonds of friendship with their fellow Confirmandi, as well as participating in Liturgy of the Hours, Confession, Adoration, and Mass.

Our retreats take place over the course of a weekend at St. Therese Camp in Wasilla. We bus out to the camp on Friday evening from St. Andrews and return to the church Sunday morning. **There are two retreats that are required for students seeking Confirmation. Year 1 students are highly recommended to join the Fall Retreat; and Year 2 students are required to attend. Students should be at both retreats, but if for some reason they are unable to attend one, they should contact us about making alternate arrangements.** There is a \$50 fee for both retreats—this covers the cost of the facilities, lodging, and food.

Students should bring the following items on retreat:

- Sleeping bag/Pillow
- Appropriate clothing for all weather
- Toiletries/Towel

Students should **NOT** bring the following items:

- Explosives
- Drugs/Alcohol/Contraband items
- Cell Phones/Electronics

As students are not permitted to be using their cell phones during the course of retreat, there is no real need for them to even bring them. Parents will be give the adult leaders' phone numbers in case there is an emergency and they need to contact their child. If students are caught using their cell phones, they will have to forfeit them to an adult leader—believe us, the retreat experience is much better void of cell phone distractions.



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SPONSOR GUIDELINES

A Confirmation Sponsor is someone who the candidates invite to walk with them during their Confirmation journey to be a guide and support as they prepare to receive the final Sacrament of Initiation. The sponsor should be someone with whom the candidate feels comfortable sharing their faith struggles and questions and can meet or converse regularly with the candidate about what is happening in their faith life as they prepare to be Confirmed. We recommend that the sponsor and candidate meet *at least* once a month during the preparation year to check in and discuss the candidates ongoing formation and their Catholic education. A sponsor **must** be a confirmed Catholic and **must not** be one of the candidate's parents (older brothers and sisters and other family members are acceptable sponsors however).

The duties on the sponsor are to be a support and faculty of encouragement for the student. The Archdiocesan guidelines specifically note that sponsors are, "those confirmed adults who spend quality time with the candidates, exploring the meaning of faith, commitment, and faith issues." As far as practical requirements of the sponsor, there are three events in their candidate's formation that we ask they be present for:

- *The Rite of Enrollment*—January 30th, 530pm Mass
- *Confirmation Rehearsal*—TBD
- *The Rite of Confirmation*—TBD

If, for whatever reason, the sponsor is unable to make one or all of these events, a proxy that stands in their place is acceptable (parents are more than welcome to participate as *proxies* but not as sponsors). However, the sponsor is still responsible for regularly checking in with their student and being a part of their sacramental formation.

CONFIRMATION SAINT GUIDELINES

When you receive the gift of the Sacrament of Confirmation, you take on a new name to mark the spiritual change that happens in your soul. When Jesus called Simon the fisherman to be an Apostle, his name was changed to Peter. Likewise, when the Roman soldier Saul was converted to Christianity, Christ gave him the name Paul. A name is given to an object or person to define it and set it apart, so when you receive the gift of the Holy Spirit in your Confirmation and enter fully into your Catholic faith, you will choose a new name to reflect the new reality of your existence as a Soldier of Christ.

The tradition dictates that Confirmandi choose a Patron Saint to act as their intercessor and guide through their faith walk. The candidate will take on this Saint's name as their own to give them a life long reminder of the choice they made to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. As students spend their formation year growing in their faith and deciding whether or not they want to receive Confirmation, they should spend time meditating on which Saint they want to take on as their patron—or rather, which Saint is calling *them* to Christ.

A Confirmation Saint can be chosen for many reasons. Many athletes take on St. Sebastian as their patron, as he is the Patron Saint of Athletes. Many who are involved in the military or come from military families choose St. Michael the Archangel, heaven's fiercest warrior. Sometimes a Saint is chosen because candidate's identify very strongly with the story of that person's life or a particular charism they possessed. Sometimes, the student doesn't even know why they feel a particular draw toward a Saint until years after their Confirmation takes place. The critical thing to remember is that we take on these Patrons to intercede for us in prayer, to act as models of Christian behavior, and most importantly, to bring us closer to relationship with Christ.



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LETTER TO THE ARCHBISHOP

One of the diocesan requirements for Confirmation is that candidates write a letter of intent to the Archbishop towards the end of the year. By this time, students will have had adequate time to reflect on their faith and whether or not they desire to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation, and will therefore be able to express that desire to the one who will administer the Sacrament to them.

The letter that students compose can talk about a variety of subjects. The Archbishop wants to use the opportunity to get to know them as best as he can—frequently students choose to begin by introducing themselves and talking a bit about the hobbies and activities that they enjoy. Another thing the Archbishop enjoys hearing about in the letters is why the candidates chose a particular Saint to be their Confirmation Patron. Students are also encouraged to tell the Archbishop a little bit about their spiritual journey through Confirmation preparation and talk about their experiences on retreat, in class, and in Eucharistic Adoration. But the main point of the letter is for the student to express *their* desire to be receive the Sacrament and talk about why they want to be Confirmed. The parameters of the Letter to the Archbishop are as follows. The letter

must be:

- At least one page in length.
- Handwritten with neat and clear penmanship.
- Addressed formally to the Archbishop. (Currently Archbishop Bellisario)
- Written on a nice piece of paper (not torn, crumpled, etc.)
- Folded neatly if put into an envelope.
- Include a picture of the student that is recognizable and recent.

Letters must be turned in no later than April 10.

REQUIREMENTS

Participation:

Youth are expected to be at class each week. Attendance is essential to learning about the faith as well as growing in community with other teens. Excessive absences may result in delaying Confirmation. Teens have two unexcused absences each semester.

Service and/or Prayer

Confirmation candidates will be required to serve the community or spend designated time in prayer (due to Covid) for a minimum of 10 hours (for prayer, this should be done in one-hour increments). Service to the community is an important part of our mission as Christians and it is essential that we serve as Christ demonstrated for us, "I have come not to be served, but to serve." –Matthew 20:28. If there are safe opportunities to serve, I suggest teens take advantage of this opportunity. If you prefer a non-contact opportunity, I am requiring youth spend a minimum of one hour a week in prayer in lieu of service hours. Youth may also split the service and prayer time. Both of these need to be tracked (tracking sheet separate).

Meeting with Pastor or Deacon:

Prior to confirmation, Candidates for Confirmation this coming May will be required to meet one on one with clergy in the month prior to Confirmation. This is an important meeting as they state their intention to be confirmed to Clergy. They may be asked some questions regarding their intent and understanding of the Sacrament. We will create a schedule of available slots for which teens can sign up to meet with Fr. Arthur or Archbishop Emeritus Schwietz, which will take place two-six weeks prior to the Confirmation mass.