

Confirmation Prep Process

Preliminary Paperwork

to be completed by April 30

Register: Go to greatgrouping.org/confirmation to register and pay the materials fee of \$40 that covers the costs associated with Confirmation Prep (\$30 to the parish and \$9.99 for the Strengths Explorer assessment). Financial assistance is available. On this form, we ask parents to give a brief reflection on your hopes for your child in receiving this sacrament.

To complete this form, you will need all the information listed on the Candidate's Baptism Certificate. We need this information to accurately record the reception on Confirmation.

- If you were not baptized at Saints John & Paul Parish, we will need an original Baptismal Certificate dated within the last six months. We need to see both sides of the document.

You will also complete the [StrengthsExplorer](#) assessment (\$9.99 of the \$40 fee, this portion submitted directly to Strengths Explorer) and [submit your results](#) by **April 30**.

Assemble Your Team: Certainly, your parents are part of your team, but there are two other important members:

- **Confirmation Saint Name:** You are choosing a heavenly patron to pray for you during your preparation. Refer to the Confirmation Name Reflection (page 4) to help you discern an appropriate Confirmation Saint Name. You can submit your name choice when you register for Confirmation Prep or by emailing Clare at cgiuffre@greatgrouping.org.
- **Confirmation Sponsor:** Your Sponsor is someone who will walk with you during your preparation and serves as an example of a living relationship with God as a Catholic Christian. Refer to pages 5-6 to help you select a Sponsor. You will need your Sponsor to complete the [Sponsor Registration Form](#) so that we can help them with any paperwork needed from them. We will also send them our Confirmation Sponsor Guide. Your Sponsor will need to ask his/her Pastor to verify his/her eligibility to serve as a Sponsor:
 - Parishioners at in the Great Grouping will verify their eligibility on the Sponsor Registration Form.
 - Parishioners from other parishes will be given instructions to contact their parish and ask for a Sponsor Certificate.

Sponsor registration and paperwork should be completed no later than April 30.

Diocesan Confirmation Curriculum

The Diocesan Confirmation Curriculum can be covered in one of three ways, and you can register for one when you complete the registration form. The options include:

6-Week Course: Confirmation Candidates and Sponsor or a Parent attend a 6-week course involving prayerful reading of Scripture, large group instruction, and small group discussions.

- Tuesdays, April 27 - June 1, 6:30-7:30 PM in Saints John & Paul Church
- Virtual Classes are available and consist of pre-recorded videos delivered via email.

Catholic School and Homeschool Students: If you attended Catholic School in 8th grade or if you homeschooled using a Catholic religion curriculum for 8th grade, then you have already completed the Confirmation Curriculum. You are welcome to attend the 6-Week Course or to complete the Virtual Classes, but you are not required to do so.

Letter to the Pastor

to be completed by June 15

All Candidates for Confirmation write a letter to the Pastor expressing their desire to be confirmed. For the sake of consistency, your letter should be formatted as a letter from you, the Candidate, to the Pastor and should include the following:

- Personal introduction including your name, what school you go to, and why you want to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation.
- What is your Confirmation Saint Name, and why did you choose it? Why is this saint/name meaningful to you?
- The name of your sponsor and why you chose this person. What good Catholic qualities does this person possess that makes them a good sponsor?
- What service project you participated in and what you learned from it. (If you did not complete a service experience due to the pandemic, then just skip this prompt.)
- What receiving the sacrament of Confirmation means to you.
- What type of Christian man or woman do you envision being in the future?

This letter should be turned into the Faith Formation Department (email or hard copy), and we will give all letters to the Pastor together. Letters must be submitted by June 15 but may be submitted before then. If you email your letter, please email it to jgawaldo@greatgrouping.org and include "Letter to the Pastor" in the subject line. ***Please do not send it directly to the Pastor; it will get lost.***

About Retreats/Evenings of Reflection and LifeTeen Events

Under normal circumstances, we ask Candidates to attend an Evening of Reflection (our version of a Confirmation Retreat) and four LifeTeen Events so they can experience our high school programming firsthand. Due to the pandemic, we are encouraging Candidates to participate in LifeTeen according to your comfort level. Please reach out to Nick and Scott for event details.

About Service Projects

Under normal circumstances, we ask Candidates to complete a service project that will help them explore their God-given talents. Due to the pandemic, we leave the parameter of a service project up to your comfort level. There is no hours requirement, and the parish does not need to approve your project. If it is good enough for you, it is good enough for us. Parish-based service projects can be found at greatgrouping.org/outreach.

Confirmation Mass Day

The Bishop has granted pastors the faculty to celebrate Confirmation to allow for multiple smaller celebrations. As a result, our Confirmation Masses will be:

- Saturday, June 19, at 11:00 AM at Saints John & Paul Parish
- Sunday, June 20, at 2:00 PM at Saints John & Paul Parish
- Saturday, June 26, at 11:00 AM at Saints John & Paul Parish
- Sunday, June 27, at 1:00 PM at Good Samaritan Parish

Assuming current pandemic protocols, each family will be able to have a maximum of 10 people attend the Mass (8 in addition to the Candidate and Sponsor). You can register for a Confirmation Mass when you complete the Confirmation Candidate Registration Form. If your Sponsor is unavailable on the date you choose, a Proxy Sponsor can stand in during the Mass. The Proxy must also register as a Sponsor (see bottom of page 1).

In light of the pandemic, we will not have an in-person practice like we normally would. Instead, we will send out a video overview of the ceremony about a week before Confirmation Mass along with a seating chart. On the day of the actual Mass, we will spend a few minutes reviewing the logistics and responses before Mass begins.

Candidates should go to **Confession** before receiving the sacrament of Confirmation. To find our current Confession schedule, visit GreatGrouping.org and click the yellow Mass Times button on the bottom righthand corner. In the popup window, click "Confession" on the menu bar.

Confirmation Name Reflection

“Christians treat the name of a person reverently, because the name is profoundly connected with that person’s identity and dignity. From time immemorial, Christians have selected names for their children from the list of the saints; they do so in the belief that the patron saint is an example for them and will intercede with God for them in a special way.” (YOUCAT #361)

1. Why did your parents choose the name they gave you? Were you named after a beloved relative or a favorite saint? If so, who? What about this person inspired them to name you?
2. What does your name mean? (Ex: “George” means “farmer” [www.BehindTheName.com])
3. What is the name of someone whom you see as a good role model of faith?
4. What does that person’s name mean?
5. What are a few other names that you like (because they are strong names, pretty names, etc.)?
6. What does each of these names mean?
7. Who is your favorite Saint, or who is the Saint celebrated on your birthday? What does this name mean?
8. What is a personality trait(s) of a holy person that you would like to develop? (Ex: patience, piety, humility, etc)
9. What name(s) mean these traits? (Ex: Irene is a female name that means “peace”)

Now that you have several meaningful names to work with, you need to choose one that will be your Confirmation Name. Once you have chosen a name, find a Saint that is associated with that name. If there is no Saint with your name, try to find a Saint with a derivation of your name (i.e. Giovanni, Joan, Janis, Johanna, Sean, Ivan, Juan, and Jean are all derivations of John). Regardless of your gender, you can choose a Saint of either gender.

Role, Eligibility, and Verification of the Sponsor According to the Diocese of Pittsburgh

Role: A sponsor must be a person who knows the candidate and can help him/her on his/her spiritual journey and can share his/her own faith. This selection should be indicated at the beginning of the candidate's immediate preparation. Ideally, it should be someone who has been already involved in the spiritual formation of the candidate, such as a godparent or member of the local parish.

Eligibility: A sponsor:

- Must be a practicing Catholic in good standing with the Church.
- Must be at least sixteen years old (exceptions can be made with Pastor's approval).
- Must belong to the Catholic Church and have been initiated in the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist.
- Must not be prohibited by law from exercising the role of sponsor.
- May be the same sponsor the individual had at Baptism.
- May be a new sponsor selected specifically for Confirmation.
- May be either male or female for any candidate.
- Note: Parents are no longer eligible as sponsors. (1983 – Code of Canon Law)

All Sponsors need to register at greatgrouping.org/sponsor. We will work directly with each Sponsor to get the proper verification in a timely fashion. Sponsors who belong to the Great Grouping will attest to their eligibility online using the following statements:

1. I declare that I am a baptized and confirmed Catholic, and that I am a registered member of Sts. John and Paul Parish.
2. I believe all that the Catholic Church believes and teaches, and I truly make a serious effort to live a good moral life worthy of imitation.
3. As a practicing Catholic, I participate at Mass on Sundays and Holydays, and I receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist regularly.
4. If married, I have been validly married in accordance with Canon Law.
5. I realize that I assume a great responsibility before God and the Church in becoming a sponsor. I intend to encourage my candidate in the practice of the Catholic faith by word and example.

Sponsors from other parishes will need to obtain a **Sponsor Form** (aka Certificate of Eligibility) from his or her parish, stating that he or she is eligible to serve as a sponsor for Confirmation (using the same or similar questions as are listed above).

Choosing a Sponsor

Your Sponsor is someone who will walk with you during your Confirmation Preparation and who serves as an example of a living relationship with God as a Catholic Christian in good standing. In addition to finding someone who is eligible to serve as a Sponsor, consider the following questions:

1. Who are my godparents? Am I comfortable talking to either of them about spiritual things?
2. Am I comfortable talking with any of my siblings, cousins, aunts, or uncles about spiritual things? If so, who?
3. When I think about good Catholic role models in my life, who comes to mind? Are any of these people someone I could ask to be my Confirmation Sponsor?
4. Of all these names, who am I most comfortable asking to serve as my Confirmation Sponsor?

Need to reach us?

Jason Gawaldo, Director of Faith Formation
jgawaldo@greatgrouping.org, 724-935-2104 X228

Nick Sciarappa, Director of Youth Ministry at Saints John & Paul Parish
nsciarappa@greatgrouping.org, 724-935-2104 X238

Scott Lieb, Director of Youth Ministry at the Beaver Valley Parishes
slieb@greatgrouping.org