

St. Michael the Archangel Pastorate Confirmation Program: 2021

“Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea.” (Mt 18:6)

These are strong words by our Savior, but also a command to all of us – parents, teachers, priests – to make sure that we are fulfilling our duties to those “little ones”, our children, entrusted to our care in our responsibility to nurture them in the gift of Faith that Christ has handed down to us through the Apostles and the Church.

About Our Confirmation Program

As the Church has always taught, the Sacrament of Confirmation and all Religious Education in the Church is about equipping oneself to live out their lives in the world, with the tools and resources necessary to be able to protect and defend one’s Faith as well as to grow it, even when – or especially when – that Faith is under attack, whether it be by temptation, persecution, doubt or fear.

Student Expectations for Classrooms or Youth Events

It is the goal of the catechists to provide a caring and positive experience for learning and growing in faith. A code of conduct and expectations is, therefore, necessary to keep order and to help provide a pleasant environment that includes mutual respect and fosters Christian love.

More specific expectations include the following:

Dress Code: Students must wear appropriate clothing that modestly covers the shoulders and chest areas, midriff, and back. Short shorts, mini skirts, tight clothing or clothing with inappropriate words or pictures are not permitted.

Cell Phones, Electronics, Games: Cell phones must be turned off during class time and during retreats. Personal electronics including music or games are to be left at home. If these items are brought to class, teens will be asked to lay them on a special table in the classroom. Students will be responsible for picking them up after class. Should the student not comply with these rules, parents will be called and asked to pick up their child.

Food and drinks: Students will only be able to bring food and drinks to specially designated areas.

Confirmation Preparation Program

The Sacrament of Confirmation has always been understood as preparing each person, in body and soul, to live out and defend their faith so as to be “deemed worthy to attain to the coming age” (Lk 20:35); this is why we take such diligence with the preparation that each person receives before the reception of the Sacrament here in the St. Michael the Archangel Pastorate.

What is Confirmation?

Confirmation is one of the seven sacraments of the Church. It is not a “rite of passage” or a “graduation”, but a commission and obligation to grow in the Catholic faith and to be a public witness to the truth and teachings of the Holy Catholic Church. Please refer to paragraphs 1293-1321 in the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC).

The sacrament of Confirmation completes baptismal grace. It unites us more firmly with Christ and is given only once — for it imprints an indelible spiritual mark on the soul. The sacrament increases the gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit in us so that we can be soldiers and true/authentic witnesses of Christ.

Universal Requirements for Confirmation

Sunday Mass attendance is expected and required for all Catholics, but especially those preparing for full initiation (i.e. Confirmation). "To receive Confirmation one must be in a state of grace. One should receive the Sacrament of Penance in order to be cleansed for the gift of the Holy Spirit." (CCC 1310) Penance services will be available throughout the year, as well as other confession times, to enable your teen to develop a habit of reconciliation but also to return to and strive to remain in that state of grace necessary for the reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation. All students seeking the Sacrament of Confirmation within the pastorate shall have been validly baptized in the Latin Rite of the Catholic Church. If a child was baptized in an Eastern Rite of the Catholic Church or in an Orthodox Church, the pastor should be notified immediately.

Diocesan Requirements for Confirmation

The candidate for the sacrament of Confirmation is expected to have participated in yearly ongoing faith formation since his / her reception of First Eucharist to assure a continuous, systematic, age appropriate catechesis.

When this is not the case, the candidate should complete one (school) year of formal catechesis, either in a parish faith formation program, Catholic school, or pre-approved Catholic home school, immediately prior to the time of the reception of the sacrament.

Parish Program Requirements and Attendance Policy?

- Families must be registered parishioners within the St. Michael the Archangel Pastorate at least six months prior to the ***Ignite The Fire Confirmation Retreat***.
- We understand there may be scheduling conflicts for a few families. Therefore, students may be confirmed anytime between 9 - 12 grades, but **it is the pastorate expectation** that students are confirmed upon completion of their 8th grade year of school and upon the entrance into the 9th grade.
- Six months prior to Confirmation, parents must request a Baptismal Certificate with annotations from the parish where your child was baptized. If your child was baptized within the pastorate, please provide us with the ***Month, Year and parish*** in which your child was baptized.
- Candidates will attend the entire Ignite the Fire 4-day Confirmation Retreat at St. Theodore Guerin High School, Noblesville, IN on **June 10 - 13, 2021**.
 - Lodging will be included: TBD (seeking to stay at Guerin to limit costs and transportation)
 - (No additional service hours, classes or additional retreats are required.)
- **Sunday August 8th** Confirmation Students will be recognized at their parish Sunday Mass
- A Penance service for Parents, Sponsors and Confirmation Students will take place at **3:00pm CT on August 8th** at St. Augustine Catholic Church
- Candidates will be confirmed on, **August 11th @ 6:30pm CT** at St. Augustine Catholic Church by Bishop Doherty.
 - Candidates and Sponsors should arrive to the church by **6:00pm CT** at the latest.
- **5-7pmCT May 15th, 2021** Knights of Columbus Pork Chop Dinner Fundraiser for Confirmation Retreat.
 - Fundraiser to offset costs for retreat.

Optional Requirement

"Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Mt 18:20)

Lastly, in an attempt to get to know you and your family more, Fr. Bennett would like to come visit your home, perhaps for dinner, and spend some time to get to know your family and your sponsor before confirmation. Fr. Bennett began doing this in prior years and was told by many families that this simple visit was a "great thing... that needed to remain a part of the confirmation formation program in the future." Fr. Bennett will be contacting each of you to schedule the time that works best for you to meet.

Information We Will Need

Baptismal Record

If your child was not baptized within the St. Michael the Archangel Pastorate and you have not already done so, you must provide a copy of his or her baptismal certificate to the Parish office. This is typically as simple as calling the parish of baptism and requesting a baptismal certificate be sent to you or directly to the Pastorate office (318 N. McKinley Ave, Rensselaer, IN 47978, Attn Fr. Bennett). We MUST have this documentation no later than **May 30th 2021.**

Confirmation Sponsor

Your child must choose a sponsor—someone who will share their faith with them and help guide them. The sponsor *cannot* be a parent. The sponsor must be a confirmed and an actively practicing Catholic, who is in good standing with the Church and their home parish. They must be at least 16 years of age but preferably 18 or older. It is preferred that they be the child's Godparent, a close relative, or family friend.

Please give the sponsor the necessary application form and ask them to complete it and return it to our Parish office no later than **June 1st, 2021.**

Sponsor's should also be **actively** involved in the Confirmation process and not just "show-up" on the day of Confirmation. The sponsor will be asked to complete a "Sponsor Packet" project with your child to help in their preparation for the Sacrament which is due **July 17th, 2021.**

Confirmation Saint Name

Your child should be encouraged to choose a patron saint ASAP. Like a sponsor, a saint can be a friend to your child and will pray for him or her. Encourage your teen to do some research and ask in prayer to find a saint who he or she feels a connection with in some way. There are many books on the lives of saints. Websites giving information about saints include: www.catholic.org/saints/, www.ewtn.com/saintsHoly/, and <http://saints.sqpn.com/>

All candidates must choose a Confirmation Saint and complete the "**Confirmation Saint Essay**" by **Tuesday June 1st, 2021** so that they can begin praying to and asking the help of their future patron as they make their remote, proximate and immediate preparations to receive the fullness of the Holy Spirit in the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Why I want to be Confirmed Essay

Immediately prior to confirmation each student will be asked to write a short essay to answer the question "why do you want to receive the sacrament of confirmation?" This Essay will be due no later than **Monday, August 2nd.** This essay is meant to help the student in their final preparations for the valid reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation. They will be asked to explain:

- the basic theology of the sacrament of confirmation and the affects you expect it will have on your life (specifically, what will be different?)
- how you think you will use the SEVEN Gifts of the Holy Spirit in your life?
- in your own words, why you want to receive this sacrament and these gifts.

Due Dates

Due dates are to be observed. Failure to recognize the due dates for each individual item on the schedule may result in the postponement of the Sacrament until the next calendar year when everything can be completed by the assigned due dates.

After Confirmation

Leading those who have been initiated into the faith, into its deeper meaning and significance for their lives.

“A candidate for Confirmation who has attained the age of reason must profess the faith, be in the state of grace, have the intention of receiving the sacrament, and be prepared to assume the role of disciple and witness to Christ, both within the ecclesial community and in temporal affairs.” (CCC 1319)

The Effects of the Sacrament of Confirmation

The sacrament of confirmation confers special graces of the Holy Spirit upon the person being confirmed, just as such graces were granted to the Apostles on Pentecost. Like baptism, therefore, it can be performed only once, and confirmation increases and deepens all of the graces granted at baptism.

The catechism of the Catholic Church lists five effects of confirmation:

1. It roots us more deeply in the divine filiation [as children of God] which makes us cry, "Abba! Father!"
2. It unites us more firmly to Christ.
3. It increases the gifts of the Holy Spirit in us.
4. It renders our bond with the church more perfect.
5. It gives us a special strength of the Holy Spirit to spread and defend the faith by word and action as true witnesses of Christ, to confess the name of Christ boldly, and never to be ashamed of the cross.

It is the goal of this confirmation program to not only prepare our children for the reception of the Sacrament, but also to help the newly confirmed discern their God-given gifts and provide opportunities to learn about and live out their faith through discipleship in the parish, in the community, and in the world.

This will be accomplished at the pastorate level through:

1. Appropriate and ongoing catechesis (mystagogy) must be provided to the newly confirmed at the parish level as well as an invitation to parish and community ministry appropriate to the abilities of the newly confirmed.
 - a. This insures an opportunity for continued faith formation and Christian discipleship.
2. In addition to these mystagogy sessions, young people are encouraged to continue participation in faith formation / youth group following Confirmation.
3. A life lived within Communion in the Church and the Gospels
 - a. Preparation for Holy Matrimony
 - i. Strength to be a good parent and spouse
 - b. Preparation for Holy Order
 - i. Configuration to God through the outpouring of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit
 - c. Preparation for Missionary Activity
 - i. Courageously witnessing to the faith in the world yearning for a savior.
 - d. Preparation for Eternal Beatitude forever in heaven
 - i. Disposed to the graces of salvation necessary to be made a saint

Ignite The Fire Confirmation Retreat Details

- Thursday, June 10 – Sunday, June 13th
- Location will be at Guerin Catholic High School
- Arrival will be at 1PM on Thursday
- The retreat will end at 8:00PM on Sunday
- Students will participate from approximately 9am-9pm daily
- Teens will participate in a service project with their small groups where they will serve elderly members of the parish that need extra help.
- Teens will participate in an outing to Birdies Putt-Putt golf
- All Meals are included from dinner on Thursday through Dinner on Sunday.
- 15 Talks in 4 Days
 - Numerous Priests, religious and laypeople to offer various experiences of the faith
- Penance Service
- Eucharistic Adoration
- Mass on Friday, Saturday, Sunday
- Devotional Prayer
- Sacred Music and Praise Music “concert”
- Registration is going to be happening soon (next week)
 - Awaiting some final logistical details that have been hampered by the ongoing pandemic.
- Costs
 - Final Hard Costs are not yet available due to above logistics still being finalized
 - May 15th Fundraiser at Knights of Columbus has been scheduled
 - Other Fundraisers may be scheduled
 - Anticipating no more than \$100/student for 4-day retreat.
 - Financial assistance is available for those unable

Covid-19 Precautions

- All Covid-19 restrictions in place by the health department during the time of the retreat will be followed.
- We will be renting a large tent for use outside that will serve as the “auditorium”
- All small groups will take place outside
 - If weather does not cooperate small groups will take place in classrooms at GCHS and social distanced. No more than 9 people will occupy a classroom.
- Busses transporting students to service projects and Birdies Putt-Putt will not be filled to their full capacity in order for students to spread out.
- Bus rides to each location will not top 15 minutes.

2021 Confirmation Essay: “Why I want to be Confirmed?”
DUE: August, 2nd 2021

Purpose:

In at least one but no more than two page (1.5 spaced, Times New Roman, 12 point font, no extra breaks between paragraphs, 1” margins all), write a short essay explaining **why you want to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation**. This essay is meant to help the student in their final preparations for the valid reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Content:

1. Explain the basic theology of the sacrament of confirmation and the effects you expect it will have on your life (specifically, what will be different?).
(CCC 1285-1381)
2. Explain how you think you will use the SEVEN Gifts of the Holy Spirit in your life?
 - a. You must address each gift individually, even if only with one sentence.
(see attached document on each of the seven gifts)
3. Explain, in your own words, **why** you want to receive this sacrament and these gifts.

Style:

A completed essay must conform to standard principles for writing and contain a clearly discernible introduction, body and conclusion. Proper grammar and punctuation must also be used in the composition of your essay.

Please include at the top of the page the following info:

Your Name; Date

Example: *Michael Patrick O’Shannon; April 10, 2021*

Please place all of this information on the first line of your essay, so as not to take up valuable page space. If you need assistance with writing your essay, you can visit

<http://homeworktips.about.com/od/essaywriting/a/fiveparagraph.htm> or ask Fr. Bennett or another catechist for assistance.

Notes:

Plagiarism is a serious sin of deceit and theft and will not be accepted. If any essays are found to plagiarize someone else's work, the student and their parents will be scheduled for a meeting with Fr. Bennett to determine an appropriate way to fulfill this requirement so that the student can proceed with sacramental preparation.

There are several sources you can consult online, but Wikipedia is not an acceptable source if you are unable to verify its content. Other more reliable sources are:

1. <http://www.scborromeo.org/ccc.htm> (Catechism of the Catholic Church, Online)
2. <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/04215b.htm> (Catholic Encyclopedia article)

Due:

August 2nd @ 5:00pm CT

Evaluation:

Desire to receive the sacrament is very important for its valid reception; this essay will be evaluated on your ability to show your desire to receive the sacrament of Confirmation in the future. Therefore, well-constructed thoughts and a clear explanation is essential for conveying your desire to the reader, and thus, this will be the main focus for evaluation.

Questions:

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask:

Fr. Bennett – fr.jbennett@dol-in.org

2021 Confirmation Saint Essay Project
Due: June 1st, 2021

Purpose:

In at least one but no more than two page (1.5 spaced, Times New Roman, 12 point font, no extra breaks between paragraphs, 1" margins all), write a short essay naming the canonized saint you have chosen for your confirmation saint and explain why you have chosen that particular saint among the thousands of others.

Content:

You will need to accomplish three things in order to successfully complete this project; as such each of these three points should be addressed in the body of your essay.

1. Name the saint you have chosen and list the facts about that saint that most interest or relate to you that influence your decision in choosing him or her.
 - a. *DO NOT COPY&PASTE a biography off of a website.*
2. Explain why you have selected this particular saint.
3. Explain how choosing this saint is going to affect your life, and how his or her intercession is going to help you. Also explain what you are going to do to facilitate this saint's intercession in your life (increased prayer/devotion, medals, etc...)

Style:

A completed essay must conform to standard principles for writing and contain a clearly discernable introduction, body and conclusion. Proper grammar and punctuation must also be used in the composition of your essay.

Please include at the top of the page the following info:

Your Name; Date; Saint Name

Example: *Michael Patrick O'Shannon; November 1, 2021; Saint Patrick*

Please place all of this information on the first line of your essay, so as not to take up valuable page space.

If you need assistance with writing your essay, you can visit

<http://homeworktips.about.com/od/essaywriting/a/fiveparagraph.htm> or ask Fr. Bennett or another catechist for assistance.

Notes:

Plagiarism is a serious sin of deceit and theft and will not be accepted. If any essays are found to plagiarize someone else's work, the student and their parents will be scheduled for a meeting with Fr.

Bennett to determine an appropriate way to fulfill this requirement so that the student can proceed with sacramental preparation.

There are several sources you can consult for biographical information on the saints, both in print and available online. However, your selection must be a **saint** or a **blessed**; you may not select a “venerable” or someone who has been designated as a “servant of God”. (NB Wikipedia is not an acceptable source). Other more reliable sources are:

1. <http://www.catholic.org/saints/>
2. <http://www.catholic-saints.info/>
3. <http://www.americancatholic.org/Features/Saints/byname.aspx>
4. <http://saints.sqpn.com/>
5. <http://www.catholichistory.net/Spotlights/SpotlightSaints.htm>
6. Butler's Lives of the Saints (book)
7. My Life with the Saints (book)

Due:

June 1st, 2021, 5:00pm CT.

Evaluation:

Each essay will be evaluated on its adherence to the requirements. The student does not have to fear that the saint they choose will be rejected – as long as they are legitimately canonized/recognized saints/blessed in the Catholic Church, no saint or blessed rejected or part of the evaluation. The evaluation will examine the student’s ability and effort to research the saint and clearly express how they hope that this particular saint is going to help them to live out the Christian life after having received the Sacrament of Confirmation.

All successfully completed essays will be turned over to the bishop for his evaluation as part of his review of all the candidates for the reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation, and should be taken very seriously.

Questions:

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask: Fr. Bennett: fr.jbennett@dol-in.org.

Baptism/Confirmation Sponsor Certificate

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO:

St. Michael the Archangel Pastorate
318 N. McKinley Ave
Rensselaer, IN 47978

THIS FORM IS TO BE SIGNED BY THE SPONSOR AND HIS/HER PASTOR/PRIEST.

THE ROLE OF THE SPONSOR

Candidates for Confirmation, as for Baptism, fittingly seek the spiritual help of a sponsor. To emphasize the unity of the two sacraments, it is appropriate that this be one of the baptismal godparents. Although one of the Confirmation candidate's godparents is the ideal, this is not the only choice. (CCC 1311)

Godparents and sponsors "must be firm believers, able and ready to help on the road of Christian life. Their task is a truly ecclesial function... bearing some responsibility for the development and safeguarding of the grace given at Baptism." (CCC 1255) Like parents, they share in the responsibility for the salvation of the young soul entrusted to them.

Because our life on earth is "a pilgrimage to the Father which takes place primarily in the heart" (Pope John Paul II, The Trinity's Embrace), the Godparent/sponsor should be a Catholic who loves and lives his or her faith and continues to grow in the knowledge of the Catholic faith. This is evident in a person who spends time in daily prayer and frequent encounters with Jesus in the Sacraments of Penance and Holy Eucharist. Consequently, the sponsor's heart reflects the tender and affectionate love of the hearts of Jesus and Mary and the gifts of the Holy Spirit, providing a living example of joyful Christian life.

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT I _____,
Godparent/Sponsor's name

A REGISTERED MEMBER OF _____ IN _____
Parish name City, State

ACCEPT THE INVITATION TO BE THE GODPARENT/SPONSOR OF:

Candidate's name

In accepting this responsibility, I solemnly swear that the statements are true, so help me God!

- I am at least 16 years of age (unless dispensed by the pastor).
- I have received the Sacraments of Baptism, Eucharist and Confirmation in the Catholic Church.
- I am not invalidly married outside the Catholic Church.
- I attend Mass weekly on Sundays and on Holy Days of Obligation and receive the Sacraments of the Holy Eucharist and Penance regularly.
- I am not a parent of the candidate for baptism and/or confirmation.

I understand and accept the responsibility that I undertake as a Sponsor and I promise to be a support and example that reflects the spirit and teaching of the Roman Catholic Church and I am prepared to assist the Candidate by my support, encouragement and prayer.

Sponsor's Signature

PRIEST'S CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this Godparent/sponsor candidate is a registered member of this parish in good standing and to the best of my knowledge, is capable of assuming the duties and responsibilities of the role of Godparent/Sponsor.

Parish Seal (must be present)

Priest Signature _____
Parish _____
Date _____