



St. Gerard Catholic Church

Parent Confirmation Information Packet

2019-2020



St. Gerard Catholic Church Confirmation Program

Welcome!

All of us on staff at St. Gerard want to welcome you, your Confirmation candidate, and your entire family to the Confirmation preparation process! This is an exciting time for your Confirmation candidate within their faith journey! Your Confirmation candidate is now embarking on the journey to own their faith and take the responsibilities of their own faith life.

With that being said we are here to help with that process as much as possible! We want to make sure that we are providing all the necessary tools, experiences, and communication to make this as meaningful of a process as possible. Please never hesitate to contact myself either by phone call or email to help in any way I can.

Within this packet of information, you will find various important pieces of information that you will want to keep track of throughout the entire year. Please make sure you take the time to cover this information with your Confirmation candidate and store it in a place where you both can locate it. The following information will be covered:

- Confirmation Requirements Outlined –Page 2
- Service Component – page 3
- How to Log Service Hours – Page 4
- Youth Ministry Events –Page 5
- Confirmation Mentor Groups Explained –Page 5
- How To Choose A Sponsor –Page 6
- The Confirmation Retreat –Page 7
- Confirmation Letter of Intent –Page 7
- Sponsor/Candidate Workbook –Page 8
- Confirmation Interviews –Page 9
- Confirmation Rehearsal –Page 10
- Celebration of Confirmation Information –Page 11
- Due Dates for Forms –Page 12

May the blessings of our loving Heavenly Father be poured out upon your candidate and your entire family during this process. I am so excited to embark on this journey towards Confirmation with each Candidate.

Jeff Corder
Coordinator of Youth Ministry and Confirmation
517-323-2379/ youth@stgerard.org



St. Gerard Catholic Church Confirmation Program

CONFIRMATION PREPARATION REQUIREMENTS

The Confirmation preparation process at St. Gerard contains multiple parts in order to help the candidate experience as many aspects of faith as possible. The tasks that need to be completed during the Confirmation preparation are as follows:

1. Attend Mass weekly.
2. Attend 2 Mentor Group Meetings (during 8th Grade Year)
3. 16 Hours of Service Work & Complete Service Journals (8 per year)
 - a. 8 hours must be Parish Service
 - b. 8 hours must be Community Service.
 - c. Record through *Track It Forward* – explained on page 4
4. Attend at least 4 Youth Ministry Events (2 per year)
5. Attend a Confirmation Retreat (during 8th Grade Year)
6. Write a Confirmation Letter of Intent (during 8th Grade Year)
7. Attend a Confirmation Interview (Fall of Freshman Year)
8. Attend Confirmation Rehearsal (Fall of Freshman Year)

These requirements are more clearly laid out in this Confirmation Packet. In the Confirmation Brochure you will find a menu style outline that will help you and your child map out his/her Confirmation preparation.

St. Gerard Catholic Church Confirmation Program

SERVICE HOURS

WHY COMMUNITY SERVICE WORK IS NECESSARY:

- Since service and justice are so important to who we are as Catholic Christians, performing service work is essential to our lives. Therefore, we ask that each candidate takes his/her service projects seriously and as a priority. It is important to keep in mind that service to others isn't something that we do "to check it off our list" rather it is something we do because we know that the presence of Jesus is in all persons and in all of God's creation.

HOW MUCH TIME IS NEEDED TO BE COMPLETED AND BY WHEN:

- Candidates are asked to do 16 hours of service between their 7th and 8th Grade years.
 - Within those 16 hours of service, candidates need to do 8 hours for the community and 8 hours for the parish community.
 - St. Gerard offers many opportunities to fulfill Parish Hours such as, Service Saturdays, VBS, Coffee and Donuts, Shadow Stations, Community Dinners and many more.
 - For Community hours, most of the Service Saturdays that St. Gerard hosts can also count towards Community hours. These are held once a month from Sept-April
- **Service Hours must be logged for all 16 hours by May 10, 2020.**

St. Gerard Catholic Church Confirmation Program

HOW TO LOG SERVICE HOURS

TRACK IT FORWARD

- This Year we are continuing to use Track It Forward to log service hours
 - This program you can use online or through their App.
 - Here is the website - www.trackitforward.com/site/st-gerard-church
 - Or you can go to the St. Gerard website and to the Confirmation page to click on the link for easier access. - www.stgerard.org/confirmation-prep
 - **Almost all of you have already registered during your child's 7th grade year. However if you have not registered yet, please register for Track It Forward by October 8, 2019**
- When logging hours you will answer questions regarding the nature of the service.
- Logging Service Hours requires one of the following verification methods
 - Picture - Require volunteers to upload a photo of themselves from the event into our mobile app or take a photo directly through the app
 - Signature - Require volunteers to get signatures with time stamps from the onsite coordinator.
 - Email – You can send an email to the Event Coordinator for verification
 - GPS - Require volunteers to record their GPS coordinates onsite on the day of the event.



St. Gerard Catholic Church Confirmation Program

YOUTH MINISTRY EVENTS

WHAT COUNTS AND WHEN NEED TO BE COMPLETED:

- Candidates are asked to attend 2 Youth Ministry Events a year for a total of 4 **by May 10, 2020 when their Event sheets are due.**
- Any Middle School Ministry Event counts. Starting March 1st, 2020, 8th Grade students can attend all High School Youth Ministry Events as well.
- Any events done in 7th Grade are grandfathered in. If you did parish events last year then they count as “Youth Ministry Events”. Going forward we ask that you do Youth Ministry Events. If you had 4 parish events from 7th Grade, you have fulfilled the requirement.

CONFIRMATION MENTOR GROUPS

WHAT ARE CONFIRMATION MENTOR GROUPS:

- Mentor Groups will be made up of 7-8 candidates with an adult facilitator in each group. Every group will meet once in the Fall and once in the Winter of their 8th grade year.
- The purpose is for a couple opportunities for the candidates to discuss their faith outside of the classroom with their peers – both in the School and Religious Ed.
- Groups will meet at different times to accommodate different scheduling.
- **Sign up your child for a group on our website**
at www.stgerard.org/confirmation-prep by October 8, 2019

St. Gerard Catholic Church Confirmation Program

HOW TO CHOOSE A CONFIRMATION SPONSOR

What Is A Sponsor:

- A sponsor is a person who encourages, assists, and walks the faith journey with a Confirmation candidate to help them embrace, fall in love, and actively practice the Catholic faith before and after Confirmation.
- The sponsor is also there to present the Candidate to the Bishop at the celebration of Confirmation.

Who Can Be A Sponsor:

- Being a sponsor is a huge role and not just an honor or fancy name. The sponsor must be an active, practicing Catholic who can be a role model for the Confirmation Candidate. The ideal situation would be to choose one of your Godparents from your Baptism, providing that they meet all the guidelines. However, if your Godparent is someone you can't choose to be your sponsor, then you want to ask someone who you see as an example of a committed, practicing Catholic.
- The requirements of the Catholic Church says that a sponsor:
 - May be either a man or woman. (Sponsor doesn't have to be the same gender as candidate.)
 - Is a person who regularly comes to Sunday Mass & celebrates the sacraments.
 - Must be a fully initiated Roman Catholic (Baptized, has made First Communion, and Confirmed)
 - Must be at least 16 years old.
 - May not be the parent of the candidate.

Sponsors should be chosen by January 1, 2020



St. Gerard Catholic Church Confirmation Program

CONFIRMATION RETREAT

Confirmation Retreat Dates:

- There are two retreat options for candidates to participate on.
 - **Sat. April 25th-Sun April 26th OR Wed. June 17th-Thurs. June 18th**
 - **Due Date to sign up for retreat: Friday March 1, 2020**
- The Confirmation retreat this year will take place at Bethany House, Dewitt, MI. Retreat participants will meet at Bethany House at 9 a.m. and be picked up at 5 p.m. at Bethany House for both retreats.

What To Bring:

- Comfortable, casual clothes for 2 days (jeans, t-shirts, sweatshirts, tennis shoes, etc.)
- Set of gym clothes for outdoor activities
- Clothes to sleep in (pajamas also need to be modest)
- Towel & Toiletries- shower needs, toothbrush, toothpaste, deodorant, etc.
- Camera (optional)
- Medications need to be labeled and given to an adult leader at retreat.

Not To Bring:

- Spending money- All meals will be provided. Participants will not need to buy anything.
- Valuable items- do not bring anything you don't want to get damaged or misplaced. You are responsible for your own belongings

Important Reminders:

- **PARTICIPATION:** Participants will not be allowed to leave during the retreat. Once participants are dropped off, they will be expected to stay for the entire duration of the retreat.
- **CLOTHING:** We will be spending some time outside. Please bring appropriate shoes, jackets, pants, sweatshirts in case it is chilly. Anyone who is wearing immodest clothing will be asked to change. Dress comfortably, but please cover up!
- **CELL PHONES:** Participants will be asked to leave cell phones in their room. These items are to be kept in their room, and will be taken away if they are out of their room during the retreat. A participant may use his/her cell home only if permission is given by an adult leader. This is to ensure participants are not distracted during important times of the retreat. **Parents, please do NOT call your child on his/her cell phone. If you need to contact your child contact: Jeff Corder- 810-820-5166**

Any Questions, Please Contact
Jeff Corder, Coordinator of Youth Ministry and Confirmation
517-323-2379 or youth@stgerard.org

St. Gerard Catholic Church Confirmation Program

CONFIRMATION LETTER OF INTENT

WHAT IS THE CONFIRMATION LETTER OF INTENT:

- Each candidate is asked to compose a letter at the end of the Confirmation preparation journey to state their intent of wanting to be confirmed in the Catholic Church. Within the letter Confirmation candidates should write what it is they have done to prepare for the sacrament, why they want to receive the sacrament of Confirmation, and what it is they are planning to do once they are confirmed to continue to grow in their faith.

THE BASIC DETAILS:

- Candidates will be given the chance to write a number of Parish Staff including: Fr. John, Fr. Prabhu, Deacon Jim, Jeff Corder, Theresa Bosman, Mrs. Piecuch or Mrs. Guysky. The purpose of the letter is to express their desire to be confirmed in the Catholic Church.
- The Confirmation Letter of Intent will be due by no later than **May 10, 2020**. **It may be requested earlier depending on the School's deadline or Religious Ed deadline.**
- A detailed outline to help candidates write their letter will be given to candidates later down the line as they continue to journey towards the sacrament.

SPONSOR-CANDIDATE WORKBOOK

WHAT IS A CONFIRMATION SPONSOR-CANDIDATE WORKBOOK:

- In order to help the Confirmation candidate and sponsor become comfortable talking about their faith with each other the workbook helps to guide conversation.
- The workbook also helps to dig deeper into topics that are discussed in formation classes allowing candidates the opportunity to more fully understand their Catholic faith.

WHEN IS THE SPONSOR-CANDIDATE WORKBOOK DUE:

- **The booklet is not required so there is no due date.** However, it is required to have some sort of communication and faith sharing between the candidate and sponsor. This workbook is one of many ways this can be done.



St. Gerard Catholic Church Confirmation Program

CONFIRMATION INTERVIEW

What is The Confirmation Interview:

- We like to take a few minutes in the weeks leading up to the Sacrament of Confirmation to sit down with each one of the candidates in order to talk about the preparation process they have gone through. This gives us the ability to know where candidates are at and whether they are truly ready to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation.
- In order to help ease the nerves of candidates we do mail the interview questions to allow each candidate the chance to review and to fully prepare. Reviewing the questions with sponsors is another great way to help strengthen the candidate-sponsor relationship.

The Basic Details:

- Interviews will take place at the end of Summer and in the fall when school resumes. Dates will be sent out once we receive the date of the Celebration of Confirmation.
- Parents and Candidates will receive a list of dates and times available to schedule an interview. The candidate will be expected to call the Parish Office and schedule their interview by the designated deadline.
- Interviews will be performed by: Fr. John, Fr. Prabhu, Deacon Jim, Theresa Bosman, our Youth Ministry Assistant and Jeff Corder, Coordinator of Youth Ministry.
- Interviews will be offered at both Lansing Catholic High School for those enrolled at LCHS for their Freshman year, and at the Parish Offices for those that aren't.

St. Gerard Catholic Church Confirmation Program

CONFIRMATION REHEARSAL

Process of Scheduling the Confirmation Rehearsal Date:

- Once the Diocese assigns us our Confirmation date, we then schedule the date for the Confirmation Rehearsal.
- Our goal is to have the Confirmation rehearsal the Sunday one week prior to Confirmation.
- Sponsors are asked to attend the Confirmation rehearsal.

Who Needs To Attend The Rehearsal:

- The Confirmation rehearsal will be held for candidates and their sponsors. It is very important for both the candidates and their sponsor to attend the rehearsal. A parent may stand in for the sponsor, **only** if the sponsor is **absolutely unable** to attend the rehearsal. The parent or sponsor must notify Jeff Corder before the rehearsal if this is the case.

What Will Happen At The Rehearsal:

- The entire afternoon will include: a reflection for candidates and sponsors, Rite of Confirmation rehearsal, and a candidate-sponsor activity. We will be walking through the Rite of Confirmation in order to familiarize the candidates and sponsors with the roles they will play on the day of Confirmation.

St. Gerard Catholic Church Confirmation Program

CELEBRATION OF THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION

Process of Scheduling A Date:

- Requested dates are submitted by May 1st to the Diocese.
- The Diocese will give us our official date around the middle of the summer. Sometimes sooner, but usually towards the middle of July.
- We will try and schedule Confirmation for the end of September or the beginning of October. Our hope is that it will be on a Sunday afternoon, but we can't guarantee that.

Celebration of Sacrament Date Notification:

- As soon as we receive information about our assigned date of Confirmation, a letter will be sent out in the mail notifying parents, candidates, and sponsor of this date.
- This letter will let the candidates and sponsors know what time they need to meet in the Parish Hall to sign in, review duties, and meet with Bishop Boyea.
 - The letter will also contain information regarding the rehearsal and the interviews.
- Please keep an eye open for this letter to come.

DRESS CODE FOR THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION

Ladies:

- Dress Shirt with Skirt or Dress Pants or Modest Dress
 - Skirt/ dress must be to your knees or longer
 - Tops/dresses must have sleeves- no strapless or spaghetti straps please! If you have a sleeveless shirt or dress, you will need to wear something over it to cover your shoulders.
 - If you are not sure if an outfit is appropriate, play it safe and don't wear it.
- Dress Shoes (please no flip-flops)

Gentlemen:

- Dress pants
- Dress shirt with collar (tie preferred)
- Dress shoes
 - We ask that you don't wear jeans, low riding pants, tennis shoes, or t-shirts please!

****We want to see you wearing your Sunday Best please!****



FORMS

Forms and Due Dates Include:

Sign Up for Confirmation Mentor Group – October 8, 2019

Sign Up for Track It Forward (if not already done) – October 8, 2019

Confirmation Candidate & Sponsor Form – January 1, 2020

Sponsor Certificate of Eligibility (If Sponsor is a Non St. Gerard Parishioner)
– January 1, 2020

Letter of Intent – Determined by School or Religious Ed

Retreat Forms – March 1, 2020

Service Journals (on Track It Forward) – May 10, 2020

Youth Ministry Event Forms – May 10, 2020

Need additional forms? Go to <http://www.stgerard.org/confirmation-prep>

Please review all the provided forms and return them by their designated due date! Feel free to turn them in prior to their due date!

Thanks so much!