



CONFIRMATION PREPARATION PROGRAM

1. This is Important.

Pope Francis reminds all Catholics especially, those who desire to take their faith seriously, that: "It is not enough to say we are Christians. We must live the faith, not only with our words, but with our actions." Winston S. Churchill reminds us that "the price of greatness is responsibility." I therefore desire to make it clear that your preparation for Confirmation is one of the most important things that you will be doing this next year and half. Missing an event or not fulfilling a requirement without making **PRIOR** arrangements will result in your no longer being able to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. If you have a serious reason for not being able to accomplish a requirement or attend an event, you will be asked to perform an alternative task.

If you are involved in a sport or other activity in which your coach or director requires a note explaining or excusing your absence, we have provided a personal letter from Father Pastorius that can be downloaded from our parish website if you are involved in a sport or other activity in which your coach or director requires you to have a note in order to have an excused absence. Pope Francis reminds us: "The world tells us to seek success, power and money; God tells us to seek humility, service and love." It is therefore important for us, who desire to take our faith seriously to show that we are choosing the things of God instead of the things of the world."

2. Small Groups and Spiritual Mentors

In order to help guide you in your preparation for Confirmation, you will each be assigned to a small group, and each small group will have a spiritual mentor. Your spiritual mentor will guide your small group discussions, help keep you on track and will be responsible for collecting all your work. Your small group will help you feel more connected to the Church through connecting with others on your faith journey.

3. Rite of Acceptance

One of the amazing things about our God is that He never forces Himself upon anyone. He invited Abraham to leave his comfort zone and begin a journey of faith that would lead him to the Promised Land. God now invites you to leave your comfort zone so that you can one day enjoy eternal life. God invited Moses to lead the Israelites from slavery to freedom with the promise to be with him at every step of the journey. God now invites you to leave your old life of slavery to sin and selfishness so that you may enjoy the true freedom of being a selfless child of God. God invited Joshua to trust Him when the city of Jericho appeared too big of an obstacle to overcome. God now asks you to learn to trust Him when life's obstacles seem too big for you to handle. God invited the Blessed Virgin Mary to be the mother of God and to play an important part in bringing Jesus into the world, and so now He asks you to willingly step up and bring His Son and His love to the world.

As you begin this period of preparation for Confirmation, we invite you and your parent to come to Church on Thursday September 26, 2018 at 7PM. As a part of the evening, you and your parent will be given a chance to develop your own Discipleship Plan. The evening will conclude with a special prayer service and blessing.

4. Impact Nights

Throughout the next year and half, you will be required to attend four Catechetical Impact Nights to help you develop a better understanding of the Church's teaching, develop a deeper personal relationship with God, and to come to a better understanding of what God desires you to do with your life. Each Impact Night will start at 7PM with an introduction and lesson followed by a time of group discussion and a closing prayer. The impact Nights for the upcoming year are the following:

November 8th, 2018 – Impact Night – Creed

February 21st, 2019 – Impact Night – Liturgy/Mass

April 11th, 2019 – Impact Night – Life in Christ/Morality

September 12, 2019 – Impact Night – Prayer

5. Experiencing Church

The Catholic faith was never meant to be lived alone. One of the greatest gifts that God gives each one of us is an opportunity to be a part of His Church. The Catholic Church is sometimes a very misunderstood institution to be a part of. St. Augustine described the Church as a “Hospital for sinners and not a hotel for saints.” Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen once stated: “There are not one hundred people in the United States who hate The Catholic Church, but there are millions who hate what they wrongly perceive the Catholic Church to be.” It is therefore important for you to experience many aspect of the Church. We are asking you to attend three of the following events and to fill out a small reflection on it.

- | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> A Night of the Parish Mission | <input type="checkbox"/> Sausage Supper | <input type="checkbox"/> Fish Fry | <input type="checkbox"/> Mass in Spanish |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Latin Mass | <input type="checkbox"/> Chrism Mass | <input type="checkbox"/> Eastern Rite Mass | <input type="checkbox"/> Luke 18 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Christmas Novena @ Seminary | <input type="checkbox"/> Precious Infants Mass | <input type="checkbox"/> Pro-Life Convention | <input type="checkbox"/> Timothy 4 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Christmas Concert | <input type="checkbox"/> Kenrick-Glennon Days | | |

6. Confirmation Saint

What an incredible gift we have in the communion of saints. The saints are like us! They are our ancestors, our teachers, our friends, our siblings. They are real, truly human. They are sinners, they are repentant children of God. The saints lived on this earth and experienced suffering, joy, pain, broken promises, peace, frustration, war, injury, heart-break... they know our hearts. But mostly, they know what it takes to be united with God here on this messy earth. They know what it takes to live well for Him.

We choose a Confirmation saint (like we choose a Confirmation sponsor) not out of due diligence to the “rule,” but rather because *we realize how unfortunate it would be to travel alone*. We recognize how important it is to know your Confirmation saint not only by name, but also by story. The saints have so much to teach us about this journey. Choosing a Confirmation saint is choosing a spiritual role model.

As part of your Confirmation journey you are expected to choose a saint to be your Confirmation Saint and write a two-page report about the saint you have chosen. In your report give a short history of the saint’s life and why you chose him or her to be your confirmation Saint.

7. Confirmation Sponsor

The Church in her wisdom, knowing that the Christian life is not easy, insists that each Catholic who prepares for the Sacrament of Confirmation should choose for him or herself a spiritual coach and role model to help them prepare for the Sacrament and to assist them after Confirmation in living out their Christians lives. To demonstrate that the person you are choosing is a good role model, please write a two-page paper about why you desire to have this person be your sponsor.

8. Service

Mother Teresa reminds us: “At the end of life we will not be judged by how many diplomas we have received, how much money we have made, how many great things we have done. We will be judged by ‘I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat, I was naked and you clothed me. I was homeless, and you took me in.’”

As Catholics we are called to breakout of sinful selfishness and to become the loving hands and feet of God in our world today. You have the opportunity to perform **EIGHTEEN HOURS** of service in at least three different areas. To help connect your service with your faith life, you will be expected to fill out three reflection worksheets.

9. Rite of Enrollment

Along your journey toward Confirmation, you will be asked to publicly declare your intention to be Confirmed. During this evening you will have a chance to sit down with your sponsor and reflect on your experience so far. At the end of the evening you will be invited to sign our Confirmation Cross to demonstrate to others your continued willingness to grow in your faith. The Rite of Enrollment this year will be January 17, 2019.

10. Reap Team Confirmation Retreat

You and your sponsor will be expected to attend a retreat at St. Joseph Parish led by the Reap Team on February 16, 2019. The Reap Team has been leading youth retreats for almost 30 years. We are convinced that your Reap Team experience of the Reap Team will help make your Confirmation a truly inspiring event in your life.

11. Confirmation Rally

The Catholic Church has over 1 billion members spread throughout the world. You will be able to experience the largeness of the Catholic Church in a small way as you gather with Catholic students preparing for Confirmation from our small area of St. Louis. The Rally will take place on October 15th from 9AM to 3PM at St. Joseph

12. Interview with a Parish Council Member

At the end of your preparation process for Confirmation, you will get to meet with a member of our Parish Council to demonstrate what you have learned and how you may continue to be an active member of our parish after your Confirmation.



**Confirmation Preparation Program
St. Joseph Parish Important Dates**

September 26, 2018 – Rite of Acceptance
October 15, 2018 - Confirmation Rally
November 8th, 2018 – Impact Night – Creed
February 16, 2019 = Reap Team Retreat
February 21st, 2019 – Impact Night – Liturgy/Mass
January 17, 2019- Rite of Enrollment
April 11th, 2019 – Impact Night – Life in Christ/Morality
February 16, 2019 = Reap Team Retreat
September 12, 2019 – Impact Night – Prayer
October 1-10 – Interview w/Parish Council Members
November ? 2019 - Confirmation