



# Confirmation Policies at a Glance

## Candidates

Candidates for Confirmation must have the use of reason, be in a state of grace, and properly instructed and able to renew their baptismal vows.

Typical candidates for Confirmation will be adolescents in the 9th or 10th grade of school (having begun preparation no earlier than 8th grade).

No one can be forced to celebrate the Sacrament. However, parents by word, example, and participation in the life of the Church are a true support and encouragement to their children.

## Parents

Parents are to be carefully instructed throughout the year(s) on the meaning and theology of the Sacrament.

## **Preparation**

### Proximate

Preparation is the shared responsibility of the faith community (parish). Therefore the community is to be intimately involved in the preparation for Confirmation.

The Proximate preparation for confirmation is a two-year process beginning in the 8th grade. Each year should include 25 hours of catechetical instruction, as well as opportunities for retreat and service.

Content and Process for Proximate Preparation should include:

- The Catechetical Topics outlined by the Office of Evangelization & Catechesis;
- Liturgy, Scripture, and one day retreats;
- Attendance at Holy Mass;
- Components of Christian Service of reasonable hours;
- Information on the requirements for and role of sponsors;
- Formation of the parents throughout the year(s) on the meaning and theology of the Sacrament, and opportunities to grow in their own faith;
- The celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation;

Any fee for preparation should cover the costs of materials and/or retreats. No person can be denied the opportunity to prepare for the Sacrament for financial reasons.

### Immediate

At the end of the process, evaluation for readiness to celebrate the Sacrament should be determined. Readiness for Confirmation shall not be judged solely on the basis of one pro-

gram component.

Near the completion of the second year, as part of the 25-hours of catechetical instruction, candidates begin immediate preparation. This begins with interviews with parish clergy and staff.

Immediate Preparation for Confirmation is typically 4-6 weeks before Confirmation and should include:

- An opportunity to reflect on the presence and power of God in the candidates' lives and the difference that has made for them;
- Understanding of Confirmation;
- Understanding the Role of the Holy Spirit and the Gifts of the Holy Spirit;
- Understanding of Prayer;
- Understanding of Christian Lifestyles, and the life of a Disciple on Mission;
- A day of reflection/retreat (5 hours).

### Sponsors

Before choosing a sponsor, parents and candidates should understand the role and responsibility of a sponsor. This catechesis should happen early in the proximate preparation.

It is desirable that the sponsor (godparent) at Baptism be chosen if they still meet the qualifications.

Sponsors who are not members of the parish should provide a letter from their pastor attesting to their suitability to serve as sponsor.

A sponsor must:

- Be at least 16 years old;
- Be fully initiated (having received Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist);
- Lead a life of faith;
- Not bound by any canonical penalty;
- Not be the father or mother of the candidate they sponsor.

### Celebration

Celebrations are celebrated in the fall and spring and scheduled by the Bishop's office through the Office of Evangelization and Catechesis.

Following Confirmation, ongoing catechesis (mystagogia) should be offered to the newly confirmed in an effort to assist their continued practice of the faith and to encourage their ongoing participation in the parish. (i.e. Confirmation should lead into a parish youth ministry program.)

Notification of the Sacrament of Confirmation must be made in a timely manner to the confirmand's church of Baptism.