

Confirmation

“For by the sacrament of Confirmation, [the baptized] are more perfectly bound to the Church and are enriched with a special strength of the Holy Spirit. Hence they are, as true witnesses of Christ, more strictly obligated to spread and defend the faith by word and deed.” –Catechism, 1285

Confirmation, like Baptism and the Eucharist is one of the three sacraments of initiation of the Catholic Church. As the Holy Spirit descended upon the disciples who were gathered on Pentecost, so the Holy Spirit comes to every baptized person for whom the Church requests the gift of the Holy Spirit. Confirmation secures and strengthens them to be a living witness to Christ.

In the sacrament of Confirmation, we receive in a special way the gifts of the Holy Spirit. “When a coach sends a player onto the playing field, they put their hand on the players shoulder and give them final instructions. We can understand Confirmation in a similar way. A hand is placed upon us. We step out onto the field of life. Through the Holy Spirit we know what we have to do and we have been given the power to do it. He has motivated us. His mission resounds in our ears. We sense his help. We will not betray his trust or disappoint him; we will win the game for him. We just have to want to do it and listen to him.” –YouCat 203.

The sacrament of Confirmation confirms and strengthens our commitment to the Faith, and our discipleship in the Lord. This sacrament of Confirmation, through a renewal of baptismal promises, laying on of hands, and anointing with sacred chrism, celebrates the gifts of the Holy Spirit working in the lives of those receiving this incredibly special sacrament.

We are all called to courageously be a witness to Christ in the world around us in our daily lives, and Confirmation affirms and strengthens that call. As you prepare in your Confirmation Classes you will learn more about the Faith and what it is you are affirming when you say yes- Confirmation perfects the graces of Baptism and grounds us more deeply in our identity as God’s children. Your commitment to preparing for this sacrament should be taken seriously, this is an exciting and important year in your faith journey! Fr. Paul, your parents, your sponsor, myself, all of your catechists, and the parish, are all praying for you as you begin your preparation for Confirmation. We are all committed to teaching the Catholic Faith and preparing you for Confirmation; but in order for us to be most successful in our efforts, we need your commitment to this program. Please review the following requirements of St. Christopher’s Confirmation Program and then if you are ready to commit- sign and return this no later than Sunday, January 22, 2017.

Please review, sign, and return the following page by the last Wednesday/Sunday of this month.

As a candidate enrolled in the Confirmation Class at St. Christopher’s Church I agree and commit to the following requirements:

- Attend Mass and Class **EVERY** week - Faithful attendance at Mass weekly is a **MANDATORY** requirement.
- The first Sunday of every month (unless noted otherwise) the students will attend the 11:15 AM Mass as a class.
- Successfully complete class requirements which will be defined to the candidates in their classes by their catechists.

- Attendance at all scheduled classes – any more than **THREE ABSENCES (January– April)** may result in not being Confirmed, unless there is a serious medical or family reason for your absence. (If a student is absent due to illness or an emergency they are responsible for obtaining and completing any missed assignments- these absences are excused. Missing Mass or class for sporting events including practices or games, theatre, dance, band, etc. are not excused absences from class or Mass.)
- Come to class **on time!** Candidates coming in late are very disruptive to class- please make sure you are on time for class.
- Reflect and pray on who you would like to be your Confirmation Sponsor. Feel free to reference the Confirmation Handbook, discuss it with your parents/teachers. Once you have selected your Sponsor make sure you give them the Sponsor Certificate to fill out- this must be signed, sealed, and returned on or before the due date.
- Type a one page double spaced Confirmation letter demonstrating your desire to be Confirmed. This letter should explain how God is at work/present in your daily life, so answer the question: How is God working in my life? In this letter also discuss why you want to be confirmed. Your letter to Fr. Paul should demonstrate your understanding of the Sacrament of Confirmation; including how Confirmation will affect your lives once classes end. Please turn this letter into the classroom catechist before the last week of February. **Fr. Paul does read these letters so please make sure they are typed, proof read, and signed. Any questions contact Katie.**
- Confirmation Exit Interview - the Candidates will be asked questions that will demonstrate their readiness for Confirmation and their willingness and ability to spread and defend their faith as confirmed Catholics.
- Complete 3 Community Service Projects – **One** must be outside the Parish, examples: helping those affected by the tornado (yard clean up etc.), volunteering at the Foodbank, Helping at area Nursing Homes, Senior Homes, Participating in the March for Life, assisting at a homeless shelter. You could even run your own coat drive or food drive for the homeless or needy. **One Project** must be for the Parish (Fall Festival, Spaghetti Dinner, Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper, Christmas Pageant, etc.) and the **Third** can be for either. All outside the Parish Service Projects must be approved ahead of time by your teacher. Your teacher will also be consulting with the coordinator of whatever Parish activity you choose; to be sure you were an active participant. Keep track of your service projects on the tracking form given to you by your teacher and make sure you get this form signed after completing your projects.
- **Receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation.** All candidates must receive this sacrament within 1 month of Confirmation. This is your responsibility to make sure you get to Reconciliation prior to your Confirmation. Consult the parish website or bulletin for times.
- Attend the Confirmation Retreat– **MANDATORY** – If you fail to go on the retreat you may not be confirmed until you complete an approved make-up retreat. You have advanced notice for the date of this retreat so please work all schedules around it (sports, hunting, etc. are NOT excuses for missing this retreat.) You are expected to attend the retreat in its entirety- coming late or leaving early will not be permitted unless there is an emergency. If, for serious reasons beyond your control, you miss the retreat, contact the Religious Ed Office as soon as possible to make other arrangements.
- Attend the Confirmation Rehearsal – **MANDATORY for Confirmandi** – We would like to have the Sponsor there if possible **or** at least one parent. **Please check your calendar for the date and time of the rehearsal.**
- **Confirmation**, you must arrive (dressed according to the dress code) to the parish Hall one hour before the Confirmation Mass begins. Prior to Confirmation you will have the opportunity to meet with Bishop Malooly- please make sure you are here on time! Confirmation Mass will begin promptly at the scheduled time.

I _____(Candidate's Signature) have read and agree to the above requirements and will put forth my best effort in class as I prepare for the sacrament of Confirmation this year.

I/We _____(Parent's Signature) have read and agree to the above requirements and will help my child as they prepare to receive the sacrament of Confirmation.

_____ (Date)

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Dear Parents & Confirmation Candidates,

This is a very exciting year in your religious education journey, and I am excited and look forward to working with each of you. I would like to take this opportunity to share some information about St. Christopher's Confirmation Program. Confirmation is a special sacrament in the Church; when we are confirmed, the Holy Spirit gives us graces to be adults in our Catholic faith. By the end of this school year, you will have the opportunity, to undertake the commitments that your parents made for you at your Baptism, through this very special sacrament of Confirmation. Confirmation is not a Sacrament that is chosen for us, as in Baptism. Rather, it is a serious choice we must make on our own. It is a commitment we make to live in the fullness of our Catholic faith. Such a commitment requires careful preparation and the support of your family and parish community. **Both weekly Mass and class attendance are crucial to the success of your child's preparation. Faithful attendance at Mass and class weekly is a mandatory requirement for Confirmation.**

Confirmation brings to fullness that life in the Holy Spirit into which we were first initiated at Baptism. Program components include study, service, retreat, and most important Liturgy. Our goal is to provide a catechetical education of the Catholic faith teaching morals to help students cultivate a personal relationship with God & Jesus Christ through prayers, sacraments, and reflection. We will encourage adherence to God's commandments of love while promoting awareness with opportunities for serving God through the community and our daily good acts. The goal of preparation is to deepen our faith and strengthen our relationship with Jesus, the Church, and the community we serve. We will focus on the power of the Holy Spirit, a solid understanding of Catholicism, and fruitful acts of service to accomplish this. **This sacrament should not to be seen as the end of your religious education, but as the beginning of your strong commitment of spreading and defending your Catholic faith.**

I will be working with you, your parents, and your catechists this year to help you meet all the various requirements of the Confirmation Program here at St. Christopher's Church. The program begins in the fall, and continues throughout the school year. This year we will be using *Chosen: Your Journey Towards Confirmation* for our Confirmation curriculum. This powerful and engaging program provides everything candidates need to prepare our students both intellectually and spiritually to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation and to become lifelong Disciples of Christ. *Chosen* speaks the language of today's youth and is designed to reach through the cultural confusion of relativism and materialism. This Confirmation program connects with the hearts and minds of students intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually. In addition to the student text, each family will receive a parent guide and sponsor guide. It is highly recommended to use these valuable resources!

Attached to this letter you will find all the requirements for Confirmation. The Calendar of events for Confirmation is an excellent guide and has all of the deadlines for when to submit the various forms needed throughout the year. If you ever loose or misplace any of these forms contained in your folder, check our parish website or contact me. You can also check the parish Facebook page or website to find the most up to date news, announcements, and service project opportunities.

Please read, review, and return the attached page of our expectations of you for this year. We are very much looking forward to working together with your family as we journey together towards Confirmation. Know that I, Fr. Paul, all the catechists, and our entire parish community are praying for you throughout this exciting year in your lives. Again, I look forward to working with all of you! If at any time you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to call (410-643-8489) or e-mail (ksukley@stchristopherski.org) and I will get back to you.



Thank you and God Bless,

Katie Sukley

Director of Religious Education
& Confirmation Coordinator