



DIOCESE OF PITTSBURGH
Secretariat for Catholic Education

SECRETARY FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION

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January 4, 2012
Feast of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

Dear Friends in Christ,

Parents, catechists, pastors, and the whole community remember what those baptized in infancy are not able to know: *that these young lives are consecrated by the Holy Spirit.* The community must affirm this identity in the young Christians as they lead them to the day when this gift is strengthened and poured out in a special way in the Sacrament of Confirmation.

We are looking forward to sharing with you this journey of faith as you prepare young people to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. As you will see, Confirmation preparation involves faith learning, sharing, serving, fellowship, spiritual growth and requires the support of the entire Church. Young people will be given the opportunity to learn more about the Catholic faith and what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ.

I am delighted to share with you a resource guide for those preparing for Confirmation. This resource guide will provide assistance for those preparing young people, as well as the expectations of parents and sponsors, set forth by the Diocese of Pittsburgh. This commitment involves the whole family and we ask that you carefully examine the expectations and communicate them to the young people and their families entrusted to your care. As St. Paul reminds us,

...that their hearts may be encouraged as they are brought together in love, to have all the richness of fully assured understanding, for the knowledge of the mystery of God, Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.” Col 2, 2-3

I trust you will find this resource helpful in your ministry with our young people. I want in a special way to thank those faithful catechetical administrators who contributed their own best practices and voiced the needs of the community, as well as the staff of the Secretariat for Catholic Education and all those involved in making this project a success. In a particular way, I want to acknowledge the great effort of Ms. Holly Joy Penzenstadler, Director for Elementary School Catechesis and Faith Formation, for her leadership on this project.

With every best wish and prayer, I remain,

Sincerely in Christ,

F. Kris Stubna

Reverend Kris D. Stubna, S.T.D.
Secretary for Catholic Education

Confirmation Preparation

A GUIDEBOOK FOR CONFIRMATION

TO SERVE CANDIDATES AND PARENTS

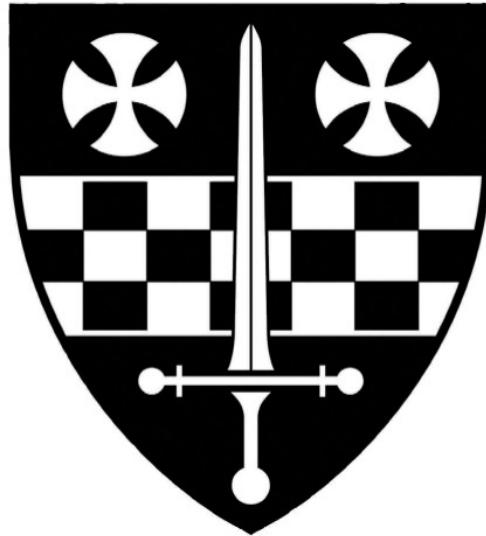
SECRETARIAT FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION

CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF PITTSBURGH

111 BLVD. OF THE ALLIES

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INTRODUCTION

Parents, catechists, pastors, and the whole community remember what those baptized in infancy are not able to know: *that these young lives are consecrated by the Holy Spirit*. The community must affirm this identity in the young Christians as they lead them to the day when this gift is poured out in a special way in Confirmation.

We are looking forward to sharing with you this journey of faith as you prepare young people to receive the sacrament of Confirmation. As you will see, Confirmation preparation involves learning, sharing, serving, fellowship, spiritual growth and the support of the entire Church. Young people will be given the opportunity to learn more about the Catholic faith and what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ.

Confirmation is one of the Sacraments of initiation. While Baptism is the first step of initiation into the life of the Church, Confirmation can be seen as the completion of the Baptismal commitment. According to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, “The reception of the sacrament of Confirmation is necessary for the completion of baptismal grace” (no. 1285). There are two primary effects from the sacrament of Confirmation: strengthening of one’s bond with the Church, and reception of the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

The following guide details the requirements and expectations for those enrolled in Confirmation preparation as well as the expectations of parents and sponsors, set forth by the Diocese of Pittsburgh. This commitment involves the whole family and we ask that you carefully examine the expectations and communicate them to the young people entrusted to you.

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Dear Parents & Confirmation Candidates:

Candidates, Congratulations! You are approaching an important milestone in your Catholic Faith! Confirmation is a special time in the life of every young Catholic, it marks the personal decision to follow Christ with total mind, heart, and spirit. Confirmation is not graduation from Religious Education, rather, it is the beginning of an adult life of faith.

As parents of candidates, you have a very important role in the Confirmation Preparation process. Your support at this time is more critical than ever. Perhaps reflecting upon your own Confirmation in the faith will help you to help your child prepare.

In the coming weeks and months we will be taking part in many activities to help with Confirmation Preparation. Attached is a complete listing of the activities that are necessary parts of the Confirmation Preparation program. As a family, this is a time to reflect on the Sacraments and those special celebrations in your family. As individuals, this is a time of excitement and study of the faith.

Each candidate is responsible for understanding the Creed and the Sacraments of the Catholic Faith. We acknowledge the Eucharist as central in our Faith. Candidates should be prepared to explain why this is truth. Candidates should have a thorough understanding of the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy, as well as the 10 Commandments and the Beatitudes. They should have a knowledge and understanding of the 7 gifts of the Holy Spirit and be able to relate how and why they are important to their personal faith life. As we draw nearer to the date of Confirmation, candidates will have the opportunity to share expressions of their faith, which has accumulated since their Baptism.

Since Confirmation is a critical sacrament in our Catholic Faith, we will be retaining the sacramental information for each Candidate as they complete Preparation. Attached you will find a form entitled "Information for Recording the Sacrament of Confirmation", for parents to complete and return to the Faith Formation Office by December 1st, along with a copy of your child's Baptismal Certificate. In the case that we do not have record of Baptism on file, please submit a photocopy of your child's the Baptismal Certificate.

If you have any questions regarding the Preparation program, please do not hesitate to contact *Catechetical Administrator Name* or *Youth Minister Name* in the Faith Formation Office for more information. You will find their contact information below.

Sincerely Yours in Christ,

Catechetical Administrator

Principal

Youth Minister

Preparation for Confirmation

Confirmation will be celebrated at NAME OF PARISH/SCHOOL COMMUNITY. We will be celebrating the sacrament on DATE, and our celebrant will be Bishop NAME.

1. Confirmation candidates are expected to **attend all sessions** being held for Confirmation preparation.
2. Confirmation candidates are expected to **attend a retreat** which will be held at LOCATION on DATE and TIME.
3. Completion and return of **all forms** is required by DATE in order to be properly prepared and presented for reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation at this time.
 - a) Confirmation Application (*to be completed by candidates and signed by parents*)
 - b) Sponsor Eligibility Form (*to be requested by sponsor at sponsor's Catholic Parish*)
 - c) Letter of Intention (*to be written by candidate and returned to Catechetical Administrator/Principal*)
 - d) Christian Witness Experiences (*to be completed by candidate and signed by adult witness*)
4. Prior to Confirmation, there will be a **practice** for candidates and their sponsors on DATE and TIME at LOCATION. If sponsors are not available, candidates *must be accompanied by adult*.
5. All candidates should be regularly participating in the life of the Church by attending Sunday and Holy Day Mass, receiving the Sacraments, including Reconciliation, and actively giving service to others.

Through the Sacrament of Confirmation, the baptized receive the Gifts of the Holy Spirit which strengthen and empower them to live as Jesus did. Bound more closely to the Church through this Sacrament, they are obliged to spread and defend the faith, both by word and deed, as witnesses of Christ. Therefore, preparation for this Sacrament is important and should be taken seriously.

After Confirmation

The opportunity to participate in discipleship activities and to join the parish.

Youth Ministry is open to all. Ongoing parish service and involvement is always available. Please check the parish bulletin for details.

Liturgical Ministry -- The Church calls us forth to Liturgical Ministry as part of our Baptismal Call to service. Candidates are invited to respond to this call on the third Sunday of each month during the 9:00 A.M. Mass, serving as ministers of hospitality, and musicians when appropriate. A parish formation program is established to prepare students for their role in liturgical ministry.

Outline of Confirmation Program

First Year/Sixth Grade

1. **Community Worship** – Confirmation candidates are expected to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days.
2. **Religious Education Class** – Attendance at all religion classes (in the parochial school or in the religious education program) is required. There is to be no unexcused absences.
3. **Rite on Enrollment** --Candidates are asked to participate in a ceremony marking their official enrollment in the Confirmation Preparation process. The Rite of Enrollment is a ceremony in which the Candidates make their official commitment to enter into preparations for the sacrament of Confirmation. The Rite of Enrollment is recommended to take place in the 6th Grade year. Prior to the Rite of Enrollment candidates are asked to seriously and prayerfully think about what will be required of them during this time of preparation. At a designated Mass, each Candidate will be given a promise form that he/she will sign immediately and will have their parent(s) sign as well. The Candidate will keep the promise form until the ceremony begins after the homily. Candidates will stand and state their names and make their commitment to the requirements of Confirmation.

Second/Seventh Grade

1. **Community Worship** – Confirmation candidates are expected to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days.
2. **Religious Education Class** – Attendance at all religion classes (in the parochial school or in the religious education program) is required. There is to be no unexcused absences.
3. **Confirmation Meeting** – Candidates and parents attend a Confirmation meeting in the fall and become familiar with the Confirmation Preparation Process.
4. **Study Guide** – This booklet includes a copy of the- **Study Guide**, which is the outline of the material students will be expected to understand at the completion of their preparation.
5. **Confirmation Patron Saint Research** – The Church strongly suggests that you use the name that your parents gave to you at Baptism, because Confirmation brings us into the fullness of our Baptismal Call. Confirmation is the renewal of the Baptismal promises that your parents made on your behalf when you were a baby. Whatever name you choose, your own or that of a favorite saint, we ask that you do some research about your namesake. We would like you to explore how this saint offers you witness to walk more closely with Christ.
6. **Service Project** – Over the course of the formation years, the candidate is asked to devote time and thoughtfulness to chosen service project and to write an account of this experience. Information about service opportunities are distributed throughout the year.

Service hours may be completed over the summer, and Christian Service Reflections turned in at specified times.

7. **Baptismal Certificate** – Please staple a copy (*not the original*) to the proper page in this booklet. If your child was baptized at this parish, no certificate is needed, as our office will verify this information.
8. **Information Sheet** – Parents complete the sheet in the back of this booklet and sign, verifying information listed is complete and correct.

Third Year/Eighth Grade

1. **Community Worship** – Confirmation students are expected to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days.
2. **Religious Education Classes** – Candidates attend regular Religious Education classes.
3. **Confirmation Meeting** – Parents and candidates attend the second Confirmation Meeting. A time line of events for the year is given.
4. **Confirmation Retreat** – Candidates are expected to participate in a retreat or day of recollection at some point before Confirmation. Permission slips and details will be sent home.
5. **Interview with Pastoral Leader (Priest or Lay Ecclesial Minister)** – Candidates will be scheduled to meet with one of our pastoral leaders in the parish to discuss readiness for reception of sacrament.
6. **Sponsor:**
 - a. **Choosing a Sponsor:** The candidate, in consultation with his / her parents, chooses a sponsor. *Please refer to “The Role and Eligibility of the Sponsor” in this booklet.*
 - b. **Sponsor Eligibility Certificate** - A sponsor who is **not** a member of Good Counsel Parish will need a letter from his/her Church stating he/she is eligible to be a sponsor. ***Please attend to this early.***
 - c. **About My Sponsor** – The candidate is to give a brief account of his/her sponsor and tell why the person was chosen as sponsor.
 - d. **Letter to Sponsor** - The candidate is to write a letter to the sponsor telling of his/her commitment toward Confirmation and asking for prayers, guidance, and help. The Confirmandi is to ask the sponsor to answer by making a brief statement on what the church means to him/her.
 - e. **Letter from Sponsor** - The sponsor's reply is attached to the proper page in this booklet.
7. **Penance** – An opportunity for candidates and parents to participate in the celebration of the sacrament of Reconciliation will be offered.
8. **Confirmation Practices & Liturgy** –
 - a. **Reverence for Sacred Liturgy:** As in all liturgical gatherings, respect for the Blessed Sacrament should be paramount.
 - b. **Candidates / Sponsor Practice:** Sunday before Confirmation. Sponsors are asked to attend or to arrange for a proxy.
 - c. **Dress Code** –Appropriate church attire is required, which includes dress shoes, dress shirt and tie for boys, and modest attire for the girls (no spaghetti straps, strapless, or low-cut shirts, and skirts or dresses must come to the knee).
 - d. **Pictures** - Once Mass has begun, we ask that no pictures or videos be taken. Parents are asked to convey this message to extended family and guests beforehand.
9. **Confirmation Reception** – After the liturgy, the newly confirmed, with their parents and guests, are invited to attend a simple reception in the multipurpose room. The presider is available for photographs at this time.

The Apostles Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.
and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended into hell; on the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the God the Father Almighty;
From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting, Amen.

The Seven Sacraments

1. **Baptism** – is the sacrament of rebirth. In receiving baptism, we are united with Jesus in His death and resurrection, cleansed from original sin and personal sins, welcomed into the community of the Church, and more closely related to God.
2. **Confirmation** – is the sacrament by which baptized persons receive the seal of the Holy Spirit, the Gift of the Father and Son. It is linked with the other two sacraments of initiation, Baptism and the Eucharist. In celebrating confirmation, we ask for the graces needed to live a mature Christian life and to deepen our faith.
3. **Penance or Reconciliation** – is the sacrament by which Christians celebrate God's merciful forgiveness for sins committed after Baptism. After a sincere confession of sin, true sorrow, and resolution not to sin again, we receive absolution as a means of reconciliation with God and the community. In penance, Christians are also reconciled with the Church. Although perfect sorrow or contrition restores a sinner to grace, sacramental confession is the ordinary way for serious sinners to be reconciled with Christ and the Church.
4. **Holy Orders** – is the sacrament by which members of the Christian community are given special powers and are put in position of special service for the building up of the Body of Christ. Among other things, they preside at the celebration of the Eucharist. They serve as ministers for the sacraments of penance and anointing of the sick.
5. **The Anointing of the Sick** – is the sacrament for the seriously ill, the infirm, and the aged, by which the Church asks God to lighten their sufferings, forgive their sins, and bring them to eternal salvation.
6. **The Eucharist** – is the center of sacramental life and is primary among the sacraments. We celebrate the Eucharist in obedience to Jesus' instruction at the Last Supper: "Do this in memory of me." When the priest consecrates bread and wine, they are changed into the Body and Blood of Christ. Christ Himself, true God and true Man, is really and substantially present in a mysterious way, under the appearances of bread and wine. In the Mass, the death and resurrection of Jesus are celebrated and renewed. The Eucharist is also a meal which recalls the Last Supper, celebrates our unity in Christ, and anticipates the messianic banquet of the kingdom. In the meal, Jesus nourishes us with the Bread of Life, His own self, and unites us more closely with God and with one another. A Christian must be in the state of grace to receive the Eucharist worthily.
7. **Matrimony** – is the sacrament which joins a baptized man and woman together as husband and wife in a union that is permanent and indissoluble. The married couple receive special graces to help them direct their family in loving relationships and toward full participation in the Christian community.

Sacraments of Initiation

Baptism

Eucharist

Confirmation

Sacraments of Healing

Penance

Anointing of the Sick

Sacraments of Vocation

Matrimony

Holy Orders

The Ten Commandments

1. I am the Lord thy God; thou shalt not have strange Gods before me.
2. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.
3. Remember thou keep holy the Lord's day.
4. Honor thy father and thy mother.
5. Thou shalt not kill.
6. Thou shalt not commit adultery.
7. Thou shalt not steal.
8. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.
9. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife.
10. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's goods.

The Two Great Commandments of Love

- Love God with all your heart, and soul, and mind.
- Love your neighbor as yourself.

The Beatitudes

- Blest are the poor in spirit; the reign of God is theirs.
- Blest are the sorrowing; they shall be consoled.
- Blest are the lowly; they shall inherit the land.
- Blest are they who hunger and thirst for holiness; they shall have their fill.
- Blest are they who show mercy; mercy shall be theirs.
- Blest are the single-hearted; for they shall see God.
- Blest are the peacemakers; they shall be called sons of God.
- Blest are those persecuted for holiness' sake; the reign of God is theirs.

The Seven Corporal Works of Mercy

- To feed the hungry
- To give drink to the thirsty
- To clothe the naked
- To visit the imprisoned

- To shelter the homeless
- To visit the sick
- To bury the dead

The Seven Chief Spiritual Works of Mercy

- To admonish the sinner
- To instruct the ignorant
- To counsel the doubtful

- To comfort the sorrowful
- To bear wrongs patiently
- To forgive all injuries
- To pray for the living and the dead

The Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit

<input type="checkbox"/> Wisdom	<input type="checkbox"/> Understanding	<input type="checkbox"/> Counsel
<input type="checkbox"/> Fortitude	<input type="checkbox"/> Knowledge	<input type="checkbox"/> Piety
		<input type="checkbox"/> Fear of the Lord

The Six Precepts/Duties of a Catholic Christian

- To keep holy the day of the Lord's resurrection. To worship God by participating in Mass every Sunday and holy day of obligation. To avoid those activities that would hinder renewal of body and soul.
- To lead a sacramental life. To receive Holy Communion frequently and the Sacrament of Reconciliation regularly.
- To study Catholic teaching in preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation, to be confirmed, and then to continue to study and advance the cause of Christ.
- To observe the marriage laws of the Church. To give religious training, by example and word, to one's children. To use parish schools and catechetical programs.
- To strengthen and support the Church – one's own parish community and parish priests, the worldwide Church and the pope.
- To do penance, including abstaining from meat and fasting from food on the appointed days.

Sample**Student Confirmation Application**

Name _____ Date of Birth _____

Address _____

Phone Number _____

Parent/Guardian Name(s): _____

Date and location of Baptism _____

Date and location of First Communion _____

What school do you attend? _____ Grade _____

Where have you attended Religious Education? Years Attended

How often do you attend Mass? _____ weekly _____ monthly _____ occasionally

How have you served your parish in the past year?

_____How have you served your community in the past year?

_____What kind of activities are you involved with at school?

_____How often do you pray? What do you pray about? _____

Why do you want to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation? _____

Do you have a sponsor who can support you in this Confirmation process? Who are they, and why do you think they would be a good choice? _____

Signed _____
Candidate

Candidate's Name has my support in his/her decision to seek the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Signed _____
Parent/Guardian

Date Received _____

**Please write a letter to Bishop/Vicar/Priest/DRE responding to the following questions.
This letter must be a minimum of 1 page, typed.**

All letters must be return by DATE.

Questions for candidates to respond to:

- 1. Why do you want to be confirmed?**
- 2. What gift or gifts of the Holy Spirit do you feel effect you most?**
- 3. What Confirmation name have you chosen and what is the relationship with the Church?**
- 4. Who is your sponsor and why did you choose him or her?**

Sample

Covenant

Certificate of Intention

Candidate's Name: _____

Confirmation Name: _____

Candidate Covenant

I know that it is my choice to enter into the preparation process and celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation. I am ready to participate in the process leading me to the Sacrament of Confirmation and journey with my fellow candidates, parents, and sponsor. I will complete the requirements set forth, allowing the Holy Spirit to lead me to reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation. I realize that it is my personal decision to be confirmed at this time in my life.

Candidate's Signature

Date

Parent Covenant

I have read and understand the program requirements of the Confirmation Preparation process. I will support my child in this journey and provide encouragement in the preparation process. I will allow the Holy Spirit to lead my child toward Confirmation.

Mother's (Guardian, or Step-Parent) Signature

Date

Father's (Guardian, or Step-Parent) Signature

Date

The Role and Eligibility of the Sponsor According to the Diocese of Pittsburgh

Role: A sponsor must be a person who knows the candidate and can help him/her on his/her spiritual journey and can share his/her own faith. This selection should be indicated at the beginning of the candidate's immediate preparation. Ideally, it should be someone who has been already involved in the spiritual formation of the candidate, such as a godparent or member of the local parish.

Eligibility:

A sponsor:

- Must be a **practicing** Catholic in good standing with the Church.
- Must be at least sixteen years old.
- Must belong to the Catholic Church and have been initiated in the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist.
- Must not be prohibited by law from exercising the role of sponsor.
- May be the same sponsor the individual had at Baptism.
- May be a new sponsor selected specifically for Confirmation.
- May be either male or female for any candidate.

Note: Parents are no longer eligible as sponsors. (1983 – Code of Canon Law)

Sponsor's Name: _____

Sponsor's Parish:

Name of Church _____

City / State _____

- If your sponsor is a member of this parish, simply complete the information on this page – our office will verify information to parish records.
- If your sponsor is not a member of this parish, he or she will need to obtain a **Certificate of Eligibility** from his or her parish, stating that he or she is eligible to serve as a sponsor for Confirmation. Please have the Certificate sent to you, and not our office. **Please attend to this early** so that it is received by the appropriate time.

Please attach sponsor's Certificate of Eligibility to this page.

About My Sponsor

A sponsor is a responsible person, a companion on your journey of Confirmation preparation. Your sponsor is a special kind of friend, one who shares with you his or her own faith, knowledge, and experience of being a Christian.

Describe the qualities of your special friend, the person you have chosen as a person committed to traveling on the way of Christ.

The Confirmation student is to write a letter to the sponsor telling of his/her commitment toward Confirmation and asking for prayers, guidance, and help. The Candidate asks the sponsor to answer by making a brief statement on what the church means to him/her.

Sponsors are asked to write a letter to the Candidate. The letter is to be a personal faith witness answering the question: ***"What does my faith mean to me?"***

"Whoever has heart full of love, always has something to share." -- Pope John XXIII

Attach the letter you receive from your sponsor telling you what his/her faith means to him/her to this page.

Parish or School Name
Sponsor Information

Each candidate is asked to choose an adult member of the greater Catholic community to be a sponsor during the Confirmation journey. Sponsor selection guidelines are:

- Sponsor must be a confirmed Catholic at least 16 years of age.
- Sponsor should be active in their Catholic faith. Active participation means that the sponsor regularly attends Mass and is involved in the life of his or her parish, and, most importantly, personal faith formation. The Sponsor represents the Catholic community and should be seen as a life-long role model and guide for the Candidate.
- A Sponsor is preferably someone outside the immediate family. Parents cannot be designated as sponsor or proxy.
- Sponsor must submit signed Sponsor Eligibility form from his/her pastor. If sponsor is member of this parish community, the pastor should be informed about he sponsor selection and he will verify eligibility.

Candidate's Name: _____

Confirmation Name: _____

Sponsor's Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Email Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Sponsor's Parish: _____
(City, State)

If your sponsor will not be present for the Rite of Confirmation, another adult may stand in for your sponsor as proxy. A proxy should be a practicing Catholic and may not be the candidate's parent.

Proxy's Name _____ Parish _____

Enclosed: Signed Sponsor Eligibility Form

(A form or letter from the pastor of sponsor's parish to be requested by sponsor)

Will Send Signed Sponsor Eligibility Form before DATE

(Necessary by DATE listed in order to recommend candidate for sacrament)

Please remember that Confirmation is a sacred Sacrament, and our appearance should reflect this. Sponsors and Candidates are responsible for respectful and modest attire.

Females**Dress or skirts:**

- Should not be any shorter than 1" above the knee.
- Spaghetti Straps, Sleeveless, or Strapless Dresses MUST be covered by sweater, scarf, or jacket.
- Plunging necklines are prohibited.

Shirts:

- Spaghetti Straps, Sleeveless, or Strapless tops MUST be covered by sweater, scarf, or jacket.
- Plunging necklines are prohibited.
- Undergarments must be covered.

Dress pants:

- Pants should not be skin tight or low riding. Skin or undergarments must be covered.

Shoes:

- No flip-flops or tennis shoes.

Males**Dress pants:**

- Pants should not be so loose as to reveal underclothing.
- Jeans and athletic apparel are prohibited.

Shirts:

- Collared shirts are recommended. T-shirts are prohibited.
- Ties are recommended, not required.
- Jackets are recommended, not required.

Shoes:

- No flip-flops or tennis shoes.

Please use these guidelines in preparation for any liturgical celebration.

Please do not bring personal media devices to classes, retreats, rehearsals, Holy Mass, or to the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Your Parish Name Here

January 1, 2012

Dear High School Student...

Greetings! "You are the light of the world..." (Matthew 5:14). Did you know that? Do you know what it means to be "the light of the world"? It means that your Light cannot be hidden, and it must be seen by all. You, young person, shine with the light of Christ, and we want to take a minute to encourage you in your journey.

Youth Ministry in the Catholic Church encompasses not only a deeper relationship with Christ, but also consists in growth of the total person: heart, mind, intellect, and character. That being said, we want to offer you an opportunity to take another step in this journey by giving back.

We need your help at NAME OF PARISH. On DATE TBA, we will be sponsoring a BREAKFAST/DINNER for the Confirmation Candidates and their parents. We need your help to make this important occasion a success. You will be awarded at least 4 service hours for this event. Please contact NAME at PHONE NUMBER or EMAIL ADDRESS as soon as possible to sign up to help.

Important Information:

- Date of Event
- Location of Event
- Duties: cooking/food preparations, set up, serving, hosting, etc.
- Time for Check In
- End Time

In the words of the late and Great Holy Father, Pope John Paul II at World Youth Day in Denver: "***The Church needs your energies, your enthusiasm, your youthful ideals, in order to make the Gospel of life penetrate the fabric of society, transforming people's hearts and the structures of society in order to create a civilization of true justice and love***".

One of my favorite verses is from Paul's first letter to young Timothy, "Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity." (1 Timothy 4:12). We believe that YOU, by virtue of your Baptism and Confirmation, have the qualities that Paul spoke to Timothy about, and we believe that you have the ability to be an example among your peers. *Don't worry, being an example doesn't mean "perfection", it means that you are sincerely trying to be the person that God is calling you to be.*

And thank you, NAME, for being a witness to others here at NAME OF PARISH.

In Christ,

Pastor

Youth Minister

Catechetical Administrator

Evening of Reflection Sample Outline**Preparations:**

6 months in advance, review plan with Pastor and discuss Rite of Enrollment.

3-6 months in advance, connect with Youth Ministry leaders in the parish community to review plan for Evening of Reflection.

3-6 months in advance, communicate date and expectation to attend to parents of Confirmation Candidates.

2 months in advance, send out invitations to parents and Confirmation Candidates.

3-6 weeks in advance, collect RSVPs and coordinate specific details of the meal and liturgy.

3-6 weeks in advance, connect with Youth Ministry leaders in the parish community and invite teens to begin praying for the Confirmation Candidates. Invite them to specifically to host and serve the Evening of Reflection in the following capacities:

- | | |
|-----------------|---|
| 3:45pm | HSYM arrive to set up and cook.
Place personalized cards at each setting.
Create an environment with background music, lighting, and visual focus.
Review HSYM Witness
Review Prayer Service |
| 5pm | Parish Liturgy and Rite of Enrollment |
| 6pm | Dinner
HSYM Hosts will Greet, Seat, and Serve Drinks |
| 6:15pm | Grace and Welcome
HSYM and Teen |
| 6:30-7pm | Share a Meal
Fellowship
HSYM Continue to refresh drinks, clear plates, and serve dessert |
| 7:15pm | CA/Principal thanks all for attending and invites HSYM to share a witness and express an invitation for continuation in Catholic Discipleship through Youth Ministry |
| 7:30pm | Closing Prayer (you may use one of the formats) |
| 8pm | Conclusion and Clean Up |

Morning of Reflection Sample Outline**Preparations:**

6 months in advance, review plan with Pastor and discuss Rite of Enrollment.

3-6 months in advance, connect with Youth Ministry leaders in the parish community to review plan for Morning of Reflection.

3-6 months in advance, communicate date and expectation to attend to parents of Confirmation Candidates.

2 months in advance, send out invitations to parents and Confirmation Candidates.

3-6 weeks in advance, collect RSVPs and coordinate specific details of the meal and liturgy.

3-6 weeks in advance, connect with Youth Ministry leaders in the parish community and invite teens to begin praying for the Confirmation Candidates. Invite them to specifically to host and serve the Morning of Reflection in the following capacities:

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| 7:45am | HSYM arrive to set up and prepare meal.
Place personalized cards at each setting.
Create an environment with background music, lighting, and visual focus.
Review HSYM Witness
Review Prayer Service |
| 9am | Parish Liturgy and Rite of Enrollment |
| 9:45am | Breakfast
HSYM Hosts will Greet, Seat, and Serve Drinks |
| 10am | Grace and Welcome
HSYM and Teen |
| 10am-11am | Share a Meal
Fellowship
HSYM Continue to refresh drinks, clear plates, and serve dessert |
| 11:15am | CA/Principal thanks all for attending and invites HSYM to share a witness and express an invitation for continuation in Catholic Discipleship through Youth Ministry |
| 11:45am | Closing Prayer (you may use one of the formats) |
| Noon | Conclusion and Clean Up |

What is the Rite of Enrollment for Confirmation?

The Rite of Enrollment is a ceremony in which the Candidates make their official commitment to enter into preparations for the sacrament of Confirmation. The Rite of Enrollment is recommended to take place in the 6th Grade year. Prior to the Rite of Enrollment candidates are asked to seriously and prayerfully think about what will be required of them during this time of preparation.

At a designated Mass, each Candidate will be given a promise form that he/she will sign immediately and will have their parent(s) sign as well. The Candidate will keep the promise form until the ceremony begins after the homily. Candidates will stand and state their names and make their commitment to the requirements of Confirmation.

After a prayer, the candidates will be asked:

Priest: *Candidates, under the guidance of Christ, and His church, with the help of this community and your family and friends, are you prepared to begin your preparations for the Sacrament of Confirmation?*

Candidates: “**I AM**”

Then the priest will ask you the following questions:

Do you promise to:

- *Give evidence of living according to Christ’s teachings? “I DO”*
- *Participate in the Holy Sacrament of Mass on weekends and Holy Days of Obligation? “I DO”*
- *Grow in relationship with Jesus Christ through daily prayer? “I DO”*
- *Participate actively in all classes and other activities provided by the Confirmation program? “I DO”*
- *Offer your talents and engage in service to this parish and community? “I DO”*

The Candidates will then come forward to the altar and drop off their promise form in the basket and return to their seats and remain standing.

Priest: *Dear Candidates, your promises mean that you wish to share your life and hope in Christ. The whole community welcomes you with love and stands ready to help you.*

APPLAUSE

And may almighty God bless you the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. AMEN

CONFIRMATION COMMITMENT SERVICE

PRIEST:

As a parish community, we are happy to welcome (xx number of) Confirmation Candidates who have decided to seal their membership in the Lord's Body through the Sacrament of Confirmation. Today, I invite each of them to sign their Confirmation commitment on the altar, where they receive and have received God's greatest gift, His Beloved Son, Jesus.

Please stand as I call your name: (Priest names each candidate)

I ask each candidate to answer each questions with "Yes, Lord, please hear our prayer":

- Are you prepared to seal and confirm the gifts of the Spirit that you received at Baptism.

(They respond: Yes, Lord, please hear our prayer.)

- Are you willing to continue your faith journey in a spirit of generosity and service?

(They respond: Yes, Lord, please hear our prayer.)

- Do you accept the Spirit of wonder and reverence so that you may be on fire with the love of God?

(They respond: Yes, Lord, please hear our prayer.)

- Do you accept the Spirit of wisdom and understanding to make all who believe in heart and soul?

(They respond: Yes, Lord, please hear our prayer.)

- Do you accept the Spirit of knowledge and right judgment to follow the Gospel of Jesus and the teachings of the church?

(They respond: Yes, Lord, please hear our prayer.)

- Do you accept the Spirit of courage and strength to help us to serve others and build a world of justice and mercy?

(They respond: Yes, Lord, please hear our prayer.)

PRIEST:

Will each person in the parish extend their right hand out and join me in this blessing for these candidates:

“May our God seal you with the Holy Spirit at Confirmation and fill your hearts with courage and love to make a difference in this world as you witness your faith. “

I now invite each candidate up to the altar to sign their commitment:

Candidate #1 (name of candidate --wait until candidate signs the form and returns to seat)

Candidate #2 (name of candidate --wait until candidate signs the form and returns to seat)

Candidate #3 (name of candidate - wait until candidate signs the form and returns to seat)

PRIEST:

“We are richly blessed to have this opportunity to share God’s wonderful gift of the Holy Spirit with these worthy candidates.”

CONFIRMATION COMMITMENT SERVICE CANDIDATES (given to each candidate to follow along with the service)

Please stand: (Priest names each candidates)

Please answer each questions with “Yes, Lord, please hear our prayer”:

- Are you prepared to seal and confirm the gifts of the Spirit that you received at Baptism.

(Candidates respond: Yes, Lord, please hear our prayer.)

- Are you willing to continue your faith journey in a spirit of generosity and service?

(Candidates respond: Yes, Lord, please hear our prayer.)

- Do you accept the Spirit of wonder and reverence so that you may be on fire with the love of God?

(Candidates respond: Yes, Lord, please hear our prayer.)

- Do you accept the Spirit of wisdom and understanding to make all who believe in heart and soul?

(Candidates respond: Yes, Lord, please hear our prayer.)

- Do you accept the Spirit of knowledge and right judgment to follow the Gospel of Jesus and the teachings of the church?

(Candidates respond: Yes, Lord, please hear our prayer.)

- Do you accept the Spirit of courage and strength to help us to serve others and build a world of justice and mercy?

(They respond: Yes, Lord, please hear our prayer.)

PRIEST:

Will each person in the parish extend their right hand out and join me in this blessing for each of these candidates:

“May our God seal you with the Holy Spirit at Confirmation and fill your hearts with courage and love to make a difference in this world as you witness your faith.”

I now invite each candidate up to the altar to sign their commitment:

Candidate 1 (signs the form and return to your seat)

Candidate 2 (signs the form and return to your seat)

Candidate 3 (signs the form and return to your seat)

Candidate 4 (etc.)

CONFIRMATION COMMITMENT FORM

I, _____, have decided to become a full member in the Lord's Body and His Church through the Sacrament of Confirmation. I understand that this is just the beginning of my journey in my Catholic faith and that I need to continue to witness to Jesus and His Church.

As a Catholic Christian, I promise to do my best to:

1. Keep holy the day of the Lord's resurrection (Sunday).
2. Lead a sacramental life and receive the Holy Eucharist frequently and the Sacrament of Reconciliation regularly.
3. Study Catholic teachings and advance the cause of Jesus Christ.
4. Strengthen and support the church through prayer and example.
5. Join in the missionary spirit of the church by actively participating in the Church's programs, activities and services.

As a Catholic student, I have begun my study of my faith, have understood the Ten Commandments and plan to use them as a guideline my life. I understand that God's Law shows me how to be my best self, to practice virtue and to avoid vice. It enlightens me about the attitudes and actions needed in my relationship with God, with self, with others and with created things. I know that God does not force me to love and obey but leaves me free to make my own choices.

I want to be wise and follow the way God has shown. I promise to use prayer to help me grow in my love of God and to find the strength to make right decisions. I understand that obedience to commandments and my prayers will make me a better member of Christ's Church.

(Signature)

(Date)

Service Reflection

'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'

Matthew 25:40

The Confirmation class will continually be learning about the importance of service to the parish and the community. Some students have already started providing service to the parish as altar servers, Vacation Bible School leaders, and religious education student aides.

The idea of service should not be limited to a project completed in just one afternoon, but the start of a way of life.

For example, quality service may start with helping with one food drive, but it should not be limited to that. Did it create an awareness of the poor in our area? Assistance to the elderly may begin with one visit to a lonely neighbor, but what about other times? Does this neighbor need help with shoveling snow or even just walking her mail or newspaper to the door? Awareness of persons in personal care and nursing homes may begin with helping with the parish outreach program in some capacity. Parents are invited to serve along side their children. Service should not end after a few hours.

As Christians, we are called to serve one another each and every day.

A list of suggested places and times for service will be made available. The list will not have all of the possible service opportunities on it, for service cannot be limited.

Each student is asked to reflect on three points and write a brief reflection of 1-2 pages.

The three points to reflect on are:

- *How does Jesus call us to serve others?*
- *What service did you perform, and for whom?*
- *What difference did this service make? (for the individual, the group, and/or the student)*

The Service Reflection is due by DATE

Christian Witness

***I believe that my faith in Jesus Christ calls me to respond
as a Catholic Christian in my words and deeds in everyday life situation.***

Faith is lived out in community.

To love God, I must love myself and others.

Name _____

***God's spirit has prompted me to respond to the needs of my family,
church, and neighborhood in the following ways:***

I offered service to: _____ Date: _____

Description: _____

Adult Verification: _____

I offered service to: _____ Date: _____

Description: _____

Adult Verification: _____

I offered service to: _____ Date: _____

Description: _____

Adult Verification: _____

I offered service to: _____ Date: _____

Description: _____

Adult Verification: _____

I offered service to: _____ Date: _____

Description: _____

Adult Verification: _____

The Confirmation Service Project ***Not required but good practice!***

*"Christ has no body on earth but yours,
No hands but yours, no feet but yours.*

*Yours are the feet with which He goes about doing good,
And yours are the hands with which He is to bless us now."*

- St. Theresa of Avila

In the time of Confirmation preparation, each student will be expected to give some form of Christian witness and service. To be a mature Christian means not only to "know" one's faith, but to also accept the responsibility of acting in the name of Jesus Christ to our community.

The following is a suggested list of projects which would enable you to serve others, free of charge. You are asked to devote a minimum of _____ hours to this work. The time may be spent on one project or on several different activities.

Service projects performed by prior Confirmation classes are given here as suggestions:

1. Aide at Bible School
2. Altar Server
3. Assisted with Advent Sunday Pageant and Christmas Tableaux
4. Assisted with Parish Clean Up Day
5. Carousel Therapeutic Horse Farm
6. Collated papers and helped with parish mailings
7. Donated clothes to Emergency Services, Goodwill, etc
8. Donated hair to Locks of Love / Wigs for Kids
9. Donated Thanksgiving and Easter baskets to Emergency Services
10. Donated socks and mittens to Emergency Services
11. Hand Bell Choir
12. Helped with activities at parish picnic
13. Helped elderly neighbors with yard work
14. Library Summer Reading Program
15. Liturgical Ministry
16. Pet therapy at local nursing home
17. Religious Education – teacher's aide
18. Ronald McDonald House: cooked and served food
19. Served at Graduation and Confirmation receptions
20. Sang in Parish Youth Choir
21. Sang Christmas Carols at nursing home
22. Volunteered at Family Fun Day
23. Volunteered at Summer Mission
24. Volunteered at Noah's Ark
25. Volunteered at Special Olympics

*Christian service should reach out beyond the "family circle" to the larger Christian Community.
Hopefully, the candidate is already contributing as a responsible member of his/her family.*

Christian Service Project Reflection

*"Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there also will my servant be.
The Father will honor whoever serves me."* - John 12:26

1. A. Project Name: _____

Dates Completed: _____

What I did:

B. Project Name: _____

Dates Completed: _____

What I did:

C. Project Name: _____

Dates Completed: _____

What I did: _____

D. Project Name: _____

Dates Completed: _____

What I did: _____

2. Now that you have completed your service project(s), how would you describe the experience?

3. Did you feel that God was present as you were doing service for others?

4. How will you continue to be of service after Confirmation?

Saintly Reflection

As you prepare for the Sacrament of Confirmation, you begin to look for a Confirmation Name.

The Church strongly suggests that you use the name that your parents gave to you at Baptism, because Confirmation brings us into the fullness of our Baptismal Call. Confirmation is the renewal of the Baptismal promises that your parents made on your behalf when you were a baby.

Whatever name you choose, your own or that of a favorite saint, we ask that you do some research about your namesake. We would like you to explore how this saint offers you witness to walk more closely with Christ.

Reflection Guidelines:

- Find out if you were named after a beloved family member or a favorite saint.
- Whether you select a different name in Confirmation, or continue with your Baptismal name, you must tell why you are doing so in your paper.
- Find out who your patron saint is and tell us about his or her life.
- What did they do with their lives that made them worthy of sainthood?
- Why did you select this person as a role model for the Confirmation process?

Pray, reflect, and let the Holy Spirit guide you in your search.

This reflection should be at least 1 page in length and you are encouraged to include either a symbol or depiction of the saint. It can be neatly handwritten or typed. Be sure to put your name on the top of the paper or on the cover sheet. This assignment is a personal reflection paper. It is not a research paper, however, you are expected to use reliable sources for your information about the particular saint. At the end of your paper, please include a reference list of any sources that you have used. Use Internet resources with caution, as they are sometimes unreliable. Check with your catechists about some of the approved sites.

This assignment will be due on DATE.

When the Saints go marching in...

The Communion of Saints



Choose a Confirmation Name

You may use your Baptismal name or a name chosen in honor of a special saint you admire. It is required that you select the name of a saint.



Write a Saint Paper

Upon selecting a Saint's name, each of you will be required to research and write a paper on that Saint and tell why you chose that Saint for your Confirmation name. A web site may be helpful to you in this project.

References you may want to use:

Books about the Saints from the public library.

Books about the Saints from the St. Joseph library (contact the Faith Formation Office for times).

The following websites are recommended:

AmericanCatholic.com

NewAdvent.com

DisciplesNow.com

Lifeteen.com

(If you are able to find another reputable Catholic website, please contact the Faith Formation Office for verification.)

To help you get started:

Saint Name _____ Feast Day _____

Born _____ Died _____

Resources Used _____

What is important to you about this Saint?

My Patron – Sharing the Story of Your Saint

The tradition of taking on a new name to show a new role can be traced back to the Old Testament. When Abram was called to lead his people to believe in the one God, his name was changed from Abram to Abraham, “*Father of many nations*”. Again, in the New Testament, we find Simon’s name changed to Peter, meaning “rock”, because he was to become the rock upon which Jesus founded his Church.

Now that you are about to be confirmed, it is time to choose the name you will take as a sign of your growth in faith. You may also choose your Baptismal name as Confirmation is the completion of the Baptism experience.

“I believe in the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints . . .”

Blessed Teresa of Calcutta discovered God’s mission for her life in serving the poorest of the poor. Her simple yet profound message rings out clearly in today’s world: We are all called to this earth in order that God’s love and compassion might be given human form through our actions. She believed that:

The fruit of silence is prayer. The fruit of prayer is faith.

The fruit of faith is love. The fruit of love is service.

The fruit of service is peace.

Saint Research / Confirmation Patron

1. The saint I chose to pray to and imitate in my preparation for Confirmation is:

2. I chose this patron Saint because: _____

3. Pretend you are the Saint’s biographer. On the lines below, write a summary of your Saint’s life story.

4. What event in the life of this Saint most impressed you? Why?

5. What special virtues did this Saint have? _____

6. How could you imitate this Saint today? Be specific! _____

7. Explain why your Patron Saint is meaningful to you. _____

If your child was baptized at another church, ***please attach*** a copy of the baptismal certificate to this page.

Please note:

We cannot confirm any candidate if we do not have a copy of his/her Baptismal Certificate. Please ensure that we have a copy of his/her Baptismal Certificate with a raised seal again.

If Baptismal Certificates are in a foreign language, please attach a translation.

If there is any change to child's legal name or parent change through adoption, please attach copy of official court document. Information must be changed in the Baptismal Register and a copy of the legal document is required in order for parishes to make these changes.

Attach a copy of the Candidate's Baptismal Certificate to this page.

The Sacrament of Confirmation
With Bishop David A. Zubik
Bishop of Pittsburgh

As we continue to prepare for the Sacrament of Confirmation, parents and/or sponsors are invited to attend two sessions to learn more about what it means to grow in the Catholic Faith. In 2010, Bishop David A. Zubik provided resources for Catechists to use in immediate preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation. Refer to the resources provided by the Diocese of Pittsburgh, or contact the Department for Religious Education for more information.

These resources are best used in the context of immediate preparation and when the sponsor or parent is present to support the Candidate. Use these two sessions as opportunities to catechize parents, sponsors, and candidates, as well as to build community. Make the dates, times, and expectations of attendance clear in advance, sending out specific invitations to the parents and sponsors of Candidates. Be creative in the usage of these materials, and enthusiastic about this important opportunity for formation.

Session One:**2 Hours**

This is an excellent session for a parent or sponsor to attend with the Candidate, as students will relate that they enter into the Church through Baptism, the fundamental sacrament, and are fully initiated through Confirmation and Eucharist. The basics of sacramental life will be discussed, as well as the specific concepts about the Sacrament of Confirmation. In this session, we have an opportunity to remind students and adults that Confirmation is not “graduation from the Church”, but rather a time for making a deeper commitment to the Church.

Together, Candidates and sponsors or parents will reflect on Scripture and their collective Faith and Life Experiences, thus forming a closer bond as a community of Christ.

Suggestions:

- ❖ Select date near the end of the Immediate Preparation Time.
 - ❖ Allow for two hours to complete activities and video.
 - ❖ Welcome the group and provide overview of the time together.
 - ❖ Assign groups of 6, including adults and youth. Designate one leader to facilitate discussion.
 - ❖ Follow the Lesson Overview and administer lesson as indicated.
 - ❖ Provide opportunity for prayer, scripture, video review, discussion, and reflection.
 - ❖ If there is any information about the date, time, dress code, or rehearsal for the Sacrament of Confirmation taking place, this would be a suitable time to address those particulars.
 - ❖ Provide some refreshments for this special session and encourage community. If your parish has a youth ministry program, this is a good opportunity to invite the Youth Minister and youth to serve by providing and serving refreshments.
-

Session Two:

2 Hours

In this session, Candidates and adults will explore God's plan for life and how we are to live out our faith through the Gifts of the Holy Spirit. As groups reflect on the Scriptures provided and relate the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit with their daily life, all present will have an opportunity to grow more rooted in their Catholic Faith. In addition to the video presentation, it may be appropriate to invite the Youth Minister of the parish, teens, and/or young adults to attend and share a brief witness about how they are living their Catholic Faith now, after receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation. Other members of the parish family may also be invited to join the group or share a witness, represent a ministry, or simply be present in support.

Suggestions:

- ❖ Select date near the end of the *Immediate Preparation Time*.
- ❖ Allow for two hours to complete activities and video.
- ❖ Welcome the group back and provide overview of the time together.
- ❖ Assign groups of 6, including adults and youth. Designate one leader to facilitate discussion. If your parish has a youth ministry program, this is a good opportunity to invite the Youth Minister and youth to serve by facilitating small groups.
- ❖ Follow the Lesson Overview and administer lesson as indicated.
- ❖ Provide opportunity for prayer, scripture, video review, discussion, and reflection.
- ❖ If Candidates participated in the Rite of Enrollment, this would be a suitable time to remind them about their commitments and review the various opportunities for continued growth available to them.
- ❖ Provide some refreshments for this special session and encourage community.

Follow Up:

Ongoing

Encourage Candidates and adults to stay connected with each other, and with the parish community, through involvement with Youth Ministry and parish ministry. Share mailing lists, contact information, and the particular gifts that you have witnessed (in either the Candidates or the adults) with other parish ministry leaders and pray for each person to find their role in building up the Kingdom of God.

Activities with Students

The DOVE

Goal

*To provide an opportunity for parents and students to participate in a prayer experience and thoughtful representation of the way the Holy Spirit works in their lives.
This representation is to be shared with the entire faith community.*

Procedures

1. *Gather parents and candidates together for a reflection on 1 Corinthians 12:9-13:*

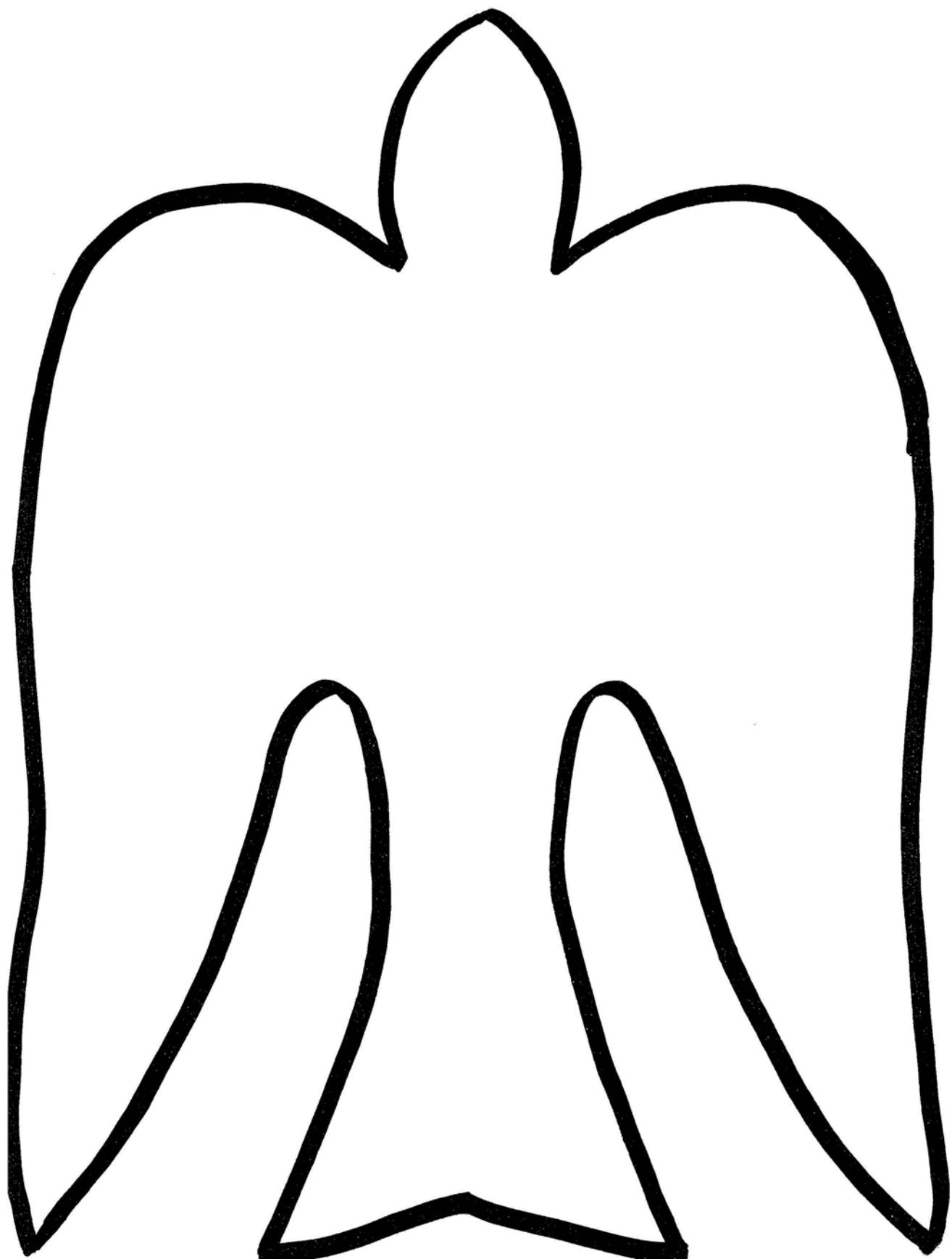
But as it is written:

"What eye has not seen, and ear has not heard, and what has not entered the human heart, what God has prepared for those who love him,"

this God has revealed to us through the Spirit.

For the Spirit scrutinizes everything, even the depths of God. Among human beings, who knows what pertains to a person except the spirit of the person that is within? Similarly, no one knows what pertains to God except the Spirit of God. We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit that is from God, so that we may understand the things freely given us by God. And we speak about them not with words taught by human wisdom, but with words taught by the Spirit, describing spiritual realities in spiritual terms.*

2. *Explain how the Dove is a symbol of the Holy Spirit. Connect the idea of raising our prayers to God with putting our prayers in writing. Highlight the concept of the Holy Spirit praying for us when we cannot (Romans 8:26). Invite candidates and parents to consider what this means in their own prayers lives, especially in this time of preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation.*
3. *Send parents and candidates off with the dove cut out and invite them to write their prayers of the Holy Spirit along the edge of the dove. *Recommendation is to use white doves with red pens.*
4. *Collect doves and attach doves together by wings and bodies to make large wreaths. These wreaths may be on display in the church during the Sacrament of Confirmation.*



Prayer for the Gifts of the Holy Spirit
Saint Alphonsus Liguori

Holy Spirit,
Divine Consoler,
I adore You as my true God,
with God the Father and God the Son.
I adore You and unite myself to the adoration
You receive from the angels and saints.

I give You my heart
and I offer my ardent thanksgiving
for all the grace which You never cease to bestow on me.

O Giver of all supernatural gifts,
who filled the soul of the Blessed Virgin Mary,
Mother of God, with such immense favors,
I beg You to visit me with Your grace
and Your love and to grant me the gift of holy fear,
so that it may act on me as a check to prevent me
from falling back into my past sins,
for which I beg pardon.

Grant me the gift of piety,
so that I may serve You for the future with increased fervor,
follow with more promptness Your holy inspirations,
and observe your divine precepts with greater fidelity.

Grant me the gift of knowledge,
so that I may know the things of God and,
enlightened by Your holy teaching, may walk,
without deviation, in the path of eternal salvation.

Grant me the gift of fortitude,
so that I may overcome courageously all the assaults of the devil,
and all the dangers of this world which threaten the
salvation of my soul.

Grant me the gift of counsel,
so that I may choose what is more conducive to my
spiritual advancement
and may discover the wiles and snares of the tempter.

Grant me the gift of understanding,
so that I may apprehend the divine mysteries
and by contemplation of heavenly things detach my thoughts
and affections from the vain things of this miserable world.

Grant me the gift of wisdom,
so that I may rightly direct all my actions,
referring them to God as my last end;
so that, having loved Him and served Him in this life,
I may have the happiness of possessing Him eternally in the next. Amen.

Prayer for the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit

O Lord Jesus Christ, Who,
before ascending into heaven,
didst promise to send the Holy Ghost
to finish Thy work in the souls
of Thy Apostles and Disciples,
deign to grant the same Holy Spirit to me,
that He may perfect in my soul
the work of Thy grace and Thy love.

Grant me the Spirit of Wisdom
that I may despise the perishable things of this world
and aspire only after the things that are eternal,

the Spirit of Understanding to enlighten my mind
with the light of Thy divine truth,

the Spirit of Counsel
that I may ever choose the surest way
of pleasing God and gaining Heaven,

the Spirit of Fortitude
that I may bear my cross with Thee,
and that I may overcome with courage
all the obstacles that oppose my salvation,

the Spirit of Knowledge
that I may know God and know myself
and grow perfect in the science of the Saints,

the Spirit of Piety
that I may find the service of God sweet and amiable,

the Spirit of Fear
that I may be filled with a loving reverence towards God,
and may dread in any way to displease Him.

Mark me, dear Lord,
with the sign of Thy true disciples
and animate me in all things with Thy Spirit.

Amen.

Come Holy Spirit

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created. And You shall renew the face of the earth.

O, God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit, did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may be truly wise and ever enjoy His consolations, Through Christ Our Lord, Amen.

Prayer to the Holy Spirit - Prayer of St. Augustine

Breathe into me, Holy Spirit,
that my thoughts may all be holy.

Move in me, Holy Spirit,
that my work, too, may be holy.

Attract my heart, Holy Spirit,
that I may love only what is holy.

Strengthen me, Holy Spirit,
that I may defend all that is holy.

Protect me, Holy Spirit,
that I may always be holy.

The Confirmation Retreat: A How to Guide



A retreat is, by definition, different from the ordinary.

A retreat is an opportunity to step back from daily life and reflect on God's presence, goodness, and grow in relationship with Him.

The *Catholic Encyclopedia* describes the necessity of such retreats: "*In the fever and agitation of modern life, the need of meditation and spiritual repose impresses itself on Christian souls who desire to reflect on their eternal destiny, and direct their life in this world towards God.*"

Components of a Retreat:

The Warm-up Starting a retreat with some developmentally and age appropriate "ice breaker" activity often helps the participants to open up and put down their guards before entering into the content portion of a retreat. During longer retreats, incorporating more than one "ice breaker" may be necessary.

Refer to www.thesource4ym.com/games or www.group-games.com for examples.

Prayer & Spiritual Component Setting the tone for the retreat by offering thoughtful prayer experiences and opportunities to connect with God are an important part of the retreat. Remember that everyone comes in to retreat from different places, and sometimes it's necessary to incorporate the multiple intelligences into prayer experiences in order to help them connect with God. Sometimes, developing a theme and building the retreat around that helps, especially with middle school youth.

Example: "Why Catholic?" with sessions called *Why Faith?*, *Why Church?*, *Why Catholic?*, *Why Sacraments?*, *Why Confirmed?*; or "Super Holy" with sessions themed around the Universal Call to Holiness, Grace, and the Gifts and Fruits of the Holy Spirit

Evangelistic Catechesis on topics and the theme is the hinge of every retreat. The presentations and approach of the presenter can “make or break” a retreat. This is important to consider, especially with confirmation retreats, because of the various experiences of the participants. Different stages of adolescence require different presentation styles. By approaching catechesis through the lens of evangelization, presenters can often hold the attention of the audience longer and have the ability to engage participants in personal conversion and relationship with Christ.

“Catechesis for life in Christ seeks to inspire individuals and communities to allow life in Christ to be the vital principle of all their activity.”
(Summary of the National Directory for Catechesis, p. 24)

Sacrament i.e. Reconciliation, Liturgy, Adoration

Retreats are great opportunities to expose young people to different experiences of the sacramental life of the Church. It’s important to appropriately prepare young people for these experiences and take the time to process and explain what is happening.

Examples:

- Explaining why we adore the Blessed Sacrament and what the significance of Exposition and Benediction is.
- Offering the readings for liturgy and challenging retreatants to follow along and think about how they connect with what the Priest or Deacon shares in his homily.
- Preparing young people for the Sacrament of Reconciliation by offering them an Examination of Conscience for youth and explaining Reconciliation as a testament of God’s Mercy.

Discussion/Processing Offering discussion guides, or better yet, trained facilitators to affirm.

Some questions to include in processing and discussion guides:

- How would you describe your relationship with God? Would you like to see anything about your relationship with God change?
- Why do you want to be Confirmed?
- What do you think about....*something in relation to the topics of the talks...?*
- What did you hear the speaker (*or better yet, use the name of the presenter*) share today that stood out to you?

Things that you may want to add

Adult or Teen Facilitators trained in evangelization, and confirmed disciples of Christ. People who are walking with the Lord in their every day life, living as witnesses, and comfortable sharing their faith with others are excellent examples to young people.

Different Voices often enhance the messages being proclaimed. Consider inviting guests from the community, parish, or region.

Before inviting them, consider the criteria for facilitators:

People who are walking with the Lord in their every day life, living as witnesses, and comfortable in sharing their faith with others



Contemporary Music presents an encounter with God through the vernacular language and engaging melodies which young people today respond to remarkably. However, many of our tradition Sacred Hymns are beautiful and offer a sense of familiarity, enhancing prayer experiences. Consider incorporating both in the retreat, using a mix of both for background music during prayer, or perhaps in the Liturgy or Adoration. Some contemporary music is so engaging that it would be appropriate to have in the back ground during lunch and free time.

Personal Connection with community in the form of letters, parishioners serving during the retreat, etc. This will help young people to feel comfortable in celebrating and practicing their Catholic faith for years to come.

Connection with the Church in various ways, like personal invitations to be lectors or catechist aids for Religious Education. Follow up in the parish helps to strengthen the concept that Confirmation is not the end, but rather an important part of the journey of faith.

SUPER HOLY



Catechetical Themes: Our Universal Call to Holiness

"There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to *your call*" (Eph. 4:4).

St. Francis de Sales is known for his teaching that all Christians are called to holiness. Blessed Jose del Rio, and the martyrs who marched before and after him, were known for living this call. The teaching of the universal call to holiness did not originate with the Second Vatican Council, as it has always been part of the Christian tradition. Consider the very words that Christ spoke to His disciples.

"Universal call," means, quite simply, that *all* men and women are called to holiness. Pope Pius XI explains our "universal call" in *Casti Connubii*, as: "*All men of every condition, in whatever state of life they are, can and ought to imitate that most perfect example of holiness, Christ himself, and by God's grace to arrive at the summit of perfection.*" (n. 23) The Second Vatican Council clearly outlines components of this holiness in Chapter 5 of *Lumen Gentium*.

The Church and Holiness

"The Church is believed to be indefectibly holy" (n. 39), for Christ gave himself up for her "that he might sanctify her," uniting her to himself as his body and perfecting her by the gift of the Holy Spirit. **Because the Church is holy, all members of the Church are called to be holy, "to become what they are," and to manifest this holiness in their lives, by faithfulness to the movement of the Spirit, by the practice of charity.** This is of particular importance to those preparing for the Sacrament of Confirmation. An explanation of the relationship of Confirmandi and the Church is developmentally appropriate for early adolescents as they develop a sense of community and responsibility.

Christ and Holiness

Christ himself spoke of holiness of life to all: "*Be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.*" He provided the means for holiness, sending the Spirit, who pours love into men's hearts, that they might love God above all, and love each other as Christ loves them. In the Sacrament of baptism, the faithful put on Christ, becoming children of God and sharers in the divine nature. Thus they are made holy by the grace of God. They must then hold on to this holiness and live it out in their concrete lives, they must live in a manner that is fitting to those who are holy. Confirmation is an affirmation of the call to holiness and grace abounds.

The Council concludes then, that all members of the Church, all Christ's faithful, whatever their rank or status, are called to the fullness of Christian life and the perfection of charity.

Attainment of Holiness

The concrete way of attaining holiness and the perfection of charity depends on one's situation and duties, yet some things can be said in general:

(1) *Stewardship*: We should use our strengths and talents as a gift from Christ. We should use our personal gifts and fulfill our duties in the spirit of faith working through love.

(2) *Discipleship*: We should follow Christ and become like him, seeking the Father's will in all things, the glory of God and the good of our neighbor.

(3) *Gratitude*: We should receive all things with faith from the hand of the heavenly Father.

In summary, we as followers of Christ can take on these basic attitudes:

the spirit to accept all things as coming from the loving hand of God, and the aim to do all things in accordance with God's will out of love for him.

Holiness is first of all a gift of grace, the gift of love by which we love God above all things and our neighbor for God's sake. But in order for love to grow, we must cooperate with this grace, completing what God has begun in us. (n. 42)

Some actions flowing from grace are common to all Christians: the sacraments, especially the Eucharist, participation in the liturgy, prayer, self-denial, service of our brothers and sisters, and the practice of all the virtues. All such actions are to be ruled by charity, enlivened by charity, and expressions of charity.

One of the most exceptional expressions of love, which are not actually common to all Christians, are given particular mention by the Council:

Martyrdom

The greatest proof of love is martyrdom. There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for Christ and one's brethren. Not all will be faced with martyrdom, but all must be prepared to confess Christ, whatever may come, whether it means losing one's job, one's reputation, or even one's life.

Consider the story of Blessed Jose del Rio—*attached*.

Scriptural References:

John 10:10; Jeremiah 1:5; Jeremiah 29:11; Ephesians 1:4; Ephesians 4:4

Catechism of the Catholic Church References

Part One: The Profession of Faith (#26-1065)

Man's Capacity for God (#26-49)

Man's Response to God (#142-184) including Characteristics of Faith

Understanding God's Grace: (#1999-2005)

YouCat References

Part Two: How We Celebrate the Christian Mysteries (p. 101)

Part Three: How We Are to Have Life in Christ (p. 161)

Forms of Prayer

Spontaneous Prayer, Adoration & Benediction, Prayer before meals, Closing Prayer service

I. Universal Call to Holiness, What it is to be Super Holy. 20 minutes

II. Priorities: Making Space for God. 20 minutes

Priorities Drama

Small Groups

What would it be like to make space for God?

How are you making space for God now?

Are there people in your life who are making space for God in some ways? Describe.

III. Eucharistic Adoration & Reconciliation 45 Minutes – 1 Hour

Witness on living in Grace and having a relationship with the Holy Trinity
Instructions on Adoration (also have a teen-friendly hand out)

IV. Grace, Fills Us. 10 minutes.

- *What is grace?*
- *Where does it come from?*
- *Why are the sacraments important?*
- *How do you feel after Reconciliation?*
- *How does Grace change your life at Confirmation?*

LUNCH & Game Break 45 Minutes - 1 hour.

V. Gifts and Fruits of the Holy Spirit: What we need to be Super Holy 20 Minutes.

VI. Large group discussion: Can we be Super Holy? 15 minutes.

VII. Closing prayer: Link in a chain vocation prayer service 10 minutes

Super Holy Introduction:

Hi, I'm _____.
Brief introduction.

What do you think it means to be “Super Holy”? (*invite several youth to answer the question*)

We weren’t just called to get through life. We were called to a life with a purpose. We were made for greatness. We were made to live a life that is full, blessed, and happy.

We were made to be Super Holy. Today we’re going to take a look at what that means.

To do that today, we need to remember a couple of things:

- **Respect**—Active listening, respecting property, etc.
- **Equality**—No one on the team is any better than you, you’re not any better than us, etc....
- **Investment**—What you put in determines what you get out.

Introduce other people helping with the day and invite youth to participate in icebreaker game.

Possible ice breaker game: *Heaven, Hell, & Purgatory*

This game is a game similar to tag. One way to introduce it is to tell them that you want to see what they have learned in Religious Education over the years. One wall is Heaven, one wall is Hell. The space between is Purgatory. When leader calls out Heaven, all run to Heaven wall, etc. The last people left in the middle are out. As the game goes on, add groups and moves, like:

- Lazarus (lay on the floor)
- Sacraments (groups of 7)
- Holy Family (group of 2 boys and 1 girl)
- Trinity (group of 3)
- 4 Horsemen of the Apocalypse

Super Holy Talk Sheet 1:Super Holy

Introduction:

"I SEE LOVE" video from youtube...featuring scenes from "The Passion of the Christ" as a segue into the universal call with the question: "What is it all about?" meaning life, what is life all about? And letting students sit with that thought for a few moments...

In the meantime, pass out note cards and markers. Ask students to write down what they think it means to be super holy. After they write down their response, instruct them to put that in their pocket and not look at it again until after the retreat

Introduce the term "**Universal Call of Holiness**" what do you think this means (break down to each word) then give the description.

- Connect with the foundation of the faith, "**Who built the Church?**" Jesus did..."on to this rock I build my church"..."**Why?**" To be holy...Jesus gave himself for that purpose.
- Jesus also sent the Holy Spirit to guide the Church, to be with us, everywhere, everyday...as a means to make us "Super Holy".
- In **BAPTISM**, God makes us holy by His grace.
- In the **EUCARIST**, Jesus comes to us.
- In **CONFIRMATION**, we receive an outpouring of the gifts and fruits that we need to live a "super holy" life.
- **You do not need to be perfect to be super holy!** Christ loves us just as we are, but as we draw nearer to him, we want to imitate him more. The sacraments help us to imitate Him more and grow closer.

NOTE: Referencing some of the original comments about what it means to be super holy, students may say, "To follow the commandments", "To get by life without messing it up too much", and things like that. Very few will actually get it from the start, so try to reference some of their original assumptions with this next section:

- Do we just want to get by life? Does God want us to stay in a box and just try not to get into too much trouble?
- No. God wants us to have a full and happy life. John 10:10b
- John Paul 2 said, "**True holiness does not mean a flight from the world; rather, it lies in the effort to incarnate the Gospel in everyday life, in the family, at school and at work, and in social and political involvement.**"
- Can you show how much you love the Lord everyday? Living out loud? (Talk them through some scenarios at school, at home, etc.)

Moments of Super Holy witnesses: The healing of the servant of the Centurion is a good example of how humility makes room for super holy character to shine through. (Read this: Matthew 8:5-8)

Closing: To live a super holy life, we must be humble enough to change things that might get in the way of that. Some times it's hard to align our priorities to what helps us become super holy, but it's never too late to start!

Background for Catechist/Speaker:

From <http://www.nbcccongress.org/features/universal-call-to-holiness.asp>

Universal Call to Holiness and Apostolate is a teaching of the Roman Catholic Church that all people are called to be holy. (See Lumen Gentium, Chapter V)^[1] This Church teaching states that all within the church should live holy lives.

Living a holy life, as defined by the Catholic Church, has little to do with perfection (see the Catechism of the Catholic Church, Second Edition, Chapter Two.) Rather, it is a lifelong process of seeking God himself, through the person of Jesus Christ.

God's holy people are simply those who love God and live in Him.

The universal call to holiness in the Roman Catholic Church is rooted in baptism, a sacrament which configures a person to Jesus Christ who is God and man, thus uniting a person with the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, bringing him in communion with intra-trinitarian life.

John Paul II states in his apostolic Letter *Novo Millennio Ineunte*^[2], his master plan for the new millennium, a "program for all times", that holiness is not only a state but a task, whereby Christians should strive for a full Christian life, imitating Christ, the Son of God, who gave his life for God and for his neighbor. This entails a "training in the art of prayer".

From the YouCat:

Are we all supposed to become “saints”?

(Article 342)

Yes. The purpose of our life is to be united with God in love and to correspond entirely to God’s wishes. We should allow God “to live his life in us” (Mother Teresa). That is what it means to be holy: a “saint”. [2012-2016, 2028-2029]

Every man asks himself the question: Who am I and why am I here, how do I find myself? Faith answers: Only in HOLINESS does man become that for which God created him. Only in holiness does man find real harmony between himself and his Creator. Holiness, however, is not some sort of self-made perfection; rather, it is union with the incarnate love that is Christ. Anyone who gains new life in this way finds himself and becomes holy.

“Holiness is not the luxury of a few people, but a simple duty for you and me.”-
Blessed Teresa of Calcutta

Super Holy Talk Sheet 2:Priorities

With so many great things to choose from in high school and even more as you get older, it's hard sometimes to make time for God.

We all have to decide to have a relationship with God, since prayer, like all relationships, is about communication and time.

Watch as _____ struggles with setting his/her priorities on this relationship with God, and see what kinds of challenges might be similar in your life.

Characters in drama:

Main Character	Coach	Teacher
Jesus (in alb)	Parent	Youth Minister
	Best Friend	Girlfriend/Boyfriend

***Rehearsal required!*

After Drama:

Now that you've seen what _____ had to choose from and what God's response was and is, write down on your note card three things that might pull on you as you work on your relationship with God. Remember, these are for your eyes only, so be honest.

****These note cards will go with them into Adoration and Confession.*

Super Holy Talk Sheet 3: Adoration

Why are we here, in this church, and why do we pray?

"Prayer in my opinion is nothing else than a close sharing between friends; it means taking time frequently to be alone with him who we know loves us." - St. Teresa of Avila

In John 3:16, we hear that famous words, *"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life."* God truly desires that we might be with Him, so much so, that He moved heaven and earth to show us that.

John 1:14 *"And the Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us, and we saw his glory, the glory as of the Father's only Son, full of grace and truth."*

This passage describes the **Incarnation**—which really tells us that God wants a relationship with us so much that he lowered himself to humanity and died.

Before the Resurrection, we know Christ endured the Crucifixion.

"Christ, our Redeemer, chose the Cross so as to bear the guilt of the world and to suffer the pain of the world. So he brought the world back home to God by his perfect love. God could not show his love more forcibly than by allowing himself in the person of the Son to be nailed to the Cross for us. Crucifixion was the most shameful and most horrible method of execution in antiquity. It was forbidden to crucify Roman citizens, whatever crimes they were guilty of. Thereby God entered into the most abysmal sufferings of mankind." (YouCat 101)

Before the Crucifixion, Christ instituted the Eucharist, and the call to love.

In John Chapters 13-14, Jesus issues a call to love among the disciples. He demonstrates the call to serve as He washes their feet. He reminds them about being true to the Commandments and the greatest, of loving God. He tells them that he is leaving, but promises to be with them (and with us) always, and speaks these words in Matthew 26:26-30:

While they were eating, Jesus took bread, said the blessing, broke it, and giving it to his disciples said, "Take and eat; this is my body." Then he took a cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which will be shed on behalf of many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you, from now on I shall not drink this fruit of the vine until the day when I drink it with you new in the kingdom of my Father."

So we ask, WHY? Why did Jesus do this? Why are we here?

In John 15: 11-14, Jesus says, ***"I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and your joy may be complete. This is my commandment: love one another as I love you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you."***

“Our sharing in the Body and Blood of Christ has no other purpose than to transform us into that which we receive.” —Pope St. Leo the Great.

From the YouCat:

482 The first Christians prayed intensively. The early Church was moved by the Holy Spirit, who had come down upon the disciples and to whom they owed all their influence. “They held steadfastly to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of the bread and to the prayers” (Acts 2:42).

485 Every person who understands that he is God’s creature will humbly recognize the Almighty and adore him. Christian adoration, however, sees not only the greatness, omnipotence, and holiness of God. It also kneels before the divine Love that became man in Jesus Christ. Someone who really adores God kneels down before him or prostrates himself on the ground. This expression to the truth about the relation between man and God: He is great and we are little. At the same time, man is never greater than when he freely and devoutly kneels down before God. The unbeliever who is seeking God and is beginning to pray can find God in this way.

Adoration & Divine Worship:

We are here today, in Adoration, before the Real Presence of Jesus. Here, in the Monstrance (or Tabernacle), Jesus is humbled again. Taking on the appearance and form of wheat. We are free to gaze upon Him, talk with Him, worship Him, seek Him, and find Him. Pope Benedict XVI teaches us that ***“Worship...is not a luxury, but a priority. To seek Jesus must be the constant desire of believers, young people and adults, of the faithful and of their pastors.”***

The Christ the disciples experiences as they gathered and broke bread was not a vague, fuzzy recollection, but the real, living, healing, transforming presence of the One who had walked with them and changed their lives. (The Catholic Faith Handbook for Youth, p. 345) **Who is He to you?**

“God would have given us something greater if he had had something greater than himself.” —St. John Vianney

Background for Catechist/Speaker, Preparation:

Exposition, the custom of taking the Eucharist from the tabernacle and placing it in a special vessel called a **monstrance**, designated to hold a host and make it visible, would normally last as long as the faithful are there to pray. **Benediction** is a special prayer ritual and blessing with the Blessed Sacrament, given by a priest. These devotions developed as extensions of Eucharistic adoration. (The Catholic Faith Handbook for Youth, p. 347)

Find out if a priest or deacon will be available for Adoration and Exposition.

Find out if he would be willing to give this talk, using the outline.

Other considerations:

Will there be music, along with silence? *You may want to use soft, reflective music at this time.*

How will bibles, note cards, and other prayer materials be distributed? Will specific passages be marked for youth to reflect on?

Are the Benediction prayers available where the youth are sitting, in the missals, or are additional resources required?

Will Reconciliation be available at this time? *Are youth prepared? Have they received a confession guide and examination of conscience? Will the youth have adequate time before the Blessed Sacrament before Reconciliation? Are there enough priests available to serve the youth? (General guidelines to follow are 1 priest to 6 youth, with one hour available)*

If **Reconciliation** will be offered, include this scripture in the talk and provide context:

*For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, they are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption, which is in Christ Jesus.
(Romans 3:23-24)*

Refer to or photocopy page 268 in the YouCat to demonstrate various prayer postures for students.

Super Holy Talk Sheet 4: Grace Fills Us

Opening: Segue from Reconciliation/Adoration into Grace

- Ask them what it felt like to be in adoration
- (If Reconciliation was available) How did you feel after Reconciliation?

Consider these two scriptures:

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, they are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption, which is in Christ Jesus. (Romans 3:23-24)

A thief comes only to steal and slaughter and destroy; I came so that they might have life and have it more abundantly. (John 10:10)

What do they have in common? Grace, which comes from God.

If we were to rely only on ourselves and our own strength, we would not get far in our attempts to be good, consider Romans 3:23...however, through faith we discover that we are God's children and that God makes us strong. When God gives us strength, we call this grace. But what is it really?

What is grace?

Grace is God's favor to us....it is the free and undeserved help that God gives to us so that we can respond to him and share in his friendship and eternal life. Grace is participation in the life of God.

Sanctifying Grace is the habitual, permanent grace received in Baptism that enables us to live with God, act by his love, and inherit Heaven. Think about it—it's the new life that we receive in Baptism, and we are brought into His family.

Actual Grace refers to the ways God intervenes in our lives, either at the beginning of our conversion to Christ or as we work toward being more holy.

There are also sacramental graces, which are received when we participated in the sacraments, ever heard of "State of Grace"? That is the sanctifying grace at work through the sacraments! **And special graces, or charisms**, which are both ordinary and extraordinary, but whose common purpose is to serve the Church....ever heard of "Grace of State"? That is the special grace given to those who have responsibilities for life and ministries in the Church (It's working for me right now as I share this with you!)

I guess you could say that **Grace fills us**. As the world takes so much from us, we are desperately in need of God's grace to get through the moment, the day, etc. (Refer back to scriptures)

How does Grace change your life at Confirmation?

- Openness to the charisms, the gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit.
- Growing desire for conversion, for answers, for truth
- The actual grace at work as men and women of God, growing in relationship with the Lord
- Share some examples of what the various gifts of the Holy Spirit look like in every day life.

Background for Catechist/Speaker:

See also pages 300-301 in The Catholic Faith Handbook for Youth

From the Catechism of the Catholic Church:

1987 The grace of the Holy Spirit has the power to justify us, that is, to cleanse us from our sins and to communicate to us "the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ" and through Baptism:³⁴

But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. For we know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. The death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves as dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.³⁵

1989 The first work of the grace of the Holy Spirit is *conversion*, effecting justification in accordance with Jesus' proclamation at the beginning of the Gospel: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."³⁸ Moved by grace, man turns toward God and away from sin, thus accepting forgiveness and righteousness from on high. "Justification is not only the remission of sins, but also the sanctification and renewal of the interior man."³⁹

1990 Justification *detaches man from sin* which contradicts the love of God, and purifies his heart of sin. Justification follows upon God's merciful initiative of offering forgiveness. It reconciles man with God. It frees from the enslavement to sin, and it heals.

1991 Justification is at the same time *the acceptance of God's righteousness* through faith in Jesus Christ. Righteousness (or "justice") here means the rectitude of divine love. With justification, faith, hope, and charity are poured into our hearts, and obedience to the divine will is granted us.

1993 Justification establishes *cooperation between God's grace and man's freedom*. On man's part it is expressed by the assent of faith to the Word of God, which invites him to conversion, and in the cooperation of charity with the prompting of the Holy Spirit who precedes and preserves his assent:

When God touches man's heart through the illumination of the Holy Spirit, man himself is not inactive while receiving that inspiration, since he could reject it; and yet, without God's grace, he cannot by his own free will move himself toward justice in God's sight.⁴²

1994 Justification is the *most excellent work of God's love* made manifest in Christ Jesus and granted by the Holy Spirit. It is the opinion of St. Augustine that "the justification of the wicked is a greater work than the creation of heaven and earth," because "heaven and earth will pass away but the salvation and justification of the elect . . . will not pass away."⁴³ He holds also that the justification of sinners surpasses the creation of the angels in justice, in that it bears witness to a greater mercy.

1997 Grace is a *participation in the life of God*. It introduces us into the intimacy of Trinitarian life: by Baptism the Christian participates in the grace of Christ, the Head of his Body. As an "adopted son" he can henceforth call God "Father," in union with the only Son. He receives the life of the Spirit who breathes charity into him and who forms the Church.

1999 The grace of Christ is the gratuitous gift that God makes to us of his own life, infused by the Holy Spirit into our soul to heal it of sin and to sanctify it. It is the *sanctifying or deifying grace* received in Baptism. It is in us the source of the work of sanctification:⁴⁸

Therefore if any one is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold, the new has come. All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself.⁴⁹

2002 God's free initiative demands *man's free response*, for God has created man in his image by conferring on him, along with freedom, the power to know him and love him. The soul only enters freely into the communion of love. God immediately touches and directly moves the heart of man. He has placed in man a longing for truth and goodness that only he can satisfy. The promises of "eternal life" respond, beyond all hope, to this desire:

If at the end of your very good works . . . you rested on the seventh day, it was to foretell by the voice of your book that at the end of our works, which are indeed "very good" since you have given them to us, we shall also rest in you on the sabbath of eternal life.⁵²

Super Holy Talk Sheet 5: Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Introduction: Water, fire, a cloud and light, a dove...these symbols of the Holy Spirit have meaning, they are not just words. Get the students to share their thoughts about some of these symbols... When we talk about **believing in the Holy Spirit**, we should acknowledge the **hidden nature...yet known by His Works!**

YouCat Articles 113-120

"The working of the Holy Spirit deepens our interior life. Connected with this is a search for silence, an aversion to inopportune speech." -Heinrich Spaeman

The Holy Spirit makes me receptive to God; he teaches me to pray and helps me to be there for others {YouCat120} Augustine calls the Holy Spirit "The quiet guest of our soul". Anyone who wants to sense his presence must be quiet. Often this Guest speaks very softly within us and with us, for instance, in the voice of our conscience or through other interior and exterior promptings... The more receptive we are to the Holy Spirit in us, the more he becomes the master of our life, the sooner he will bestow on us even today his charisms for the building up of the Church.

Reference: CCC Articles 687-688

Connect the idea of a confirmation party with the idea of the gifts of the Holy Spirit....

- The gifts and cards that friends and family may give to you are nice, but what if you don't open them?
- The gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit are for us to use and to share...How would we use these?
- Wisdom, Understanding, Right Judgment (Prudence), Courage (Fortitude), Knowledge, Reverence (Piety), Wonder and Awe
- The fruits are for usage too! When would these fruits be helpful?
- Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Generosity, Faithfulness, Gentleness, Self-Control

Demonstration:

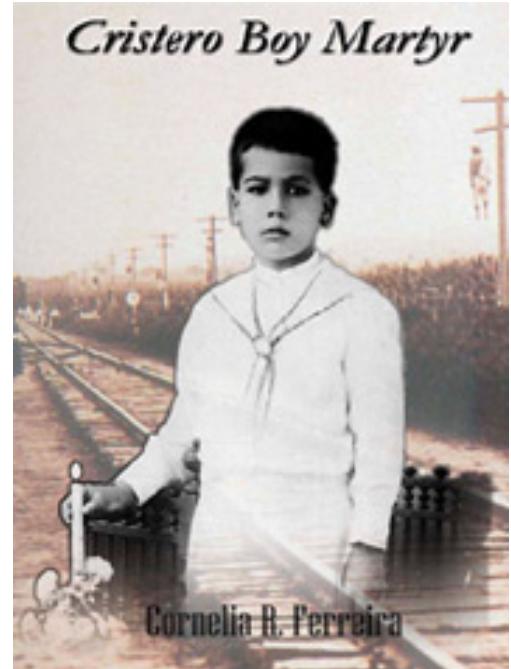
- Get one volunteer
- Get one clear glass and fill it with milk. *Explain that when God pours life into us, He has a plan!*
- Ask volunteer to taste the milk. *What does it taste like?*
- Pour in a generous amount of Hershey Syrup and add a spoon. **DO NOT STIR!** Say, "*At our baptism, the Holy Spirit is poured upon us to fill us with grace*". Go ahead, take a sip. *What's that taste like?*
- Add a little more Hershey Syrup and stir it up. Say, "*At confirmation, the Gifts of the Holy Spirit are stirred up within us, so that we might live the sweet life God has planned.*" Go ahead, how's that taste?

Blessed Jose del Rio

by Chris Stefanik, Archdiocese of Denver

Blessed José: teen martyr of the 20th century

The 80th anniversary of the death of one of my heroes is coming up on Feb. 10. Blessed José Sanchez del Rio was martyred during the persecution of Catholics that occurred in the early part of the 20th century in Mexico. He joined a Catholic group knowing that he was putting his life on the line. When the authorities caught him, they put him in jail. His ticket to freedom was simply to renounce his Catholic faith.



They made him witness the hanging of a fellow Catholic to scare him into submission. Instead, he encouraged his fellow inmate saying, "You will be in Heaven before me. Prepare a place for me. Tell Christ the King I shall be with him soon."

José's father tried to pay a ransom for his son's life but raised the money too late. When his time came, soldiers shaved off the soles of his feet and made him walk through his town. Time and again they offered him freedom and a safe return to his parents if only he would say "Death to Christ the King." Groaning in pain, he refused their offer, shouting, "Long live Christ the King! Long live our Lady of Guadalupe!"

They taunted him and asked what they should tell his parents. "That I'll see them in heaven" was his reply. They walked him to the cemetery, pointed their guns at him, and offered him freedom one last time. "Long live Christ the King!" he shouted again. The soldiers opened fire. Before receiving the shot that ended his life, he drew a cross in the dirt with his own blood and kissed it. Blessed José was only 14.

Blessed Jose Sanchez del Rio was beatified by Pope Benedict XVI on November 20, 2005.

article by Christopher Stefanick :
<http://www.archden.org/dcr//news.php?e=455&s=3&a=9581>

SUPER HOLY

THE MISSION OF MY LIFE

God has created me to do Him some definite service.

He has committed some work to me which He has not committed to another.

I have my mission. I may never know it in this life, but I shall be told it in the next. I am a link in a chain, a bond of connection between persons.

**He has not created me for naught.
I shall do good; I shall do His work.**

I shall be an angel of peace, a preacher of truth in my own place, while not intending it if I do but keep His commandments.

**Therefore, I will trust Him, whatever I am.
I can never be thrown away.**

*If I am in sickness, my sickness may serve Him, in perplexity, my perplexity may serve Him. If I am in sorrow, my sorrow may serve Him.
He does nothing in vain.*

He knows what He is about.

He may take away my friends. He may throw me among strangers. He may make me feel desolate, make my spirits sink, hide my future from me.

Still, He knows what He is about.

A Prayer by Cardinal Newman



CONFIRMATION PARENT MEETING

Purpose

"As the Body of Christ, we, all the baptized of the Church, have an important role. Let no one ever question their importance. Let no one ever feel disregarded in the Church. Let all the members of the Church as the Body of Christ embrace what it means to embody Christ."
—Bishop David Zubik, *The Church Alive!*

The purpose of the parent meeting is to bring parents and guardians of youth deeper into the Christian mystery, via the parish community; to support them in their role and spirituality; to catechize, evangelize, and minister to parents with particular care and sensitivity of their vocation. After the introduction and preliminary discussion with parents and other adults present, move through the meeting using this opportunity for catechesis and formation of the adults. Continue to pastorally lead this session in collaboration with other parish leaders and refer to the meeting agendas and catechetical background notes found in this resource.

Particulars of the immediate preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation should be discussed and pertinent information should be distributed, however, it is not to be the primary focus of the parent meeting.

Outline

A basic outline is provided. Please allow 60-90 minutes for the following:

- Sign in, welcoming, light refreshments
- Introductions and Opening Prayer
- Invitation into New Life in Christ (Evangelization Component-10 minutes)
- Catechesis on Confirmation and Sacraments of the Church (Teaching Component-10 minutes)
- Discussion on Catholic Identity (large groups or small groups -15 minutes)
- Formation and Support in Vocation of Parenthood (15-20 minutes)
- Practical Items for Immediate Preparation for Sacrament (10 minutes)
- Closing Prayer

Parent Meeting Considerations:

- Invite pastor, principal, catechetical administrator, youth minister, and catechists to be present. These people should be present especially at the beginning and end of the meeting, involved in meeting and greeting all parents in attendance.
- Supply light refreshments and beverages. It's amazing how people will warm up to each other with this sort of distraction. Invite the grade level catechists to serve in this capacity, and to wear name tags with their name, and "Catechist, Grade #".
- The presentation components should be brief, yet well-prepared and thoughtful. Use the talk points included, or invite a guest speaker, pastor, or deacon to offer a brief teaching.
- Provide paper handouts at the end of the meeting with practical items for immediate preparation. Do not spend too much time at the meeting on reading these materials, rather, seek to build a relationship with the parents and invite them into a deeper relationship with Christ and the Church.

Language

The language of the parent meeting is very important. Use the following notes to incorporate catechesis and the language of the Church in the parent meeting, as well as some tips for discussions with parents.

Welcome! We are looking forward to sharing with you this journey of faith as you prepare your children to receive the sacrament of Confirmation. As you will see for yourselves, as well as in partnering to prepare your children, Confirmation preparation involves learning, sharing, serving, fellowship, spiritual growth and living fully our Catholic faith. **You, as parents, grandparents, and guardians, will be given the opportunity to learn more about your own Catholic faith and what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ.** This gathering is not merely for handing out papers and reviewing policies, but rather an opportunity for us to support each other in our faith journey. I want to invite you to join your child or grandchild in this exciting journey in a personal way.

Since we learn best from each other, I'd like to invite you into the discussion today.

Consider your own memories and experiences of growing up in the Catholic faith. What do you remember about Religious Education, Catholic Schooling, and preparing for the Sacraments? (*invite some participation*)

Confirmation is the Sacrament in which one is enriched by the gifts of the Holy Spirit and bound more perfectly to the Church. It strengthens us and obliges us to be witnesses to Christ by word and deed and to spread and defend the faith.

Therefore, it is important for us as adults to understand what that means for us at this time in our lives. Confirmation has been known to many as the Sacrament in which one enters into full membership in the Catholic Church. This is true, and yet it is untrue. At Baptism we become full members of the Catholic Church. For many of us, this gift of faith was handed on to us by loved ones, just as many of you passed this on to your children. Confirmation marks a special time to begin acting upon our faith in a very outward way.

What are some of the ways that you, as adults, parents and guardians, are living your Catholic faith in your adult lives? (*invite some participation, although you might have to offer some suggestions here—it's difficult for some to connect “living the faith” Some examples: helping with Religious Education at catechists or aides, serving at Mass, cooking for Meals on Wheels, visiting an elderly neighbor, attending a women’s bible study or men’s fellowship...)*

I'd like to personally invite you to live your faith “out loud” as you witness to the special young person in your life. **They may not always listen to what you say, but they certainly are learning from what you do.**

Confirmation perfects Baptismal grace; it is the sacrament which gives us the Holy Spirit in order to root us more deeply as children of God, incorporate us more firmly into Christ, strengthen our bond with the Church, associate us more closely with her mission, and help us to bear witness to the Christian faith in words accompanied by deeds.

Confirmation, like Baptism, imprints a spiritual mark or indelible character on the Christian soul; for this reason one can receive this sacrament only once.

A Christian does not live as a child of God through his or her own efforts alone, but through the grace of God. We see this in a practical way when we look back on our own lives and the lives of others, even the lives of saints. Therefore, it is our duty to seek the grace that God offers us in order to live our lives as Christians in the way that God intends. (*A personal example might be used here: i.e. the strength faith offers during the loss of a loved one; the courage to stand up for what we truly believe regarding a moral issue etc.*)

1. The Christian Formation of Every Person

- a. The sacraments of Christian initiation—Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist—lay the *foundations* of every Christian life...¹

The elements that form the environment in which people are led to the holy mysteries of rebirth include an experience of the community's life and service, the worship of God and divine support in prayer, and the appropriation of God's word through catechesis.

The Catholic community also recognizes the unique and essential place of family life as the primary context for the human and Christian formation of every person. This is especially true for the young, in whose lives parents play such a crucial role, along with other family members, in sharing the message, spirit, values, and traditions of the Church.

- b. John Paul II said, "As the family goes, so goes the nation and so goes the whole world in which we live."

2. **The Church exists to evangelize.** Christ calls all members of the Church to proclaim Christ to every generation. Christians evangelize by professing faith in Christ, celebrating the Christian mysteries in the Liturgy, praying, and embracing the Christian way of life.²

¹ CCC 1212

² Summary of the National Directory for Catechesis, p.7, USCCB

- 3. Explanation of the Sacrament** "The purpose of the sacraments is to sanctify men, to build up the Body of Christ and, finally, to give worship to God. Because they are signs they also instruct. They not only presuppose faith, but by words and objects they also nourish, strengthen, and express it. That is why they are called 'sacraments of faith.'³
 - 4. "Preparation for confirmation should aim at leading the Christian toward a more intimate union with Christ and a more lively familiarity with the Holy Spirit...To this end catechesis for confirmation should strive to awaken a sense of belonging to the Church of Jesus Christ, the universal Church as well as the parish community. The latter bears special responsibility for the preparation of the confirmands."⁴**
-

³ CCC 1123

⁴ CCC 1309

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS

"As the primary educators of their children: parents are to be intimately involved in the catechesis for Confirmation. This will help them renew and strengthen their own faith, besides enabling them to set a better example for their children."(NCD, no. 119)

Because parents:

- Are the primary educators of their children
- Are responsible for initiating their children into the sacramental life
- Serve as models for their child by being committed Christians

Parents should expect to:

- ❖ Worship with your families regularly
- ❖ Be actively involved in the Confirmation preparation of the candidate.
- ❖ Engage in discussions about the material being studied including sharing your understanding and perspective.
- ❖ Encourage your child to reflect and thoughtfully consider the decision to receive the sacrament of Confirmation.
- ❖ Pray for your child's spiritual growth every day.
- ❖ Support and encourage completion of assignments, activities and expectations.
- ❖ Emphasize the importance of the sacrament of Confirmation by taking an active part in the celebration of Confirmation.
- ❖ Assist in retreats, service work, meetings, classes, spiritual events and social events.
- ❖ Faithfully bring your teen (and when necessary yourself) to meetings, programs, and prayer services that are planned to help your child prepare for the sacrament of Confirmation

1. Thank you for being here. No one loves your children more than you do. No one knows your children better.

2. Responsibility of the Parents

- ❖ Parents, along with the pastoral leaders, are to see to it that the candidates are properly instructed about the sacrament and approach it at the appropriate time⁵...in fulfilling their role, parents:
 - ❖ Are to strive to increase a spirit of faith in their children;
 - ❖ Help the children prepare to celebrate the sacrament fruitfully;
 - ❖ Give expression to their own faith through active participation in and celebration of the sacraments.⁶

Simply put, parents have the responsibility to make sure that their child takes part in the catechetical sessions, liturgical celebrations, and community and service opportunities.

Additionally, parents have the responsibility of living their faith as well, which includes attending worship and involvement in the life of the Church.

3. What does this mean?

This is not about living a passive faith, this is an opportunity for parents to reaffirm their commitment to the Catholic faith, and to become refreshed and renewed in their faith life.

To that end, parental components of a retreat or evening of reflection may serve them well, incorporating adult faith formation and spirituality into an opportunity for growth.

Example: *Evening of Reflection for confirmands with their parents, hosted by members of the high school youth ministry or pastoral counsel, and inviting a speaker to bring the catechesis of the Holy Spirit to life.*

4. Responsibility of the Sponsor

- ❖ The sponsor sees to it that the confirmed person acts as a true witness to Christ and faithfully fulfills the obligations connected with this sacrament.⁷

5. So what are the obligations connected with this sacrament?

- ❖ Long-term Formation
 - From the period following baptism, long-term formation begins, to help the candidates:⁸
- ❖ Develop a sufficient effective relationship with the Christian community; i.e. full and active participation in the life of the Church, at and outside of the Mass
- ❖ Give the witness of a Christian life; i.e. living a life of morality and prayer (relationship with God)
- ❖ Exercise the Christian apostolate; The Church “exists in order to evangelize”⁹, that is “the carrying forth of the Good News to every sector of the human race so that by its strength it may enter into the hearts of men and renew the human race”¹⁰. Which means, **we must take on the character of the Apostles.**

⁵ CJC 890

⁶ RC 3

⁷ CJC 892

⁸ RC 12

⁹ EN 14

¹⁰ EN 18

- ❖ Develop a genuine desire to participate in the Eucharist and the sacramental life of the Church.

6. What are the obligations of every Catholic?

The Duties of Catholics as Listed in the Catechism

1. To attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation and rest from servile labor.
2. To receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation at least once a year, if aware of committing a mortal sin.
3. To receive Holy Communion at least once a year, between the first Sunday of Lent and Trinity Sunday.
4. To observe the fast days and abstinence days established by the Church.
5. To contribute to the material support of the Church

The Duties of Catholics added by the U.S. Bishops

1. Obeying the Marriage Laws of the Church
2. Join in the Missionary spirit of the Church

Practically speaking, it is important for every Catholic to understand and practice living a vibrant life of faith.

7. Components of Preparation: In addition to long-term formation, specific preparations are required to properly dispose candidates to the sacrament. This preparation should strive to awaken a sense of belonging to the Church of Jesus Christ, throughout the world as well as in the local community (see CCC 1309). Such preparation includes:

- Reflection on the life and commitment implied in the renewal of one's baptismal promises;
- Reflection on the nature and dignity of the sacrament of confirmation and the rite in which it is celebrated;
- Guidance toward a more intimate union with Christ and a deeper knowledge of his saving mysteries;

Which should include:

- **Experience of Community Life** “*Each disciple, through the grace of baptism and from the gifts given in confirmation, is called to teach, sanctify and lead. However, we do so in different ways and our mode of participation differs accordingly.*” (53, *The Church Alive!*)
- **Communal Gatherings** for catechesis and study with the larger Church of Pittsburgh (opportunities for this exist through the Diocese of Pittsburgh; Hosanna, Silver Ring Thing, Middle School Faith Rally, Lovewalk for the Poor, and more)
- **Experience of Community Service** In the words of Bishop David Zubik in *The Church Alive!*

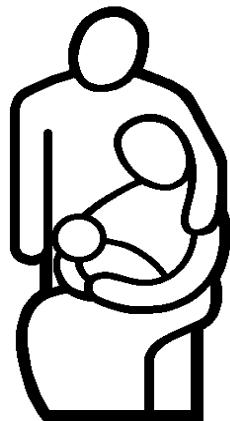
*“Finally, we must consider the understanding of stewardship, another word becoming more familiar in the life of the Church, when we consider the requirements of discipleship. If the Church of Pittsburgh is going to grow, if we are truly excited about our faith, if the Church is going to be Alive in the Spirit, then active discipleship must be pursued. For some time now, the word “stewardship” was correlated with financial giving to the Church. Then the three “t’s” of **time, talent, and treasure** expanded the notion of stewardship. A more expansive application of stewardship is one that considers three other realities: prayer, sharing and service.”* (103)

- **Worship of God:**

- Regular attendance and full participation in Divine Worship through the Mass is essential. One way to bring young people into fuller participation is to incorporate them into the Liturgical Ministries and Hospitality Ministries of the Church in preparation for Confirmation. (*i.e. Ushers, Lectors, Servers, Cantors, Greeters, etc.*)
- Worship of God is meant to be practiced in community. It is essential that parents, and sponsors, if possible, attend and participate in Divine Worship along with the Candidates.
- Divine Support in Prayer
- **Appropriation of God's Word through Catechesis**
 - In catechesis, confirmation should be presented in accord with the teaching given in the Church's liturgical rite, namely, from the Apostolic Constitution on the Sacrament of Confirmation.
 - Although confirmation is sometimes referred to as the "sacrament of Christian maturity"¹¹, it should not be implied that confirmation marks that achievement of natural adulthood, the end of Christian conversion, the completion of religious formation, or the reception of the Holy Spirit for the first time. The celebration of the sacrament underscore the need for baptismal faith to be nourished and to grow.

Pope Benedict XVI on Educating and Witnessing

I address you, dear parents, to ask you first of all to remain firm for ever in your reciprocal love: this is the first great gift your children need if they are to grow up serene, acquire self-confidence and thus learn to be capable in turn of authentic and generous love. Further, your love for your children must endow you with the style and courage of a true educator, with a consistent witness of life and the necessary firmness to temper the character of the new generations, helping them to distinguish clearly between good and evil so they in turn can form solid rules of life that will sustain them in future trials. Thus, you will enrich your children with the most valuable and lasting inheritance that consists in the example of a faith lived daily.

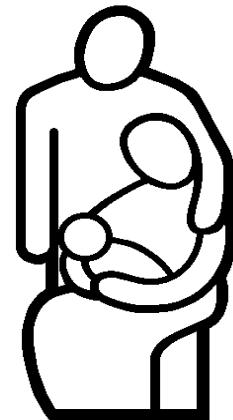


Reflection: Pope Benedict XVI on Educating and Witnessing

I address you, dear parents, to ask you first of all to remain firm for ever in your reciprocal love: this is the first great gift your children need if they are to grow up serene, acquire self-confidence and thus learn to be capable in turn of authentic and generous love. Further, your love for your children must endow you with the style and courage of a true educator, with a consistent witness of life and the necessary firmness to temper the character of the new generations, helping them to distinguish clearly between good and evil so they in turn can form solid rules of life that will sustain them in future trials. Thus, you will enrich your children with the most valuable and lasting inheritance that consists in the example of a faith lived daily.

SIGN OF THE CROSS

Leader: Father, you call us together to become prayerfully aware of our task. You invite us to work with you in helping our children grow in joy to Christian maturity. We come together to ask your blessing on this most important task, for we are convinced that only with your help can we fulfill our mission.



All: Father, teach us to be parents of compassion, of gentleness, and of sensitivity. We come to you as open, empty, receptive vessels asking that you speak in us your Word, so that, through us, Christ may be given life in others. Quiet in us all longings that would hinder such openness, and as you draw us to yourself, draw from us nourishment for the children under our care. This we ask in your name. Amen.

READING: Ephesians 1:3-17

Leader: A reading from the Letter of Paul to the Ephesians

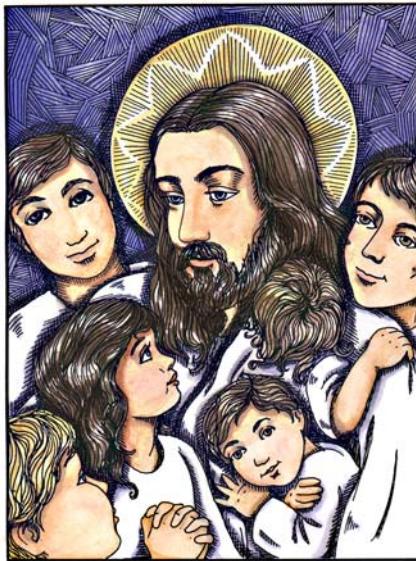
Left: Praised be the God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has bestowed on us in Christ every spiritual blessing in the heavens!

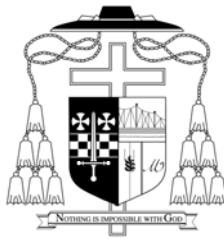
Right: God chose us in him before the work began, to be holy and blameless in his sight, to be full of love.

Left: He likewise predestined us through Christ Jesus to be his adopted son—such was his will and pleasure—that all might praise the divine favor he has bestowed on us in his beloved.

Right: It is in Christ and through his blood that we have been redeemed and our sins forgiven, so immeasurable generous is God's favor to us.

- Left:** God has given us the wisdom to understand fully the mystery, the plan he was pleased to decree in Christ, to be carried out in the fullness of time.
- Right:** To bring all things in the heavens and on earth into one under Christ's headship.
- Left:** In him we were chosen. For in the decree of God, who administers everything according to his will and counsel, we were predestined to praise his glory by being first to hope in Christ.
- Right:** In him you too were chosen. When you heard the glad tidings of salvation, the word of truth and believed in it, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit who had been promised.
- Left:** He is the pledge of our inheritance, the first payment against the full redemption of a people God has his own to praise his glory.
- Leader:** The Word of the Lord.
- All:** Thanks be to God.
- Leader:** Let us pray.
- All:** Lord God, we begin this meeting—knowing in truth that first it is you who calls. We ask that you be here with us, to speak your Word in ways we might understand. Give us the blessings of gentleness and sensitivity as we approach this most important task. We seek your grace in hope and trust. Amen.





LITURGICAL PLANNING SHEET

revised:11/11/2011

Event: _____

Date of Event: _____ **Time:** _____

Parish/Site (name and address): _____

Contact Person: _____

Office: _____ Home: _____ Cell: _____

E-mail: _____

If evening event, dinner: NO YES Time: _____ Location: _____

Parking Location (provide directions, if necessary): _____

Vesting Location: _____

Names of Concelebrating Priests and Assisting Deacons:

Event Type: Eucharist Liturgy of the Word Prayer Service Other

If other, please explain: _____

Please include hymn numbers for all congregational music

Entrance Hymn: _____

Use of Incense: NO YES (If yes, with accompanying music)

Welcome, by whom? _____

Penitential Rite:

- Confiteor – Led by the Bishop and **Kyrie** Sung Recited by: Bishop Deacon Cantor/Choir
- Invocation (e.g., "you were sent...Lord have mercy) Sung Recited by: Bishop Deacon Cantor/Choir
- Sprinkling Rite (with accompanying music - hymn #)

Please alert music ministers to prepare music during times of incensation and/or the sprinkling rite.

Gloria: Sung Recited Omitted

Liturgy of the Word

Reading I: _____

Reading II: _____

Gospel: _____

Psalm Response: Hymn # _____

Gospel Acclamation: Sung Omitted

- Use of Incense: NO YES

- Use of Gospel Book: NO YES

• Proclaimed by: Priest Deacon Name: _____

• Homilist: Priest Deacon Name: _____

Creed: NO YES Other: _____

Petitions: Sung Recited Sung/Read by: Deacon Commentator

Liturgy of the Eucharist

Hymn for Preparation of Gifts: _____

Use of Incense: NO YES (If yes, with accompanying music)

Eucharistic Prayer

- Holy, Holy: Sung Recited
- Memorial Acclamation: Sung Recited
- Great Amen: Sung Recited
- Lord's Prayer: Sung Recited
- Lamb of God: Sung Recited

Communion Stations: # of Patens _____ ; # of Cups _____

Communion Hymn: _____

Post Communion Hymn: _____

Announcements/Remarks (*Follows the "Prayer After Communion"*): NO YES

If Yes, by whom? _____

Recessional Hymn: _____

Reception: NO YES Location: _____

Particulars:

- Number of Acolytes (5 preferred – Cross, Candles, Book, Miter, Crosier; Thurible/Boat if necessary): _____
- Style of Microphone (i.e., Lavalier; Cordless Handheld; Stationary at Chair, Ambo, Altar; etc.): _____
- If preparing a worship aid, please submit it at least four (4) weeks prior to the event so it can be reviewed *before* it is printed.

Notations: