

Dear Sponsor,

Thank you so much for your willingness to be a spiritual role model and guide for a teen preparing for the Sacrament of Confirmation. Everything contained in this letter is meant to support you in this role: background information on the Sacrament and the Holy Spirit, suggestions for questions and topics to discuss with your candidate, and more. If, at any point, you have questions that are not addressed here, please feel free to contact me. Catholic Formation Admin Assistant Karen Bersch is another great person to talk to with questions. Our contact information is below.

Our hope is that you will find this process enriching not only for your relationship with your candidate, but also for your own relationship with God. We are never done growing or learning; we are all works in progress. Based on what your candidate has shared about you, I know you were chosen because you are respected, trusted, and a strong example of living out your faith, recognizing it's a lifelong journey. Thank you for the role you have obviously already played in your candidate's life. What a privilege it is to journey with them now as they prepare to receive this awesome Sacrament through which they will receive so much spiritual strength! Know of my prayers for you both.

God Bless You!

*Olivia Brotherhood*

## **Sponsor Night:**

**Sunday, November 16th, 2025 6-7:30pm** | A special evening for sponsors & candidates to hear a message and talk & pray together. *[If you can't attend, a parent will attend in your place. Please communicate with candidate & their parent(s). Video-calling in will not work for this event.]*

## **Confirmation Date:**

**Saturday, May 9th, 2026**

Confirmation Rehearsal 9:00am (meet in the Church)

Confirmation Mass 10am-12pm with light reception to follow

## **What is being asked of you (in brief)**

**Live your faith!** Continue to be a Christian example through your life of prayer & receiving the Sacraments regularly.

**Attend Sponsor Night** on Nov. 16

**Meet one-on-one at least 2 other times** before Confirmation to have intentional conversations about Faith and Confirmation. Suggestions for this are included in this packet.

**Assist with Make-Up Sessions** - If the student you sponsor misses more than 1 Confirmation small group session, they will be asked to make it up by meeting with you in person/over the phone to go over the missed session (which will be emailed to you). Guidelines and structure will be sent in the email.

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"I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God."  
{Philippians 1:3-6, 9-11}

## The Reality of Confirmation

Confirmation is a Sacramental outpouring of the Holy Spirit that leaves a permanent imprint on the soul, completes Christian initiation, and empowers us to be witnesses to Christ.

Many people mistakenly see Confirmation as graduation from religious education, as merely a cultural or symbolic passage into maturity, or as an opportunity to choose whether or not to remain Catholic. This is not at all what the Sacrament of Confirmation means!

**Confirmation is not a graduation *from* something but completes Initiation *into* something!** It is the final step of initiation *into* the Church, which is the Body of Christ, and by becoming members of the Body of Christ, it also means joining *the Mission of Jesus Christ*.

In Confirmation, we receive real power and strength to stand firmly in our identity and mission in the Church, as well as special spiritual gifts to equip us for serving God and others in particular ways. We are also "sealed" for God; our bond with Him, and with His family, is strengthened. All of these graces help us shift from interior formation to exterior proclamation, giving us courage to witness to the Faith in our words and actions.

### What happens at Confirmation?

As with every Sacrament, Confirmation is not merely a symbol – it actually has the effect it signifies. What we physically see, hear, feel, and smell at Confirmation is an anointing, a sealing with the Holy Spirit. The visible elements are not merely symbolic: they bring about a permanent change to those receiving the Sacrament.

When the Holy Spirit descended upon the apostles as they prayed together at Pentecost (Acts 2), the effects were immediately apparent. By the power of the Holy Spirit within their souls, the overjoyed apostles were emboldened to fearlessly speak the truth and spread the Gospel throughout the world.

**Confirmation empowers us in the same way with the same Holy Spirit.** The same Holy Spirit who filled the apostles at Pentecost makes a home in the soul of each Confirmed Catholic.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church emphasizes this beautifully:

#### **The Mission of the Messiah**

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,  
because He has anointed me  
to proclaim good news to the poor.  
He has sent me to bind up the  
brokenhearted,  
to proclaim freedom for the  
captives  
and release from darkness for the  
prisoners,  
to proclaim the year of the Lord’s  
favor  
and the day of justice of our God,  
to comfort all who mourn,  
and provide for those who grieve  
in Zion—  
to bestow on them  
a crown of beauty  
instead of ashes,  
the oil of joy  
instead of sadness,  
and a garment of praise  
instead of a spirit of despair.”  
{Isaiah 61:1-3}

‘In the Old Testament the prophets announced that the Spirit of the Lord would rest on the Messiah for His saving mission.... **This fullness of the Spirit was not to remain only the Messiah’s, but was to be given to everyone who belongs to Him.**

Jesus promised this outpouring of the Spirit, a promise which He fulfilled first on Easter Sunday and then more strikingly at Pentecost. Filled with the Holy Spirit the Apostles began to proclaim the mighty works of God.... Those who believed the Apostles’ preaching and were baptized **received the gift of the Holy Spirit in their turn.**

*From that time on*, the Apostles, in fulfillment of Christ’s will, gave to the newly baptized by the laying on of hands the gift of the Spirit that completes the grace of Baptism. ...[This] is rightly recognized by the Catholic tradition as the origin of the Sacrament of Confirmation, which in a certain way **perpetuates the grace of Pentecost in the Church.**

It is evident from its celebration that **the effect of the Sacrament of Confirmation is the full outpouring of the Holy Spirit** as once granted to the Apostles on the day of Pentecost.

*By Confirmation, Christians, that is, those who are anointed, share more completely in the mission of Jesus Christ and the fullness of the Holy Spirit with which He is filled’ {CCC #1286-1288, 1294, 1302}*

## **The Role of a Sponsor: A Closer Look**

The word *sponsor* comes from the Latin word *spondere*, meaning 'to promise solemnly' - this is the same root as for the word "responsible". In a very real way, you are assuming responsibility for your candidate's spiritual welfare. This is a serious task, but do not be afraid! You don't need a theology degree or to be a canonized saint for this role; remember that ***you yourself have received the gift of Confirmation***. Trusting in God, you can have complete confidence that the Holy Spirit will give you everything you need. When Jesus was preparing the disciples for His departure, they were confused, scared, and intimidated by the thought of being the bearers of the Gospel without Him by their side. He reassured them by saying,

**"The Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid."**

*John 14:26-27*

In the early days of Christianity, sponsors worked closely with the candidates to show them, on a day-to-day basis, how to live the faith. After a period of preparation that often lasted several years, the sponsors presented the candidates to the community and vouched for their readiness to receive Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist. After the Initiation, sponsors would continue to journey with the new Christians and support them in their life of Faith. What a beautiful and challenging responsibility it is to walk with someone through life as their spiritual companion and mentor!

### **What am I called to do as a Confirmation sponsor?**

A sponsor has three primary responsibilities:

1. To assist the candidate in preparing for Confirmation and ensure they are prepared to receive the Sacrament and live the Mission entrusted to them
2. To present the candidate to the Bishop for Confirmation (at the Confirmation Mass)
3. To help the Confirmed person to live out his or her Catholic life faithfully.

There are several ways you can help your candidate:

- Share your own experiences. Lead him or her closer to Christ by telling your candidate about your own spiritual journey.
- Spend time talking and listening. Help your candidate grow in understanding and acceptance of Christ and the teachings of His Church.
- Pray for your candidate regularly. Pray that he or she will not only come to know *about* the faith but will also come to *know Christ* in a personal relationship. As a sponsor, commit to lifting your candidate up in prayer every day. Perhaps commit to some small daily act of prayer, service, or sacrifice for your candidate. You could record what you do each day in a journal and at Confirmation give the journal to your candidate as a keepsake.
- Encourage him or her to grow in virtue and to set aside any habits that would prevent his or her soul from being fully open & ready to receive all the gifts that God wants to give through the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Consider this also as an invitation from God to grow in your own faith. He loves you, after all. If something glaring has been separating you from God, maybe now is the time to bring that to Confession. Consider that God may be calling you to this role for the sake of examining your own heart and coming even closer to the Lord, along with guiding your candidate.

Two of the most essential elements of Catholic Life are regular reception of the Eucharist and the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Sadly, many Catholics do not attend Sunday Mass, which is the most vital, basic element in the life of Faith. The regular commitment to weekly Sunday Mass has real effects on one's spiritual health. By your own example, you can help to ensure that these two Sacraments become an active and habitual part of your candidate's way of life as a Catholic.

## Stay Connected

Your candidate has a smartphone, sends text messages, and uses social media on a daily basis. Take advantage of these media sources to communicate with him or her, even if your schedule requires such contacts to be brief. A simple "I am praying for you today" text message can be a powerful reminder that you take your sponsorship seriously.

Perhaps share an inspiring Scripture verse, quote, or the upcoming Sunday's Mass readings, along with a thought-provoking question about the readings or a few words of your own reflection on them. Don't overlook more traditional but very meaningful communication methods – a short handwritten letter or postcard with an inspirational or encouraging message is rare enough to make a big impact.

Many teenagers desperately need this kind of personalized care, and they will eagerly respond to it because you are their *chosen* sponsor and they are less likely to resist or shrug off this kind of outreach from you. You have a special relationship with a significant potential for impact at this particular time in your candidate's life.

## **Confirmation Preparation: Intentional Faith Conversations**

**We are asking you to have at least 2 intentional, one-on-one conversations about the faith prior to the Confirmation Mass on May 9th** in order to discuss how the preparation process is going, talk about the Sacrament and Faith in general, explore questions they have, and encourage them in faith and prayer.

These two conversations we ask you to have with your candidate are *aside* from the Sponsor Night on Sunday, November 16th at Lumen Christi.

The other **two times** (or more) you meet (or call, if long distance) are up to you and your candidate to arrange. We ask that you be intentional about getting together with the purpose of a faith-based discussion and/or activity in relation to the Catholic Faith and Confirmation. Below are a few suggestions (not requirements) for what this could look like, but feel free to be creative in what you do. Please send a brief email to Olivia Brotherhood sharing what you chose to do/what you generally discussed. These two meetups or calls should take place before May 1st.

As a representative of the Catholic Church, it is expected that you will uphold the Church's teachings when discussing matters of faith with your candidate. If there is something you disagree with or don't understand, first, know that it is *not* wrong to question. God has given us the great gift of intellect and He does not expect or want us to simply turn our brains off. However, it is one thing to question and another thing entirely to actively seek answers. We need to do both – and so does your candidate.

View this as an opportunity to take a closer look, either on your own or with your candidate, at any unanswered questions you may have. At the end of the day, after much research, prayer, and sincere consideration, if you still aren't on board with something, please know that you are still responsible for presenting things in the most positive light possible and not turning your candidate away from a teaching of our Faith. If you have any questions about this or if I can be of help at any point in this process, please, feel free to contact me at [olivia@lumenchristiparish.org](mailto:olivia@lumenchristiparish.org).

### **Suggested Topics & Activities**

1. Learn: Look up Fr. Mike Schmitz on [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com) and pick one of his short videos together to watch/listen to. Discuss it: what was something that you learned? What was challenging to you? What other questions do you have? How does this help your understanding about God/Faith?
2. Serve: Students are asked to choose service opportunities with the Corporal Works of Mercy in mind. Look up the Corporal Works of Mercy and find a service opportunity to do together. If you

are unsure where to start, feel free to reach out to Olivia for suggestions.

3. Attend a special Mass or prayer opportunity: Check out Cor Jesu on Wednesday Nights 7-9pm at St Robert in Shorewood (<https://www.arisemke.org/cor-jesu>); go to Adoration & Confession together (@LC Thursdays 4-5pm); visit Holy Hill or another holy place - make it a little adventure pilgrimage!
4. Sunday Mass & Brunch – be fed spiritually and physically!
5. Check out Formed.org – a subscription the parish has purchased for all of our parish members - and you as an extension! There are great videos and series to look into together.  
<https://formed.org/signup> - then find Lumen Christi Parish

### **Sharing Personal Faith Stories and Experiences**

The following questions are meant to be a guide to discuss your faith, how you have encountered God, and how you are challenged in your faith.

**For some, faith has always been present in their life and has evolved slowly over time. Others may identify a specific point in their life at which their relationship with God began. And others may still be waiting to Encounter God in a real and personal way.**

- How did you begin? Which of those descriptions do you identify with? Why?
- Who brought you to the faith? (Who has influenced you to be where you are in your faith today?)
- Describe how your faith has changed over time. How have you grown this past year?
- How do you picture God or how would you describe Him?
- How would you describe your relationship with Him?
- When have you felt that God was with you?
- When you struggle to recognize the presence of God in your life - why do you think that is?
- What can you do together, to recognize God is with you? (*think less 'doing' and more 'being'*)
- If you could ask God anything, what would you ask Him?
- What are some good reasons to be Catholic?
- What is something about the Bible/Catholicism that you don't understand?
- What's something specific you want to receive from God?
- How can you bring more of God's love to the world?
- What gifts do you have that you think God has given you to bring more good to the world?

### **Candidate – ask your Sponsor:**

- What made you want to sponsor me?
- What do you like about being Catholic?
- Why did you want to get Confirmed?
- What was your experience of Confirmation like?
- How have you been encouraged to live out your faith, and what has made it difficult?

### **Sponsor – ask your Candidate:**

- Why did you choose me as your sponsor?
- Why do you want to be Confirmed? Why is this important to you?
- If you could have any kind of encouragement from me, regarding your faith and your life, what would you want?

**Write A Personal Prayer:** When you have finished sharing, take a few minutes to write a prayer together. In your prayer, remember to give God thanks and praise, and ask Him for any blessings you may particularly desire. Find a passage in Scripture that reflects your prayer. This prayer can become what you pray together and on your own during this Confirmation preparation.

## **Make-Up Sessions**

When Confirmation candidates miss a formation session, they miss not just content but community as well, which is why we ask that they meet with you (their chosen sponsor) to go over the missed session. In the event that a teen needs to make up a session, both you and the candidate (and their parent) will be emailed the discussion guide. This session will include some reading, videos, discussion, and prayer. Your role will be 2 parts:

1. To facilitate a good and in depth discussion between the two of you after each video or segment
2. Take some notes of your discussion and at the end of the session please email me a brief summary of your conversation (I do not need answers to each question, just an overall reflection on the discussion).

Confirmation Candidates will be assigned some of the questions to answer and submit to me via email. You will have a few weeks to complete the make-up session. However, if you are unable to make arrangements with your candidate, a parent would be fine as well (but you are the preferred person!).

If your Confirmation candidate has stellar attendance, this may not be asked of you!

## **What should I do after my candidate has been Confirmed?**

After your candidate has received the Sacrament of Confirmation, your role as a mentor in the faith continues. Obviously, each situation allows for different levels of ongoing contact, but it is fitting to check in often with your confirmand. Continue encouraging and supporting him or her in the life of faith. As best you can, send a clear message that Confirmation was not a "graduation" from religious education, but a fuller Initiation into the Catholic Faith. Continue to share your own experiences and stories of how you live *your* faith after *your* Confirmation!

**Here are some ideas for things you can do after Confirmation (some of which you can start doing now!) :**

1. Call or text your confirmand regularly with a reminder to attend Sunday Mass, if possible with you! If you are not in person together, be in contact with each other about the readings, homilies, or experiences you each had.
2. Encourage them to go to Confession every month or two - if possible, together!
3. Get together regularly after Confirmation for deeper discussions about life and faith:  
How is your prayer life developing? What are you doing to have contact with God on a daily basis?  
How will you continue to deepen your knowledge of the faith?  
What areas of the Catholic faith do you want to learn more about?  
How are you staying connected to the parish community?  
What are you doing to witness for Christ at your school?
4. Look up the feast day of your confirmand's chosen Confirmation saint. Find a way to celebrate their feast day and the feast day of your own saint.
5. Reach out to your candidate on the anniversary of their Confirmation, go to Mass together, share a meal, or find another way to celebrate the anniversary of this milestone!

*Know of my prayers for you! Don't hesitate to reach out with any questions or need for support. Thank you for taking on this special and important role - you are part of God's story of salvation for this young soul!*

*In Christ, Olivia Brotherhood*