



Go Make Disciples

EVANGELIZATION AND CATECHESIS  
ARCHDIOCESE OF OKLAHOMA CITY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Archbishop Coakley moves Confirmation to middle school**

*Guidelines for Fall 2021 and Fall 2022 coming May 1*

OKLAHOMA CITY – Archbishop Paul Coakley announced Tuesday a change in placement for the Sacrament of Confirmation in the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City. Preparation for Confirmation will be completed in one year instead of two and will be held in the sixth or seventh grade instead of during high school.

The Secretariat for Evangelization and Catechesis will assist parishes in preparing for and implementing the transition, which will begin by Fall of 2022. No changes will be made this year.

The decision to move Confirmation to a younger age comes after months of prayer and input from clergy, parish staff and parents with the goal of boosting involvement in youth ministry and better serving families.

“We all need to think deeply about our Church and about the needs of our young people, particularly in light of our modern culture and all of the unique challenges they are facing today. We need to equip our children with all of the grace available. Unfortunately, there are a number of youth in high school who have been baptized and received First Communion but never were confirmed, leaving thousands without the gift of Confirmation to strengthen them,” Archbishop Coakley said.

“It has become common to view Confirmation as a choice to become an adult in the Church. As a sacrament, God offers Confirmation as a free gift that is actually more about God confirming ‘us’ as his children, not us confirming our faith in God. As we move forward, let us focus on supporting our families and parents, and on being thoughtful and intentional in our formation and youth ministry efforts. Thank you to everyone who has collaborated on this challenge and to everyone who will be working to implement the new guidelines in the future.”

In the summer of 2019, Archbishop Coakley created the Sacramental Preparation Revision Task Force to review sacramental guidelines and consider potential changes for the placement of Confirmation. The task force included directors of religious education, principals, priests, youth ministers, deacons, parents and archdiocesan staff.

The Priests Council also reviewed guidelines, and all priests were given the opportunity to provide feedback on various aspects of Confirmation and how it should be implemented in parishes.

The Secretariat for Evangelization and Catechesis will dedicate the remainder of this year to developing options and guidelines, mindful of parishes' unique needs. The options and guidelines will be sent to pastors no later than May 1 for a Fall 2021 or Fall 2022 start. The transition will include bolstering youth ministries for middle school and high school and planning Confirmations for youth in the "gap years."

Information about Confirmation and the new archdiocesan guidelines will be posted online at [archokc.org/confirmation](http://archokc.org/confirmation) as they become available.

To enroll in Confirmation, contact your parish's office.

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