



# CONFIRMATION

The Bishop ordinarily celebrates Confirmation for our parish during the fall semester of 9th grade. To be eligible for Confirmation, ordinarily students should have completed 7th and 8th grade Faith Formation. If you have not completed these, we will need to discuss an appropriate formation plan prior to Confirmation.

## Phase 1: Preliminary Paperwork

to be completed by March 1

**Register:** Go to [divinegracephg.org/confirmationregistration](http://divinegracephg.org/confirmationregistration) to register. To complete this form, you will need all the information listed on the Candidate's Baptism Certificate.

- If you were baptized outside of the Diocese of Pittsburgh, we will need a copy of the Candidate's Baptismal Certificate dated within the last six months.
- If you were baptized outside of the Diocese of Pittsburgh, those records are at the Diocesan Archives Office, and we will obtain them.

We strongly recommend the use of Gallup's [StrengthsExplorer](#) assessment (\$9.99 paid directly to Gallup). This is not required, but it is very useful and will be utilized in some of the tools that we use during preparation.

**Assemble Your Team:** Certainly, a Candidate's parents are part of their team, but there are two other important members:

- **Confirmation Saint Name:** You are choosing a heavenly patron to pray for you during your preparation. Refer to the Confirmation Name Reflection on page 4 to help you discern an appropriate Confirmation Saint Name. You can submit your name choice when you register for Confirmation Prep or after registering by emailing Jason at [jgawaldo@divinegracephg.org](mailto:jgawaldo@divinegracephg.org).
- **Confirmation Sponsor:** Your Sponsor is a spiritual mentor who will walk with you during your preparation and serves as an example of a living relationship with God as a Catholic Christian. Refer to pages 5-6 to help you select a Sponsor. You will need your Sponsor to complete the [Sponsor Registration Form](#) so that we can help them with any paperwork needed. We will also send them our [Confirmation Sponsor Guide](#). Your Sponsor will need to ask his/her Pastor to verify his/her eligibility to serve as a Sponsor:
  - Parishioners Divine Grace Parish will verify their eligibility online via the Sponsor Registration Form.
  - Parishioners from other parishes will be given instructions to contact their parish and ask for a Sponsor Certificate.

**Sponsor registration and paperwork should be completed by March 1.**

## Phase 2: Diocesan Confirmation Prep Curriculum

To be completed by June 5

**Six-Week Course:** Confirmation Candidates and Sponsor or a Parent complete a six-week course involving both large group instruction and small group discussions. The course has three interchangeable options:

- Sundays, April 26-May 31, 9:05-9:55 AM in Oldenski Hall, St. Ferdinand
- Tuesdays, April 28-June 1, 6:30-7:30 PM at Holy Redeemer
- Virtually delivered via email

**Catholic School and Homeschool Students:** If you attend Catholic School in 8<sup>th</sup> grade or if you homeschool using a Catholic religion curriculum, then you do not need to complete this course. You are more than welcome to do so however, and we do encourage it.

## Phase 3: Formative Experiences

to be completed by October 12

**Retreat Experiences and Life Teen Events** - Complete one or more of the following:

1. **Attend a Confirmation Evening of Reflection** - Our version of a Confirmation Retreat. We have two options; sign up [here](#):
  - a. Saturday, June 20, 5:00-8:00 PM at St. Gregory
  - b. Saturday, July 11, 4:00-7:00 PM at St. Ferdinand
2. **Attend the Steubenville Youth Conference** - Contact Michael Assaf ([massaf@divinegracepgh.org](mailto:massaf@divinegracepgh.org)) for details.
3. **Attend at least four Life Nights**- Life Nights happen on Mondays from 6:30-8:00 PM in the St. Ferdinand Youth Room. Click [here](#) for the full calendar.

**Complete a Service Experience:** Service Experiences are an opportunity to foster growth in your emerging talents discovered in the StrengthsExplorer assessment. You can find suggestions for approaching service through your emerging talents in the Spiritual Growth Plans by Theme.

**Letter to the Pastor:** All Candidates for Confirmation write a letter to the Pastor, Fr. Jim, requesting that he present them to the bishop and recommend that they be confirmed. For the sake of consistency, letters should be formatted as a letter from you, the Candidate, to the Pastor and should include the following:

- Personal introduction including your name and what school you go to
- Why you want to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation, and specifically asking Fr. Jim to present you to the bishop for this sacrament.
- What is your Confirmation Saint Name, and why did you choose it? Why is this saint/name meaningful to you?
- The name of your sponsor and why you chose this person. What good Catholic qualities does this person possess that makes them a good sponsor?
- What service experience you participated in and what you learned from it.
- What receiving the sacrament of Confirmation means to you.
- What type of Christian man or woman do you envision being in the future?

## **Formative Experiences**

to be completed by October 12

### **Letter to the Pastor (continued)**

This letter should be turned into the Faith Formation Department (email or hard copy), and we will give all letters to the Pastor together. Letters must be submitted **by October 1** but may be submitted before then. If you email your letter, please email it to [jgawaldo@divinegracepgh.org](mailto:jgawaldo@divinegracepgh.org) and include "Letter to the Pastor" in the subject line.

## **Final Preparations: Ceremony and Rehearsal**

Bishop Mark Eckman will celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation at Divine Grace Parish, St. Ferdinand Church on Saturday, October 17, 2026, at 10:00 AM and 1:00 PM.

If your Sponsor is unavailable on the date we are given, a Proxy Sponsor can stand in during the Mass. The Proxy must also register as a Sponsor (see bottom of page 1). If your family is unavailable on the date we are given, just email Jason ([jgawaldo@divinegracepgh.org](mailto:jgawaldo@divinegracepgh.org)) for other local options.

Rehearsal will be on Thursday, October 15, 7:00-8:00 PM at St. Ferdinand Church. Candidates and Sponsors should attend. If a Sponsor cannot make it, a Parent should attend in his/her place.

Candidates should go to **Confession** before receiving the sacrament of Confirmation. To find our current Confession schedule, visit [divinegracepgh.org](http://divinegracepgh.org).

## **Need to reach us?**

Jason Gawaldo, Director of Evangelization & Catechetical Ministries  
[jgawaldo@divinegracepgh.org](mailto:jgawaldo@divinegracepgh.org), 724-776-9177 x1317

Michael Assaf, Coordinator for Youth & Young Adult Ministry  
[massaf@divinegracepgh.org](mailto:massaf@divinegracepgh.org), 724-776-9177 x1316

## Confirmation Name Reflection

“Christians treat the name of a person reverently, because the name is profoundly connected with that person’s identity and dignity. From time immemorial, Christians have selected names for their children from the list of the saints; they do so in the belief that the patron saint is an example for them and will intercede with God for them in a special way.” (YOUNCAT #361)

1. Why did your parents choose the name they gave you? Were you named after a beloved relative or a favorite saint? If so, who? What about this person inspired them to name you?
2. What does your name mean? (Ex: “George” means “farmer” [[www.BehindTheName.com](http://www.BehindTheName.com)])
3. What is the name of someone whom you see as a good role model of faith?
4. What does that person’s name mean?
5. What are a few other names that you like (because they are strong names, pretty names, etc.)?
6. What does each of these names mean?
7. Who is your favorite Saint, or who is the Saint celebrated on your birthday? What does this name mean?
8. What is a personality trait(s) of a holy person that you would like to develop? (Ex: patience, piety, humility, etc)
9. What name(s) mean these traits? (Ex: Irene is a female name that means “peace”)

Now that you have several meaningful names to work with, you need to choose one that will be your Confirmation Name. Once you have chosen a name, find a Saint that is associated with that name. If there is no Saint with your name, try to find a Saint with a derivation of your name (i.e. Giovanni, Joan, Janis, Johanna, Sean, Ivan, Juan, and Jean are all derivations of John). Regardless of your gender, you can choose a Saint of either gender.

## Role, Eligibility, and Verification 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 (exceptions can be made with Pastor's approval).
- 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)

All Sponsors need to register at [divinegracepgh.org/sponsor](http://divinegracepgh.org/sponsor). We will work directly with each Sponsor to get the proper verification in a timely fashion. Sponsors who belong to the Great Grouping will attest to their eligibility online using the following statements:

1. I declare that I am a baptized and confirmed Catholic, and that I am a registered member of Divine Grace Parish.
2. I believe all that the Catholic Church believes and teaches, and I truly make a serious effort to live a good moral life worthy of imitation.
3. As a practicing Catholic, I participate at Mass on Sundays and Holydays, and I receive the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist regularly.
4. If married, I have been validly married in accordance with Canon Law.
5. I realize that I assume a great responsibility before God and the Church in becoming a sponsor. I intend to encourage my candidate in the practice of the Catholic faith by word and example.

Sponsors from other parishes will need to obtain a **Sponsor Form** (aka Certificate of Eligibility) from his or her parish, stating that he or she is eligible to serve as a sponsor for Confirmation (using the same or similar questions as are listed above).

## Choosing a Sponsor

Your Sponsor is someone who will walk with you during your Confirmation Preparation and who serves as an example of a living relationship with God as a Catholic Christian in good standing. In addition to finding someone who is eligible to serve as a Sponsor, consider the following questions:

1. Who are my godparents? Am I comfortable talking to either of them about spiritual things?
2. Am I comfortable talking with any of my siblings, cousins, aunts, or uncles about spiritual things? If so, who?
3. When I think about good Catholic role models in my life, who comes to mind? Are any of these people someone I could ask to be my Confirmation Sponsor?
4. Of all these names, who am I most comfortable asking to serve as my Confirmation Sponsor?