

*Sacramental Preparation  
Information and Forms  
for  
Confirmation  
and  
First Holy Communion*

*St Mary's Catholic Church*

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**Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,**

Welcome to this blessed journey toward the Sacraments of Confirmation and First Communion! We are very excited to work with your families as your children prepare for this meaningful and important moment in their spiritual lives.

Included in this packet you will find the following:

1. A Confirmation and First Communion checklist for the parents with all important dates and a list of what is due.
2. A Confirmation and First Communion checklist for the child to take ownership for his/her own journey.
3. All the necessary paper forms (extra copies can be obtained on our website: <https://stmarysalton.com/sacraments>)
4. More information about the different aspects of preparing for the sacraments of Confirmation and First Communion.

This packet will serve as your guide in preparing your child for these sacraments.

If, at any point during this process, you have any questions or concerns which are not addressed in this packet, please reach out to us. We would be happy to help you in any way we are able. You may use the contact information below to reach the appropriate person.

Please know that we are praying for you, your children, and your families. May the occasion of your child's full initiation into the Catholic Church be one that brings your entire family into a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ.

In Christ,

Father Ben and Sister M. Veritas, FSGM

**Parish Director of Religious Education/PSR**

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## **Confirmation and First Communion Parent Checklist**

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### **Saturday, September 23, 2023, 8:00 AM**

- Mass in the Church followed by an Informational Meeting in Suddes Hall. (The child and at least one parent/guardian should attend.)
- Mark your child's schedule for the sacramental preparation retreat (see below).
- Assist your child in beginning to think/pray about a Confirmation Name (The rest of this packet and your child's Religion Teacher/PSR Catechist will also provide some guidance.)
- Assist your child in beginning to think/pray about a Confirmation Sponsor. (The rest of this packet and your child's Religion Teacher/PSR Catechist will also provide some guidance.)
- Once a Sponsor is chosen, assist your child in asking his/her Confirmation Sponsor to complete the Confirmation Sponsor Form (included in this packet).
- Obtain a copy of your child's certificate of Baptism.
- *\*If your child was baptized at a non-Catholic Christian Church other than St. Mary's or if your child was not baptized and if you wish for your child to be fully initiated in the Catholic Church: please contact Father Ben.*

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### **Weekly**

- Attend Mass and complete a "Mass Reflection". (Details to be given by the child's Religion Teacher/PSR Catechist.)

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### **By Wednesday, November 1, 2023**

- Assist your child in completing and submitting his/her Confirmation Saint Project. (Details to be given by the child's Religion Teacher/PSR Catechist.)

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### **By Wednesday, November 15, 2023**

- Submit the online Confirmation Registration form. (The link will be emailed to you when it is ready.)
- Submit a copy of your child's certificate of Baptism.
- Submit your child's Confirmation Sponsor Form.

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### **By Wednesday, January 31, 2024**

- Assist your child in completing and submitting a service project and a "Service Reflection". (Details to be given by the child's Religion Teacher/PSR Catechist.)

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### **By Wednesday, February 28, 2024**

- Coordinate with your child's sponsor to provide time for them to complete a project together. (Details to be given by the child's Religion Teacher/PSR Catechist.)
- Assist your child in completing the "Confirmation Questionnaire" (included in this packet.)

☐**First Week of March during regular Religion/PSR Classes**

- Help your child prepare for an “interview” with Father Ben using the attached study guide.
- The children will meet with Father in small groups for a discussion. It is not expected that they have all the definitions memorized. The information listed is for the adult to understand the concepts.
- The child should be able to talk about the concepts in the study guide in his/her own words and relate them to his/her own life.

☐**Wednesday, March 13, 6:00-8:00 PM**

- Ensure that your child attends the sacramental preparation retreat in Suddes Hall.

☐**Tuesday, April 2, 2024**

- Your child will receive the sacraments of Confirmation and First Communion at the Cathedral.

## **Confirmation and First Communion Student Checklist**

- ☐ **Saturday, September 23, 2023, 8:00 AM:**
  - ☐ Mass and a meeting with your parents (or another responsible adult).
  - ☐ Choose a Confirmation (Saint) Name.
  - ☐ Choose a Confirmation Sponsor.
  - ☐ Ask your sponsor to complete the Confirmation Sponsor Form.
  
- ☐ **Every Week:** Attend Mass and complete a "Mass Reflection."
- ☐ **Every Day:** Spend time becoming better friends with Jesus.
  
- ☐ **Due Wednesday, November 1, 2023:** A Confirmation Saint Project.
- ☐ **Due Wednesday, January 31, 2024:** A service project and Reflection.
- ☐ **Due Wednesday, February 28, 2024:** A project with your sponsor.
- ☐ **Due Wednesday, February 28, 2024:** "Confirmation Questionnaire".
- ☐ **First Week of March during regular Religion/PSR Class:** Meet with Father Ben to in small groups to discuss the sacraments.
- ☐ **Wednesday, March 13, 2024 6:00-8:00 PM:** Retreat in Suddes Hall.
- ☐ **Tuesday, April 2, 2024:** Receive the sacraments of Confirmation and First Communion at the Cathedral in Springfield!

## **Sacraments of Initiation – Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Communion**

The Christian is born anew by Baptism, strengthened by Confirmation, and fed by the food of eternal life in the Eucharist. One is fully initiated into the Catholic Church by receiving all three of these sacraments.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC) teaches us that the Eucharist is “the source and summit of the Christian Life. The other sacraments...are bound up with the Eucharist and are oriented toward it.” (CCC 1324)

The other sacraments, including the sacrament of Confirmation, predispose us to properly receive this amazing gift and reinforce its fruitfulness in our lives. Confirmation impresses the candidates with a ***special character***. Through the sacrament, the baptized faithful are anointed with Chrism by the laying on of hands and the grace received is the fullness of the Holy Spirit and His gifts. The sacrament of Confirmation:

1. It roots us more deeply in the family of God
2. It unites more strongly to Jesus Christ
3. It increases the gifts of the Holy Spirit in us
4. It makes our bond/unity with the Catholic Church stronger
5. It gives us special strength from the Holy Spirit to follow and defend Christ in word and deed.

Each sacrament is a moment in which God enters our created world. The Eucharist is the place where the Creator of the universe makes Himself truly present, Body, Blood, soul, and divinity. We not only receive God’s grace in the Eucharist, we literally receive HIM into our very being, such that His divine life (Grace) is flowing through us.

“The Holy Eucharist completes Christian initiation. Those who have been raised to the dignity of the royal priesthood by Baptism and configured more deeply to Christ by Confirmation participate with the whole community in the Lord’s own sacrifice by means of the Eucharist.” (CCC 1322)

## **Preparation for Receiving the Sacraments**

Those to be confirmed must be suitably instructed and properly disposed to the reception of the Sacraments. In paragraph 1309 of the Catechism of the Catholic Church, we learn that:

*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 – his actions, his gifts, and his biddings – in order to be more capable of assuming the apostolic responsibilities of Christian life. 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 [emphasis original].

This is a task that requires the help of many people. And, even with all of our help, we could do nothing without the help of the Holy Spirit. Let us pray for each other and our children on this journey!

## **The Role of the Child**

First, the Church asks that the one receiving the sacraments:

1. Has reached the age of reason (considered to be around the age of seven).
2. Is validly baptized and not previously confirmed.
3. Is Catholic.
4. Is properly instructed.
5. Is capable of renewing their Baptismal promises.
6. Has been previously prepared for and received the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

The child must be willing to be involved in the preparation program with the intention of remaining faithful to Jesus Christ and His Church. He/she will demonstrate this through their attitude, effort, and participation in religious instruction, Mass, and all Confirmation projects and requirements.

## **The Role of Parents/Families**

As parents, *you play the primary role in the sacramental preparation program*. You help your son/daughter grow in faith as you prepare him/her for the fruitful reception of the sacraments. There is no substitute for you as the primary educator of your child. Your interest, involvement, and concern make a difference in your son's/daughter's perception of what the sacraments and the Christian life are all about. Your attendance at Mass on Sundays is a vital witness to your child. You are the one bringing your child to the faith and directing him/her toward Jesus Christ. You are the adult. And yet, it is also important to allow a child ownership in his/her own relationship with Jesus and in making appropriate choices along the way.

## **The Role of Sponsors**

A sponsor is a person who is committed to playing a significant role in the Confirmand's life, sharing the faith and encouraging him/her in his/her journey as a Catholic. Paragraph 892 in the Code of Canon Law states, "[t]he sponsor's function is to take care that the person confirmed behaves as a true witness of Christ and faithfully fulfils the duties inherent in this sacrament." Therefore, it is important that sponsors meet certain criteria as defined in Canon 874 in the Code of Canon Law:

1. A willingness to help the baptized person to lead a Christian life in keeping with baptism and to fulfill faithfully the obligations inherent in it;
2. Be at least 16 years old, or, if younger, have permission from the pastor of the intended sponsor;
3. Be fully initiated into the Catholic Church (received the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist);
4. Be a practicing Catholic (e.g. attend Mass on Sundays and on Holy Days of Obligation, regularly receive the sacraments of Holy Communion and Reconciliation and, if married, have a marriage that is recognized by the Catholic Church);
5. Cannot be a parent of the confirmand.

Ideally, one of the Godparents from the Confirmand's baptism should be the sponsor (see CCC 1311). Only one sponsor is permitted.

The sponsor is asked to complete a Confirmation Sponsor Form. *If the sponsor is not a member of St. Mary's Parish, this form should include the Pastor's signature and the seal of the parish.* If the sponsor *is* a member of St. Mary's Parish, the Pastor's signature and the seal of the parish are not necessary.

### **The Role of the Parish**

The Pastor, DRE, Principal, Teachers and Catechists are here to assist the families, sponsors, and children in preparing for these sacraments. We provide the following:

1. Additional catechesis and opportunities for the children to grow in their relationship with Jesus – to supplement what they receive at home, in the family, and through weekly Mass and participation in the life of the Parish.
2. Guidance and support in completing the requirements for reception of the sacraments.
3. Necessary forms and information.
4. A preparatory retreat.
5. Communications between the Diocese and the Parish.
6. Collection of all necessary information to ensure that:
  - The child has met all the requirements.
  - Is registered with the Diocese.
  - Will have a record of these sacraments on file at the Church of the child's baptism.

### **Additional Note: Choosing a Confirmation Name**

Because the one to be Confirmed will be sent out “to confess the name of Christ boldly, and never to be ashamed of the Cross” (CCC, 1309), the idea of choosing a Confirmation name is to choose the name of a saint who can help fulfill this mission. Sometimes a saint is chosen because of his or her patronage, because of the name itself, because of a common personality, or because of his or her story. Sometimes, though, it also seems a saint, as it were, chooses us. Whatever the case, choosing the name of saint is a way of placing oneself under the patronage of this particular friend of God, of seeking to imitate this person who imitated Christ, and of seeking the prayers and guidance of this saint (cf. 1 Corinthians 11:1).

A Confirmand is not required to choose a new Confirmation name. One's baptismal name is acceptable. If a Confirmand does choose a new Confirmation name, it must be the name of a recognized Saint, Blessed or Venerable in the Catholic Church. Confirmandi are free to choose a Saint, Blessed or Venerable from either gender. The idea behind a Confirmation Name is to choose a Saint/Blessed/Venerable who will serve as a patron for the Confirmand and someone whom the Confirmand will seek to imitate. It is not to honor a grandparent or any other family member or friend.