



JOURNEY TO THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION



Revised August 2023



DIOCESE
of **SAINT JOHN**

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October 2023

Dear Priests, Coordinators, and Confirmation Catechists:

The current revisions to the '*Journey To The Sacrament of Confirmation*' document released in March of 2021, are based on an evaluation of the implementation over the last two years with input received from parish coordinators and Confirmation preparation catechists throughout the diocese.

The new two-year formation process also encouraged the participation of Catechists in the Adult Alpha program. In April 2021, a Diocesan wide on-line Alpha began with over 45 participants. This gave the Catechists an opportunity for personal faith development plus experience for delivering Alpha Youth to the Confirmation Candidates. The response to the experience was very positive.

A reminder of the goals of the new formation process outlined the basis of the questions in the survey. Those goals included:

- Have Catechists deliver the new formation alive in their faith
- Realize that faith formation of the Catechists and Confirmation Candidates is part of the work of the Parish
- Offer faith formation that is more meaningful to the candidate, parents, and sponsor
- Accompany the candidate on their faith journey
- For all of us to become missionary disciples by living out our faith based on a relationship with Jesus and sharing that with youth
- Involve everyone in the Parish....families, pastors, parishioners, pastoral and finance councils
- Have youth feel part of the Church

The feedback from those implementing the document with the youth is very much appreciated. Each wanting to make the Confirmation preparation experience more relevant, more interactive, and with a focus for personal growth of the relationship between the Candidate and Jesus. From all the feedback much of this has been achieved.

The revisions to the '*Journey to the Sacrament of Confirmation*' reflects the feedback from the evaluation of the process. Additions have also been made to make the process more comprehensive.

Note: the following pages have revisions or additions:

- Confirmation Name page 18
- Home Schooling/Catholic School page 20

Appendix A

- Addition of the Information Pamphlet Outlining the Role of the Confirmation Candidate/Parent/Sponsor

Patricia Lee

Patricia Lee
Director of Catechesis

Fr. Owen Burns

Fr. Owen Burns
Episcopal Vicar for Pastoral Services



“The Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you.” (John 14:26)

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

What an exciting occasion it is to journey with our young people towards Confirmation! In being sealed with the Holy Spirit, the Sacrament of Confirmation (along with Baptism and the Eucharist) completes their initiation into the Church.

The reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation is necessary for the strengthening and perfection of baptismal grace to grow in holiness and to be missioned as a more active witness for Christ in the Church and the world. In strengthening the gifts of the Holy Spirit received in Baptism, Confirmation deepens the commitment to Christ and to living and proclaiming the gospel boldly in words accompanied by deeds. The candidates are empowered by the Holy Spirit to live an active faith that is continuously nourished by the Eucharist.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* tells us 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. The latter bears special responsibility for the preparation of confirmands.” (n. 1309)

It is deep love for our candidates that compels us to offer the very best opportunity to encounter Jesus in a personal way in the Church as they prepare for Confirmation. We are investing in our youth by providing a more comprehensive formation journey, which will help our candidates encounter and re-encounter Christ and prepare them for a deeper engagement in the mission. To that end, I am enthusiastic about our updated formation for Confirmation, which begins no sooner than grade 8 and continues in grade 9 or beyond. The formation process focuses on a personal encounter with Jesus in Year 1 (*Alpha Youth Series*) and follows in the second part of Year 1 and into Year 2 with deeper catechesis rooted in the primacy of evangelization (choice of Dynamic Catholic’s *Decision Point* or Ascension Press’ *Chosen*). Each of these programs has sound catechesis and proven effectiveness in leading youth to encountering Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit. It is my prayer that by offering this extended formation, our young people will complete their formation and be propelled into society, empowered by the Holy Spirit, ready to share the good news of God’s love with joyful zeal.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, n. 767 states: “*The Church in her very nature is missionary, sent by Christ to all nations to make disciples of them.*” In fact, the Church exists to evangelize – to share the good news of Jesus Christ with everyone. Pope Francis reminds us that, “unless we see [Jesus] present at the heart of our missionary commitment, our enthusiasm soon

wanes, and we are no longer sure of what it is that we are handing on; we lack vigour and passion. A person who is not convinced, enthusiastic, certain and in love, will convince nobody.” (Pope Francis, Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*, n. 266)

The entire faith community (parish priest, religious education coordinators, catechists, parents, sponsors, and parishioners) plays a significant role in accompanying our young people towards the sacrament. We want the very best for our candidates – to lead them to a true encounter with Jesus, in the power of the Holy Spirit. As we support our young people on their journey, we too can deepen our own encounter with Christ. Confirmation is a sacrament for the whole church! It is the sacrament that strengthens each of us in this fundamental identity of being intentional disciples of Christ who are permanently engaged in the mission.

Our relationship with God reminds us that life is not just about this present moment: it is a constant journey towards our eternal destiny – to live in a communion of love with God and one another now and for all eternity in heaven. Mindful of this we accompany our young people with great joy, full of anticipation for what the Lord will do for them and for the wider Church through the graces of this sacrament.

Be assured of my prayers for all of those preparing for Confirmation and for all who help prepare them. Come Holy Spirit!

Our Lady, Star of the New Evangelization and Spouse of the Holy Spirit – Pray for us!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Christian Riesbeck".

Most Rev. Christian Riesbeck, CC
Bishop of Saint John
March 15, 2021

INTRODUCTION

JOURNEY TO THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION

Why Should Young People Seek to Receive the Sacrament of Confirmation?

Confirmation is an exciting step on the journey of faith. Along with Baptism and First Eucharist, Confirmation completes a person's initiation into the Church. Through these sacraments, a person is incorporated into the Church, is strengthened for participation in the Church's mission, and is welcomed into the practice of the faithful "to put the sacrament of the Eucharist at the centre, as the goal of the whole process of initiation." (Directory for Catechesis, Pontifical Council of the New Evangelization, n. 70)

Confirmation is one of the sacraments of initiation. Baptism is the first step of initiation into the life of the Church. Confirmation is seen as the completion of Baptism. According to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, "The reception of the sacrament of Confirmation is necessary for the completion of baptismal grace." (n. 1285) Candidates for Confirmation are invited to renew their baptismal commitment and engage more fully in the Church's mission as intentional disciples of Christ. To fulfill this important mission, candidates receive the fullness of the Spirit in a special outpouring of the gifts of the Holy Spirit – wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord. Their bond with Jesus and the Church is strengthened for more active discipleship, nourished in the Eucharist.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* tells us that "by the sacrament of Confirmation, [the baptized] are more perfectly bound to the Church and are enriched with a special strength of the Holy Spirit. Hence, they are, as true witnesses of Christ, more strictly obliged to spread and defend the faith by word and deed." (n. 1285) Confirmation more fully personalizes the gifts of the Spirit so that the Spirit is manifested through action in love and service. The faithful born anew by Baptism are strengthened by Confirmation and become missionary disciples ready to accept the saving message of Jesus Christ for themselves and proclaim it with zeal to others by word and deed.

As Confirmation is an important sacrament, we must take seriously our role in preparing the candidates well. It is an abundance of love for our young people that compels us to desire the very best for them – a true encounter with Jesus and a deeper belonging and engagement in his Church. We have a privileged role not only to impart information but to form candidates who, having witnessed the love of Christ present in us, desire to know him more deeply for themselves. Formation for the Sacrament of Confirmation will provide sound educational and theological content and the proper conditions through which candidates will be encouraged to wrestle with the deep truths of the Catholic faith. We pray that in so doing the candidates will freely choose to embrace this sacrament, with full understanding of its implications for their life and their relationship with Jesus in the Church.

In order to invest more fully in our candidates during this crucial time of their faith development, we are introducing a more comprehensive formation for Confirmation. The first year will focus on evangelization (opening to a deeper relationship with Jesus), followed by a more in-depth catechesis on the sacrament of Confirmation in the second part of year one and in year two.

This document outlines steps for the entire faith community to accompany the candidate towards the Sacrament of Confirmation and in their ongoing journey of faith. The goal of the updated formation for Confirmation is to prepare candidates for the sacrament by strengthening their relationship with Jesus and helping them better understand the Catholic faith that is steeped in rich tradition and prayer. The making of a missionary disciple (active participant in the work of evangelization) is better understood by the candidate after the interactive participation in the *Alpha Youth Series* in year one followed by either *Chosen* or *Decision Point* in the second half of year one and continued in year two. With a focus of evangelization and a personal encounter with Jesus, these programs aim to draw candidates into a deeper relationship with Jesus in the Church, through which a desire to grow in faith and share the Good News with others as missionary disciples are born.

It is with great joy that the parish community, in support of the parents and sponsors, accompanies candidates on the journey to a life of active faith. Through prayer, answering questions, walking by their side, and supporting our youth in each step towards the Sacrament of Confirmation, the parish community plays an active lifelong role of accompaniment with our young people.

“Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. The two went down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit (for as yet the Spirit had not come upon any of them; they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus). Then Peter and John laid their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.”

Acts 8:14-17



ROLES IN THE CATECHESIS OF CONFIRMATION

PARISH PRIEST

As the catechist of catechists, the pastor is responsible for all catechesis that takes place at the parish, seeing that preparation for all sacraments is done carefully and completely. Catechists rely on him as a leader, and depend on him for spiritual growth, direction, and support.

His interaction with the parish religious education coordinator, catechists and Confirmation candidates must be intentional and deliberate. In collaboration with a team the parish priest guides the implementation of the updated formation. The pastor should participate in gatherings involving the Confirmation candidates, and should share the responsibility for teaching classes, leading prayers, and giving retreats. Through direct interaction and development of a personal relationship, the pastor provides an additional encounter with the candidates, providing them with an opportunity to further explore their faith in a more personal setting.

The priest has the responsibility of bringing to life, coordinating, and directing the catechetical activity of the community that has been entrusted to him.
(Directory for Catechesis n. 115)



PARISH RELIGIOUS EDUCATION COORDINATOR

The parish religious education coordinator is a faith-filled person who is experienced and knowledgeable in catechesis. They should become thoroughly familiar with the updated formation process in order to help plan and support all aspects. The leader serves as facilitator and focal point for the rest of the team and a link with the pastoral staff, parents, and sponsors.

In conjunction with the pastor and diocesan regional coordinators, the religious education coordinator communicates training opportunities for Confirmation catechists and provides support to catechists. The religious education coordinator will help communicate the formation process to the parish and guide its implementation.

Parish religious education coordinators and catechists are strongly encouraged to nurture their own personal faith development. The coordinators should participate in an Alpha program, not only as an opportunity for personal growth and encounter with Jesus, but to have a proper understanding of what is being provided to our Confirmation candidates.



CATECHIST

The catechist's role in the sacramental preparation of the candidates is one of teacher and spiritual companion on the journey. By living in personal relationship with Jesus, the catechist transmits the content of the faith and leads others into the mystery of faith itself. A catechist must be a practicing Catholic engaged in the faith and Church community who exhibits a mature and active Catholic faith life.

Catechists are asked to accompany the Confirmation candidates over the full two years of their formation. It is important for catechists to display a humble attitude and allow themselves to be “touched by the questions and confronted by the situations of life, with a gaze full of compassion but also respectful of the other's freedom.” (DC n. 135c) Catechists create an environment that allows candidates to experience the love of God through Jesus Christ in a personal way, characterized by warmth, trust, acceptance, and care.

FORMATION AND TRAINING FOR CATECHISTS

Catechists are required to participate in ongoing training and spiritual formation, including:

ALPHA

All catechists are required to complete an Alpha program prior to offering formation to candidates. This allows the opportunity for personal growth and encounter with Jesus and provides a clear understanding of what is being offered to our Confirmation candidates. As needed a diocesan/regional Alpha for catechists will be offered, with preference being given to those responsible for the formation of candidates for the sacraments.

In addition to an Alpha for adults, catechists must also complete Alpha Youth Series training which prepares them to run an Alpha program in year one. This will be offered on a diocesan/regional level and is available through Alpha Canada via a series of videos. Support on a diocesan/regional level is available for parishes in their training. Training for Alpha Youth Series will be provided prior to the beginning of the Confirmation program.

DECISION POINT OR CHOSEN

Following the Alpha training and depending on which program their parish has selected, catechists will then receive training in either ‘*Decision Point*’ or ‘*Chosen*’ (Please note: ‘*Decision Point*’ has training videos and lends itself to group training. ‘*Chosen*’ has a text format for preparing catechists to offer the program). Training for ‘*Decision Point*’ or ‘*Chosen*’ will be provided prior to the beginning of the Confirmation program.

*The “ministry of catechesis” occupies a significant place,
indispensable for the growth of the faith.
(Directory for Catechesis n. 110)*

PARENT(S)/GUARDIAN(S)

Pope Francis tells us that, “the first and most important place for passing on the faith is in the home, through the quiet daily example of parents who love the Lord and trust in his word.” (Pope Francis address to young married couples in Mary’s Pro-Cathedral, Dublin, Ireland, August 25, 2018.)

Parents must be encouraged and nurtured in their role as first evangelizers and educators in the faith. Catechists work in co-operation with parents and support them in their responsibility to “bring [their] child up in the practice of the faith.” (Rite of Baptism) Catechists encourage parents to model an active life of faith in the home, which builds strong families and helps prepare children to fully accept Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit, in every sacrament they will receive, including Confirmation.

Parents/Guardians provide examples of authentic faith lived out with joy and consistency; prayerful lives (Directory of Catechesis n. 249); lives which provide *faith-in-action* examples for their child.

With a goal of supporting families as they accompany their children towards Confirmation catechists may choose to encourage families in some of the suggested following ways. For example:

- Attend Sunday Mass as a family.
- Participate in faith formation programs (e.g., Alpha, bible studies, retreats) and share what God is doing in their lives with each other.
- Read scripture as a family.
- Offer talents and gifts by participating in a parish ministry.
- Pray together on a regular basis (e.g., Grace at mealtime, rosary, evening prayers).
- Help their child to see God working in their lives.

As part of their continuing support and witness to their children preparing for Confirmation, parents should attend parent meetings as required.

Believing parents, with their daily example of life, have the most effective capacity to transmit the beauty of the Christian faith to their children. “Enabling families to take up their role as active agents of the family apostolate calls for ‘an effort at evangelization and catechesis inside the family’.”
(Directory for Catechesis n. 124)

SPONSOR

Choosing a sponsor is an important decision for the candidate. The sponsor is an accompanying companion and guide who gives spiritual help and encouragement to a person who is preparing for the sacrament of Confirmation. It is recommended that a sponsor be chosen by the candidate early in the preparation process. When a candidate's baptismal godparent is available, capable, and willing to perform the role as Confirmation sponsor, "it is desirable to choose as sponsor the one who undertook the same function at Baptism" (Code of Canon Law, canon 893).

As representatives of the parish community, a sponsor is a mature person of faith capable of meeting regularly with the candidate. Sponsors must have received all three sacraments of initiation (Baptism, Eucharist, and Confirmation), be at least 16 years of age and not be the father or mother of the candidate. Candidates should be encouraged to pray about this important role and give serious consideration to the person they will ask to fill it. The sponsor is to be a living example of faith for the candidate. To be chosen as a sponsor is a great privilege and reflects a trust and relationship with the candidate that must be taken seriously. A sponsor has two main responsibilities: to journey with the candidate as a regular support and guide, and to nurture their own personal Catholic faith. The sponsor is someone who willingly works with the candidate throughout the preparation process. They are available to discuss what the candidate is learning in formal sessions, reflect with the candidate on the meaning of Confirmation in the life of a Catholic, and participate in candidate/sponsor events and prayer experiences.

INFORMATION PAMPHLET

For those accompanying the candidate throughout the Confirmation preparation journey an information pamphlet has been developed. This pamphlet outlines the expectations of the candidate, the role of the parents/guardians, and the sponsor. Distribution of the pamphlet must be at the beginning of the Year 8 program.

(Appendix A)



PARISH COMMUNITY

The entire parish community plays an important role in preparing candidates for the sacrament of Confirmation. The community helps shape and form one another as they worship together, nurturing a closeness to Jesus in the sacraments by being living examples of lives changed by his grace. The journey to Confirmation is an opportunity for the entire parish community to re-encounter Jesus. Fully initiated members of the parish community are called to be a sign and symbol to generate and incarnate the fire of Pentecost.

“The community has an important role in the accompaniment of young people; it should feel collectively responsible for accepting, motivating, encouraging, and challenging them. All should regard young people with understanding, appreciation, and affection, and avoid constantly judging them or demanding of them a perfection beyond their years.” (Pope Francis, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Christus Vivit*, n. 243) Parish communities rejoice with candidates as they prepare for this significant milestone in their journey of faith and support them by modelling a deep personal relationship with Christ.

In addition to spiritual support, it is important to affirm candidates publicly and encourage them in their formation. Parishes may choose to recognize candidates in visible ways such as:

- Presenting candidates during Mass at the beginning of their journey.
- Inviting parishioners to become prayer partners with the candidates.
- Inviting parish members to write notes of encouragement to candidates.
- Providing bulletin updates on themes being explored, prayers of the faithful for the candidates, etc.

Receiving newly confirmed members into the parish community is a great joy! Through more intentional efforts by parents, sponsors and the larger faith community, candidates should be mentored in such a way that their gifts can both enrich and be enriched by the Church. Ongoing formation and leadership opportunities will help develop a missionary identity and provide opportunities to share the faith that has recently been ignited through the gifts of the Spirit received in fullness in Confirmation.

The Church, patiently accompanying her children and respecting the pace of their maturing, shows herself to be an attentive mother.
(Directory for Catechesis n. 64f)



CANDIDATE

Candidates for Confirmation are students in at least grade eight when they begin their formation for reception of Confirmation, which takes place in grade nine or beyond. Candidates will have been baptized and received their First Eucharist, and guided by their family, pastor and parish community, desire to personally choose to complete initiation into the faith life of the Church. Confirmation is not the sacrament of maturity but rather a strengthening of baptismal grace in the ongoing commitment as a disciple of Christ in the Church.

Confirmation formation should lead the young person toward a more intimate union with Christ and a deepening familiarity with the Holy Spirit - his action, his gifts, and his bidding. Within this loving experience which God has initiated, God invites a response to bear much fruit. In order to provide the best foundation for a true encounter with Jesus, candidates are encouraged to participate fully in the life of their parish through:

Mass Attendance – As the source and summit of our faith, Catholics find in the Eucharist the nourishment they need in their daily lives. By coming to the Eucharist regularly (and especially on Sundays) candidates come into direct contact with the living God, who sustains them in their quest to grow closer to him. As candidates mature in faith, they may find an increased desire to be fully initiated in the Catholic Church, and to be joyful and active participants in the sacraments.

Prayer – development of personal prayer and family prayer helps create a strong foundational formation for the candidate.

Strong values – displaying values consistent with the Gospel that are appropriate to an individual's age and spiritual development. These values can more easily be adapted in the lives of the youth if they have been provided with joyful and authentic faithful adult figures such as priests, adults and older peers living out their faith with joy and consistency (DC n. 248, n. 249).

Service – serving others within the parish and local community, allowing the youth to take on the mantle of *faith-in-action* as an engaged member of the Church.

As candidates go deeper in their journey of faith, they will begin to show signs of spiritual and faith engagement. This is a great joy to the parish community as the newly confirmed bring new life, unique gifts, and a reminder of our own encounters with Christ in the Church.



CONFIRMATION NAME

If a candidate would like to choose a Confirmation name that is allowed in our Diocese. The name is considered for ceremonial purposes only and will not be included in the parish records. The following should be considered by the candidate before a name is chosen:

- It must be a Christian name of a saint who is an example to the candidate's faith journey. (the name of a canonized saint, or a biblical name)
- Hold meaning to the candidate and how it relates to the decision to be Confirmed.
- Have knowledge of the faith journey of the saint, or person from the bible, and how it is personally inspirational.

The candidate may be asked to give explanation for the name chosen.

The Sacrament of Confirmation form should include the chosen name if one is desired and brought to the attention of the Religious Education Coordinator. The bishop can include that name as the candidate is confirmed.

"I have called you by name: you are mine"
(Isaiah 43:1)

LETTER TO THE BISHOP

At an appropriate time prior to the celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation candidates are asked to write a letter to the Bishop, expressing to him why they want to be confirmed and asking for the sacrament. These letters are an opportunity for candidates to tell the Bishop about themselves and should be from the heart. It is especially relevant to highlight their journey in faith and how they have grown in their prayer life. It should include examples of how they encountered Jesus during their formation and what the Sacrament of Confirmation means to their future (how do they want their lives to be changed by the Sacrament of Confirmation). Preparation for Confirmation will encourage candidates to be asking these questions throughout their formation. When writing their letter, they will be able to address their desire for the Sacrament of Confirmation. with enthusiasm.



HOMESCHOOLING/CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Confirmation preparation may be provided by parent(s)/guardian(s) in an ongoing homeschool setting or as part of the curricula in a Catholic school. However, the parish pastor is responsible to see that the candidate is carefully prepared for the Sacrament of Confirmation.

The parent(s)/guardian(s) is responsible to:

- Inform the parish pastor in writing, that the candidate beginning in the eighth grade will receive Confirmation preparation either by Homeschooling or in a Catholic school.
- The pastor or his delegate is encouraged to meet with the parent(s) and offer assistance to help fulfill the responsibility.
- A copy of the Baptismal certificate must be given to the parish priest at the beginning of the Confirmation preparation, if not already on record in the parish. (Other paperwork such as Confirmation registration may also be required)
- The candidate is expected to attend the in person Alpha Youth portion of their formation within the parish.
- The program Chosen or Decision Point, selected by the parish, is to be the program offered as part of the already existing homeschooling program.
- The sponsor is to be chosen at the beginning of the preparation so they can willingly accompany the candidate throughout the preparation process.
- Attend Mass as a family.
- The candidate is to complete the service component required by the parish for sacrament.
- The candidate will attend the NET (National Evangelization Team) and/or parish retreat.
- The candidate is to write a letter to the Bishop.
- Parent(s)/Sponsor are to attend parent(s)/sponsor meetings provided by the parish.

In the interest of standardizing formation, the pastor and/or delegate will meet with the Candidate to determine readiness.

*The whole community has the task of transmitting the faith and of bearing witness to the possibility of walking through life with Christ. The togetherness of the Lord Jesus with the two disciples of Emmaus, his walking with them, dialoguing, accompanying, helping to open their eyes, is a source of inspiration for walking with young people.
(Directory of Catechesis n. 242)*

ALPHA YOUTH SERIES

Alpha Youth Series is a nine-week course that creates a space where youth can have a conversation about their faith, the world around them and their relationship with Jesus. Youth watch a video together that sparks conversation.

CONFIRMATION YEAR 1 ALPHA YOUTH SCHEDULE

Session	Theme
Week 1	Life: Is This It?
Week 2	Jesus: Who Is He?
Week 3	Cross: Why Did Jesus Die?
Week 4	Faith: How Can I Have Faith?
Week 5	Prayer: How and Why Do I Pray?
Week 6	Bible: How and Why Do I Read the Bible
Alpha Weekend/Day (suggested after week 6)	Four Videos- Spirit: Who Is the Holy Spirit and What Does He Do? Fill: How Can I Be Filled with The Holy Spirit? New Life: How Can I Make the Most of the Rest of My Life? Evil: How Can I Resist Evil?
Week 7	Healing: How Does God Heal Today?
Week 8	Telling Others: Why and How I Should Tell Others?
Week 9	Church: What About the Church?

DECISION POINT CONFIRMATION PROGRAM

Decision Point is a 12- or 24-lesson Confirmation program specifically developed to engage young Catholics in a meaningful conversation about Catholicism. It teaches and inspires teens to respond to God's grace, and it is changing hundreds of thousands of young lives.

CONFIRMATION YEAR 1/2 – DECISION POINT (DYNAMIC CATHOLIC)

Session	Theme
Session 1	Life is Choices
Session 2	What's Holding You Back?
Session 3	The Jesus Question
Session 4	The Prayer Process
Session 5	The Bible
Session 6	Relationships
Session 7	The Eucharist
Session 8	The Holy Spirit
Session 9	The Church
Session 10	Confirmation
Session 11	Made for Mission
Session 12	Holiness is Possible

<https://www.dynamiccatholic.com/confirmation/decision-point.html>

Additional Notes on Decision Point:

- Suggested sessions be delivered in one-hour segments (24 sessions) or two-hour segments (12 sessions).
- Videos are between 7-8 minutes in length with discussion questions in between. Typically, five videos in each session.
- Workbooks for youth containing extra materials to add on and supplement materials not covered in videos.
- Leaders guide and video training (10 videos between 3-8 minutes in length).
- Program for parents and sponsors, email sign-up and sent directly to them.
- Available online, mobile app, as well as physical materials.
- Free online with downloadable workbooks.
- DVD and books can be ordered as a start-up kit paying postage only.
- Resources can be ordered online. <https://www.dynamiccatholic.com/>

CHOSEN CONFIRMATION PROGRAM

Chosen: Your Journey Toward Confirmation takes young people on a journey through the entire Catholic faith in all its richness and vitality. Teens will be captivated by the story, from Creation all the way through salvation history, and they will come to see how the sacraments, prayer, and discipleship are the keys to a happy life.

CONFIRMATION YEAR 1/2 - CHOSEN (ASCENSION PRESS)

Lesson	Theme
Lesson 1	Why Am I Here?
Lesson 2	What Makes Me Happy?
Lesson 3	What's Your Story, God?
Lesson 4	How do I Know God Is Real?
Lesson 5	Who is Jesus?
Lesson 6	Why Be Catholic?
Lesson 7	Where Am I Going?
Lesson 8	How Do I Get There?
Lesson 9	When Did My Journey Begin?
Lesson 10	Why Tell My Sins to a Priest?
Lesson 11	How Does God Help When It Hurts?
Lesson 12	Who is The Holy Spirit?
Lesson 13	What Does the Holy Spirit do for Me?
Lesson 14	How have I been CHOSEN?
Lesson 15	Why Do I Have to go to Mass?
Lesson 16	What Does it Mean to Say, "I Do"?
Lesson 17	Who's Calling?
Lesson 18	Are You Talking to Me?
Lesson 19	Who Is Mary?
Lesson 20	What Would Jesus Do?
Lesson 21	Do I Have What it Takes?
Lesson 22	Why Wait?
Lesson 23	How Do I Build the Kingdom?
Lesson 24	Where Do I Go from Here?

<https://ascensionpress.com/collections/chosen-your-journey-toward-confirmation>

Additional Notes on CHOSEN:

- Lessons can be delivered in a 60 min, 90 min, or 120 min format.
- Videos are between 15-20 minutes which leads to discussion questions.
- Workbooks for youth.
- Guides for catechists, parents, and sponsors.
- Available online as well as physical materials.
- Extra 20-minute parent video.
- Resources can be ordered online.

<https://ascensionpress.com/collections/chosen-your-journey-to-confirmation>



DIOCESE OF SAINT JOHN

Candidate Covenant

A covenant is basically an agreement between people, or between God and his people, that binds one to the other. God's faithful and loving commitment to us was fulfilled in Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world. As you begin your preparation for Confirmation, you are also called to enter into a covenant with the Lord. Read over the promises below and as an indication of your serious commitment to prepare for Confirmation, sign your name on the line at the bottom of this covenant. Ask a parent/guardian to witness your commitment by signing the covenant as well.

I pledge...

- ❖ to participate fully in all sessions;
- ❖ to enter into prayer services and retreats with reverence and openness;
- ❖ to work willingly with my sponsor throughout the preparation process;
- ❖ to give witness to living the Christian life by participating in service activities; and
- ❖ to cooperate with my parents, sponsor, pastor, catechist, and parish community, as they help me prepare for Confirmation.

I ask the help of the Holy Spirit as I begin this preparation process. I pray that the Holy Spirit will be with me as I dedicate myself to living the commitment I make through this covenant.

Signature of Candidate

Parent witness

Date

Date



DIOCESE OF SAINT JOHN

Sponsor Covenant

NAME OF THE CANDIDATE: _____

A covenant is basically an agreement between people, or between God and his people, that binds one to the other. God's faithful and loving commitment to us was fulfilled in Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world. As you now prepare to sponsor a candidate for Confirmation, you are also called to enter into a covenantal relationship. It is a sign of your commitment of trust and accompaniment in the life of this young person. Please prayerfully consider your ability to fulfill this role (including adhering to the requirements outlined below) and sign this document as a commitment of your willingness to do so.

As a Confirmation sponsor, I pledge ...

- ❖ to be a living example of faith for my candidate;
- ❖ to work willingly with my candidate throughout the preparation process;
- ❖ to discuss on a regular basis what my candidate is learning in formal sessions;
- ❖ to reflect with my candidate on the meaning of Confirmation in the life of a Catholic;
- ❖ to participate in candidate/sponsor events and prayer experiences; and
- ❖ to be open to growing in my own faith as I journey through the preparation process with my candidate.

I attest that I am a practicing Catholic, having received all three sacraments of initiation (Baptism, Eucharist, and Confirmation); I am not the parent of the candidate; I am at least 16 years of age.

I ask the help of the Holy Spirit as I begin this preparation process with my candidate. I pray that the Holy Spirit will be with me as I dedicate myself to living the commitment I make through this covenant.

Signature of Sponsor

Email address or phone

Date

CONFIRMATION YEAR 1
(SAMPLE SCHEDULE USING ALPHA YOUTH SERIES)

BASED ON WEEKLY SESSIONS	
September	Registration and Parent/Candidate Meeting Alpha Youth Session 1 – Life: Is This It?
October	Alpha Youth Session 2 – Jesus: Who Is He? Alpha Youth Session 3 – Cross: Why Did Jesus Die? Alpha Youth Session 4 – Faith: How Can I Have Faith?
November	Organize training for “Prayer Ministry” Day Alpha Youth Session 5 – Prayer: How and Why Do I Pray? Alpha Youth Session 6 – Bible: How and Why Do I Read the Bible
December	Alpha Youth Session 7 – Healing: How Does God Heal Today? Prayer Ministry Day Alpha Youth Session 8 – Telling Others: Why and How I Should Tell Others?
January – May	Alpha Youth Session 9 – Church: What About the Church? Begin Confirmation Program (<i>Decision Point</i> or <i>Chosen</i>) *Suggested meeting with parents/sponsors to give update Selection of Sponsor should be completed following the conclusion of Alpha.
June – August	Break from scheduled sessions

CONFIRMATION YEAR 1
(SAMPLE SCHEDULE USING *ALPHA YOUTH SERIES*)

BASED ON BI-WEEKLY SESSIONS	
September	Registration and Parent/Candidate Meeting Alpha Youth Session 1 – Life: Is This It?
October	Alpha Youth Session 2 – Jesus: Who Is He? Alpha Youth Session 3 – Cross: Why Did Jesus Die?
November	Organize training for “Prayer Ministry” Day Alpha Youth Session 4 – Faith: How Can I Have Faith? Alpha Youth Session 5 – Prayer: How and Why Do I Pray?
December	Alpha Youth Session 6 – Bible: How and Why Do I Read the Bible? Prayer Ministry Day
January	Alpha Youth Session 7 – Healing: How Does God Heal Today? Alpha Youth Session 8 – Telling Others: Why and How I Should Tell Others?
February – May	Alpha Youth Session 9 – Church: What About the Church? Begin Confirmation Program (<i>Decision Point</i> or <i>Chosen</i>) *Suggested meeting with parents/sponsors to give update Selection of Sponsor should be completed following the conclusion of Alpha.
June – August	Break from scheduled sessions

CONFIRMATION YEAR 2
 (SAMPLE SCHEDULE USING *DECISION POINT* OR *CHOSEN*)

BASED ON WEEKLY SESSIONS (approx. 60 – 90 minutes)	
September – December	Resume Confirmation sessions Regular sessions continue Discuss community outreach, parish project, community service Regular sessions continue
January	Regular sessions continue
February	Parent/sponsor check-in Regular sessions continue
March	Confirmation Retreat (NET Encounter, parish retreat, etc.) Letter to Bishop requesting to receive Sacrament of Confirmation
April	Completion of program Celebration of Confirmation Selection of additional faith study or engagement opportunities Parish involvement and continued engagement
May	Completion of community or parish projects

CONFIRMATION YEAR 2
(SAMPLE SCHEDULE USING *DECISION POINT* OR *CHOSEN*)

BASED ON BI-WEEKLY SESSIONS (approx. 90 – 120 minutes)	
September – December	Resume Confirmation sessions Regular sessions continue Discuss community outreach, parish project, community service Regular sessions continue
January	Regular sessions continue
February	Parent/sponsor check-in Regular sessions continue
March	Confirmation Retreat (NET Encounter, parish retreat, etc.) Letter to Bishop requesting to receive Sacrament of Confirmation
April	Completion of program Celebration of Confirmation Selection of additional faith study or engagement opportunities Parish involvement and continued engagement

CONFIRMATION PLANNING LITURGY CHECKLIST

Preparation for the Mass:

- ☐ **Vestments:** Red vestments are used unless we are celebrating a Solemnity that indicates white vestments (on Sundays in Advent & Lent: violet vestments are worn).
- ☐ **Chrism Oil:** Please have the Parish's Chrism Oil available before the Liturgy so that some may be added to the celebrant's Chrism Oil vessel that he will bring to the celebration.
- ☐ **Lemon for Hand Cleansing:** Please have a real lemon (cut in half), water and a towel for the celebrant to purify his hands after the anointing, as well as a few purificators for the anointing with Chrism

Photographs:

- ☐ Please refrain from taking photos or videos during the celebration unless the parish has one designated photographer who is discreet.

The Bishop will be available after the celebration for individual photos with the *Confirmandi* and family

Music Selections:

- ☐ Hymns for the celebration are chosen to reflect Confirmation (i.e., the Holy Spirit) or the Feast Day being celebrated
- ☐ Please note that the Gloria in excelsis is said/sung, but the Creed is omitted

Liturgy of the Word:

- ☐ On Sundays and Solemnities, the readings of the day are used. On weekdays, readings from the Confirmation Ritual (pp. 43-69) may be selected; only one reading from either the Old or the New Testament may be chosen, in addition to the Gospel reading, although two readings, in addition to the Gospel reading are also possible, one from the Old and one from the New Testament.
- ☐ Please consult the Bishop's Office regarding the selections chosen.

Sacrament of Confirmation – *Please Review with the Candidates this information*

- ☐ The Presentation of the Candidates (see Old “Rite of Confirmation” pp. 93-95 for options, although this is not necessary)

If desired, please clearly indicate which option (A, B, or C) the parish has chosen

OPTION CHOSEN:

- ☐ Renewal of Baptismal Promises

- ☐ Laying on of Hands

Candidates kneel and sponsors stand placing a hand on candidate’s shoulder

- ☐ Anointing with Chrism

The candidates come forward with their sponsor (with a hand on candidate’s shoulder) and responds to “N., Be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit” with “**Amen**”.

- ☐ Sign of Peace

The Bishop may gently touch each person on their cheek to extend a paternal sign of peace.

Confirmandi respond to “The Lord be with you” by saying “**and with your Spirit.**”

Universal Prayer: Please use the petitions found in the Confirmation Rite, pp. 22-23.

Liturgy of the Eucharist

Concluding Rite

SUPPLEMENTARY RITES

Presentation of the Candidates

If there are several candidates for Confirmation and the parish chooses to introduce them, the candidates should be presented as a group all at one time rather than individually by name.

The candidates may be presented to the Bishop in one of the following ways, according to diocesan policy or practice.

A

The pastor or another priest, deacon, or catechist presents the candidates to the Bishop in these or similar words:

Bishop,

I present to you these young people of N. parish, who have completed a period of preparation for Confirmation. They have deepened their knowledge of Jesus Christ by studying the truths of our faith.

They have been strengthened by God's grace in the Sacraments, and have been supported by the prayers and example of our parish community. I now ask you to celebrate the completion of their initiation into the life of Christ and to seal them with the Gift of the Holy Spirit.

Then the Bishop gives the homily or the instruction.

B

The pastor presents the candidates to the Bishop in these or similar words:

Bishop,

I present these candidates to you for the Sacrament of Confirmation.

The Bishop asks:

Do you consider that they are ready to celebrate this Sacrament?

The pastor or someone responsible for the formation of the candidates responds in these or similar words:

These candidates have been prepared to be fully initiated into the community of the Church. Upon inquiry among their parents, sponsors, and catechists, I testify that they are ready to celebrate this Sacrament.

All may express their assent to this testimony by an acclamation or some other sign.

The Bishop gives the Homily or the Instruction.

C

The presentation of the candidates may take the following form:

Pastor:

**Bishop, on behalf of our parish community
I present these candidates for the Sacrament of Confirmation.**

Bishop:

God's holy Church wishes to be certain that these candidates are ready to celebrate this Sacrament.

**The parents stand. The Bishop speaks to them: Parents,
at Baptism you accepted the responsibility of raising your children in the practice of the faith, and of guiding them to love God and neighbour. Do you now consider that they are ready to be confirmed in the faith of the Church?**

Parents:

We do.

The parents are seated. Then the teachers and catechists stand.

Bishop:

**Teachers and catechists, you have proclaimed the Good News and shared the riches of our Catholic tradition with these young people.
Do you consider that they have faithfully listened to God's word proclaimed by the Church?**

Teachers and catechists:

We do.

The teachers and catechists are seated and the sponsors stand. The Bishop speaks to them:

Sponsors, by word and example you have helped these candidates to walk in God's presence.

Do you consider that they have shared the company of their Christian brothers and sisters and joined them faithfully in prayer?

Sponsors:

We do.

The sponsors are seated. Then the Bishop speaks to the members of the parish community:

People of N. parish, we have heard the testimony in favour of these candidates, and welcome them to complete their initiation into the life of Christ and to be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit. Are you willing to continue to sustain them in faith by your prayer and example?

All:

We are.

The people may express their assent by an acclamation or some other sign.

The Bishop gives the Homily or the Instruction.

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USE OF BISHOP'S MITRE AND CROZIER DURING MASS AND CONFIRMATION

As a rule, the Bishop holds the crozier as he walks in procession, listens to the Gospel, for the profession of faith, for the conferral of a sacrament and for bestowing blessings. The Bishop wears the mitre when he is seated, when he preaches, when he greets the people or addresses them, when he confers a sacrament or gives a solemn blessing and when he is walking in procession.

- ☐ The Bishop wears the **mitre** and carries the **crozier** in the entrance procession.
- ☐ He removes the **mitre** and passes the **crozier** to the server before reverencing the altar.
- ☐ He wears the mitre for the Liturgy of the Word until the Gospel; for the Gospel, he removes the **mitre** and receives the **crozier**.
- ☐ For the homily, he passes the **crozier** to the server but wears the **mitre**.
- ☐ For the renewal of baptismal promises, he continues with the **mitre and crozier**, giving them up for the prayer that accompanies the laying on of hands.
- ☐ The Bishop receives both the **mitre and crozier** for the Anointing with Chrism. Before washing his hands, he passes the **crozier** to the server.
- ☐ The **mitre** is removed for the Universal Prayer (prayers of intercession), the Bishop receiving it back as he sits while the altar is prepared. He wears the mitre to receive the gifts, and then removes it.
- ☐ Following the Prayer after Communion, the Bishop receives the **mitre**; at the end of the invocations, he receives the **crozier** for the Solemn Blessing.
- ☐ The Bishop wears the **mitre** and carries the **crozier** during the recessional.

	MITRE	CROZIER
ENTRANCE PROCESSION	WEARS	CARRIES
BEFORE REVERENCING ALTAR	REMOVES	PASSES TO SERVER
LITURGY OF THE WORD (BEFORE GOSPEL)	WEARS	
GOSPEL	REMOVES	RECEIVES
HOMILY	WEARS	PASSES TO SERVER
RENEWAL OF BAPTISMAL PROMISES	WEARS	RECEIVES
LAYING ON OF HANDS	REMOVES	PASSES TO SERVER
ANOINTING WITH CHRISM	WEARS	RECEIVES
WASHING HANDS		PASSES TO SERVER
UNIVERSAL PRAYER (PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION)	REMOVES - RECEIVES BACK WHILE ALTAR IS PREPARED	
RECEIVING THE GIFTS	WEARS - THEN REMOVES	
SOLEMN BLESSING AT END OF MASS	WEARS	RECEIVES CROZIER - AT END OF INVOCATIONS
RECESSIONAL	WEARS	CARRIES

ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations are used for key Church documents cited in the text:

CCC	Catechism of the Catholic Church
DC	Directory for Catechesis Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization (2020)
CCCB	Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops

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