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**For Confirmation Questions please contact Nichole Chang, the Confirmation Coordinator at:**

[nicholechang@saintvdp.org](mailto:nicholechang@saintvdp.org) or (763) 762-7370



# *Important Information*

## **To the Parents:**

When you brought your child to the Church for Baptism, you accepted the sacred responsibility and privilege of “training them in the practice of the faith.” (Rite of Baptism, 30). You were reminded that you are the first and best teachers of your child and you were entrusted with keeping the light of faith burning brightly in their life. Parents instruct their children, both by what they say and what they do. It is now time for that next step. Confirmation is a celebration of the ongoing power of the already-present Holy Spirit in our lives, the Spirit first received in Baptism. Through this Sacrament, the gifts of the Holy Spirit first received at Baptism are deepened and intensified.

## **Following are some suggestions on ways to assist your young person in their preparation:**

1. Pray for and with your child(ren) every day.
2. Initiate conversation about the Sacrament of Confirmation. Share your memories of receiving the sacrament and encourage your teen to share their ideas of how receiving this sacrament will change their faith life.
3. Help with the selection of a sponsor and saint's name for Confirmation.
4. Make sure all documents are completed and returned in a timely manner.

## **Guidelines for reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation:**

1. Regular participation in Sunday (or Saturday evening) Mass.
2. An appropriate understanding of the Catholic Christian life. The candidate should understand and reflect the life of Christ in their lifestyle.
3. A firm determination to live the Christian life to the best of their ability. The candidate must be a good steward, giving in Christian proportion of their prayer, participation, and generosity.
4. The candidate must understand the importance of personal and communal worship in the life of the Church.
5. Faithful participation in the Confirmation preparation program, scheduled classes, retreats, service projects, etc.
6. Commitment to further religious education by the candidate and parents or guardian. Reception of this sacrament is a beginning – not an end. It is one step in our life-long journey to holiness. The candidate must be willing to be actively involved in parish life after Confirmation.



**St. Vincent de Paul Faith Community will assist in the faith formation of the Confirmation candidates by:**

1. Scheduling class sessions during which the candidates will delve deeper into understanding their faith, the scriptures, and the Sacrament of Confirmation.
2. Inviting speakers from the local faith community, greater Twin Cities' area, and from around the country to share their insights with the candidates.
3. The small groups will be led by volunteers from SVDP under the direction of the Confirmation Coordinator. It is important that the candidates attend all sessions so as not to miss the information shared at these sessions.
4. Priests will attend and/or participate in some of the sessions with the candidates.
5. Field trips to another parish may occur in order to take advantage of national speakers and allow our students to see and experience the greater Church community.

**Expectations of Confirmation Candidates:**

**Regular participation in the Sunday liturgy:**

1. Sunday Mass is not optional for Catholics. Celebration of the Eucharist is our highest form of worship and candidates are expected to be active participants. This is the faith they will affirm.

**Session Attendance and Requirements:**

1. Candidates are expected to complete all Confirmation preparation Components. ***For the 9<sup>th</sup> and the 10<sup>th</sup> grade years the following is expected:***
  - Sunday Sessions (minimum of 15 out of 18) with their D-Group
  - Sponsor Form & Sponsor Covenant
  - Quest Retreat
  - Two Sponsor Conversations
  - 10 Discipleship hours

**Then in 10<sup>th</sup> Grade the Confirmation candidate will also complete:**

- Confirmation retreat at NET
- Saint Report
- Letter of Intent
- Proof of Baptism
- Sponsor Conversations
- Confirmation Interview
- 10 Discipleship hours

**2. Emergency absence considerations:**

Extreme circumstances, including death of family member, severe sickness and/or inclement weather will be considered emergency absences and candidates may be



excused from the minimum requirements. These extenuating situations will be evaluated on a case by case basis. If you feel as though any of your absences fall into this category, please call the Confirmation Coordinator to discuss options and make up possibilities.

#### **Inclement Weather:**

1. If the weather is severe and we decide to cancel any sessions an email will be sent. The cancellation of classes will be posted on [www.saintvdp.org](http://www.saintvdp.org) on the front page of our website as well as Facebook. In addition, the cancellation will be broadcast over the local channels.

2. We will defer to your judgment as to whether or not it is safe for you to travel.

#### **Participation in Sessions**

1. Candidate should be respectful and attentive to speakers, their small group leader, fellow small group members and others in attendance.
2. Candidate should invest in each session in order to get as much out of it as possible, and complete any assignments including meeting with their sponsor, service requirements, and retreats.
3. Candidate should actively participate in small group discussions and take part in the scheduled retreats.

#### **Sponsor:**

1. Candidate is required to have a Confirmation Sponsor and will be choosing a Sponsor in the fall.
2. In 9<sup>th</sup> grade the candidate and sponsor will complete **two activities** and there will be **four required conversations** in 10<sup>th</sup> grade. Please refer to the "Sponsor Information" section in this handbook for more information.



# Confirmation Commitments

## 9<sup>th</sup> Grade

- ☐ Attend weekly Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation.
- ☐ Register online for the Quest retreat by **November 3, 2023**, at:  
<https://saintvdp.org/quest-registration>
- ☐ Attend the Quest Retreat at St. Vincent's **November 10 & 11, 2023**  
(To do a Makeup Retreat contact John Boyle)
- ☐ Turn in Sponsor Information form and the Sponsor Covenant form by  
**December 10, 2023**
- ☐ Connect with your sponsor 2 times in person or by phone. Use the *Sponsor Activity sheets in this Handbook* to lead conversation and fill out the Sponsor Conversation Log.

Activity #1: One with the Eucharist. Activity #2: Am I Ready?

- ☐ **Items that should be completed by April 14th, 2024:**
  1. Sponsor Conversation Log
  2. Discipleship hours/Log
- ☐ Attend a **minimum** of 15 out of 18 Ydisciple D-groups on Sunday evenings.

### Looking ahead to 10<sup>th</sup> Grade Confirmation:

- Another 10 Discipleship Hours will be required in 10<sup>th</sup> Grade. You may begin completing these hours after April 28, 2024. New Discipleship Logs may be downloaded and printed out from our website or requested before the end of the Faith Formation year.
- **You must Register for your 10<sup>th</sup> grade Confirmation year in August of 2024.**
- **You must Register for the NET Confirmation retreat in the spring/summer of 2024. The retreat is usually in September.**



# *Quest Retreat*

## *At St. Vincent De Paul*

### *November 10<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023*

**The Quest Retreat is a mandatory retreat for all 9<sup>th</sup> graders.** This retreat provides an opportunity to encounter the Lord in a personal and life-changing way. It is very important to have a retreat experience every year. Retreats allow time for personal reflection and to get away from the noise of our everyday life. In 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade they participate in a short mini retreat. In 9<sup>th</sup> grade the Quest retreat, which is one evening and one day retreat, sleeping at home on Friday. Then in 10<sup>th</sup> grade, they will go for a two night weekend retreat at NET Ministries. We have intentionally lengthened the retreats gradually throughout the 4 years to allow them to become accustomed to longer retreats.

**This retreat encompasses the basic Gospel message, the Kerygma.** Though made in the image of God, we are broken. We are fallen and in need of a savior. That savior is Jesus Christ who loves us and died for us so that we may be whole again. Quest has a fun, inviting, loose atmosphere with the very powerful components of Adoration, Reconciliation, and the Mass.

- **John Boyle and Caitlin Giles, our youth ministers, will lead the retreat at St. Vincent de Paul,** along with the help of 10<sup>th</sup> -12<sup>th</sup> grade students who give testimonies, lead the games, and perform skits.
- Begins November 10<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm -10:00 pm (pick up to sleep at home)  
Continues on November 11<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 am. Retreat ends with the Saturday 5:00 pm Mass. Pick up would be at 6:00 pm.
- **Registration will be online. Please use this link:**  
<https://saintvdp.org/quest-registration>
- **Deadline to register is November 3, 2023.**
- The cost of the retreat is \$15 to cover the cost of food. (Dinner Friday, Lunch Saturday)
- Please contact John Boyle if you are not able to attend the retreat for make-up information: [johnboyle@saintvdp.org](mailto:johnboyle@saintvdp.org)



# Choosing a Sponsor

If you have ever attended a Confirmation ceremony, you have seen an adult who stands behind the candidate with a hand on their shoulder as they are anointed, but the role of a sponsor goes far beyond a simple gesture of support. Did you know that the word sponsor comes from the same root word as “responsible”? A Confirmation sponsor is someone whom you look up to as a role model in faith and will be there to support you spiritually before, during and after you receive the sacrament. In essence, your sponsor is meant to act as a spiritual guide and friend in your faith. That being said, choosing your sponsor is an important task. Don’t just choose someone because they are fun or because they haven’t done it yet. Choose your sponsor because you know that they will help you grow in your faith this year and because they will continue to support you after Confirmation.

## **Here are some good questions to ask as you consider choosing your sponsor:**

1. Who in my life has made an impact on my faith?
2. Is this person responsible?
3. Is this person mature?
4. Does he/she practice his/her Catholic faith actively by attending Mass at least weekly?
5. Does he/she practice his/her Catholic faith actively in the way that he/she lives and acts?
6. Do I trust him/her?

## **The Archdiocese of St. Paul-Minneapolis has specific requirements that are to be met by all sponsors:**

1. The sponsor must be an active, participating Catholic who has been Confirmed; someone who will be an inspiration and support for the candidate. There is to be ONLY one sponsor, male or female.
2. Sponsor must be at least 16 years of age.
3. He or she may not be the candidate’s mother or father. It is desirable, but not mandatory, that the baptismal sponsor (godparent) also be the sponsor at Confirmation to show the close connection of the two sacraments. In many cases this is not possible and another suitable person may be selected.
4. The sponsor should be a person who is prayerful, open, dependable, loving and is comfortable sharing his or her faith with young people.
5. The sponsor should be someone who is a witness to Christ and to the importance of a Catholic Christian lifestyle by their words and actions. A person who will be a support and example to the candidate as he/she moves through periods of crisis, questioning, and discernment.



# Sponsor Information

**\*Due no later than December 10, 2023.**

A Sponsor must be a practicing, confirmed Catholic, who is at least 16 years of age. He/she may not be the candidate's mother or father. A godparent is a good choice. The candidate is encouraged to choose someone close by. The sponsor should be a person who is prayerful, open, dependable, loving, and is comfortable sharing his or her faith with young people. The sponsor represents the support and prayers of the entire Church. He/she will be the candidate's spiritual friend.

## **In this program, the following is asked of the sponsor:**

1. Accompany the candidate to the Rite of Welcome and Rite of Sending if possible
2. Attend the Liturgy of Confirmation.
3. Meet with the candidate regularly throughout this year of preparation and discuss the topics addressed in the preparation sessions.
4. Share their faith story with his or her candidate.
5. Spend time getting to know the candidate, possibly taking him or her out to lunch or dinner, or having him or her over to your home.
6. Pray for and with the candidate.
7. Present the candidate during the Confirmation Rite.
8. **Continue to be there for the candidate and lend spiritual support after the Confirmation ceremony is over.**

## **Candidate Information:**

Candidate Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

(first) (middle) (last)

## **Sponsor information:**

Sponsor Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Parish Membership: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Name of Parish) (City) (State)





# Sponsor Covenant

**\*Due no later than December 10, 2023.**

## **Sponsor:**

I will be in contact and complete the 2 Sponsor Activities that are in the Confirmation Handbook. I will also contact my candidate at least monthly during the preparation process in person, by phone, or by email:

- To get to know the Candidate better.
- To share my faith story including my questions, thoughts and feelings.
- To discuss the Candidate's participation in the Confirmation program.

Sponsor's Name (print) \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsor's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **Candidate:**

I will be in contact with my sponsor to complete the 2 Sponsor Activities in the Confirmation Handbook. I will also speak with my Sponsor at least monthly during the preparation process in person, by phone or by email:

- To get to know my sponsor better
- To share my faith story including my questions, thoughts and feelings.
- To discuss my preparation for the sacrament of Confirmation.

Candidate's Name (print) \_\_\_\_\_

Candidate's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_



# Sponsor Conversations & Log

**\*Due no later than April 14, 2024.**

**On the following pages you will find two conversations to have with your sponsor.** Our hope is that these conversations lead you to a deeper relationship with your sponsor and will provide you with insights into your faith that will allow you to grow closer to Christ. This fall you chose your sponsor because you felt they would be able to help guide you on your Faith journey towards Confirmation and beyond. I pray they will be the first of many conversations with your sponsor.

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## Conversation Log:

**After your conversations with your sponsor please complete and return the following log to your Confirmation small group leader by April 14, 2024.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Small group Leader: \_\_\_\_\_

### Conversations:

#### 1. One with the Eucharist

Sponsor Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Candidate Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

One insight you received in this conversation:

#### 2. Am I Ready?

Sponsor Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Candidate Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

One insight you received in this conversation:



# Sponsor Conversation #1

## *One With the Eucharist*

### **Background:**

1. Communal worship is viewed by many as an obligation to fulfill; however, it is more like “taking a vitamin.” It nourishes us, guides us, and strengthens us so that we can get through the daily struggles of our lives. The presence of the faith community reminds us that we are not alone. Others are struggling and together we are turning to God for help and guidance. We repent of our sins, and become one body, in Christ, in the Eucharist. Nourished, refocused, and in gratitude for our many gifts and blessings, we proclaim the glory of our God. Help your candidate see their experience of communal worship at Mass as what it is: a source of strength and guidance, as well as an opportunity to gather in thanksgiving.

### **Discussion Questions (You do not need to write out your answers):**

1. What was the best Eucharist (Mass) experience you have ever had? What made it so good?
  2. Studies claim that only 30% of young adult Catholics attend Mass each Sunday. Why do you think these young people choose to go? What blessings can come from a “habit” of regular Mass attendance?
  3. Do you have trouble believing that Jesus is actually present in the Word, Eucharist, and in the community? What can we do to help our unbelief?
  4. Have you had an experience of observing or belonging to a Christian “community” where you felt that Jesus was present? What was it like?
  5. How has your experience of Eucharist (Mass) been like a celebration? What things have you seen celebrated at Mass? (ex: baptisms, weddings, funerals, other rites like the Rite of Welcome for Confirmation, First Communion, etc.)
- The Community of St. Vincent de Paul is praying for you and your candidate.  
May God Bless you during your journey together!*

\*Please note that this does not need to be turned in.



# *Sponsor Conversation #2*

## *Am I Ready?*

### **Background:**

1. Confirmation is one of the sacraments of initiation into membership in the Church. Confirmation builds on and completes the gifts of the Holy Spirit we were given at Baptism and brings us more closely into the Church. This completion is experienced: through a deeper look at how our lives reflect the values of Jesus (WWJD) through a deeper participation in the life of the Church (active in ministry and participation in liturgy); through sharing our growing faith and the resulting hope and joy we experience as a Christian; and through a growth in the spiritual gifts of the Holy Spirit (wisdom, understanding, right judgment, courage, knowledge, reverence, and wonder and awe) which guide our choices and actions.
2. Confirmation requires that a person be baptized, freely profess the Catholic faith, and be in a state of grace with no serious sins not confessed. The person must also have an understanding of the sacrament they are about to receive, a desire to be confirmed and a willingness to be a witness for Christ. This sacrament is the final step of the beginning of their new life in Christ...a life-long process of learning, growing, and becoming even stronger.

### **Confirmation Process:**

1. This year of preparation has provided the opportunity for your candidate to gain a good initial understanding of the Catholic faith and the sacrament of Confirmation. We will continue to learn what it means to be an active member of this Catholic faith family so together we all may live holy lives as witnesses for Christ.

### **Discussion Questions:**

1. What has been your favorite part of this first year of preparation?
2. Are you more ready and excited to receive the sacrament of Confirmation than you were at the beginning of the year? Why or why not?
3. What is something that has changed about your faith or your practice of your faith during this past year? How did that happen?
4. What would you say to someone who asks you why you are a Catholic? If you don't know what to say, how would you find out?
5. Looking ahead to your final year of Confirmation, what do you hope to accomplish at class? What areas would you like to serve in?

\*Please note that this does not need to be turned in.



# Discipleship Hours

*(Living out your Faith in Action)*

**\*Due no later than April 14, 2024.**

Youth have a tremendous capacity and energy to perform great works of charity (Love). Most do this with vitality and joy! What a blessing! Our youth are not the future of the Church they are a vital part of the Church TODAY. The Catholic Church needs the optimism, the perspective, and the energy that our teens have in abundance. To this end, we invite all of our candidates to dig into their volunteer efforts with the same focus and enthusiasm as many of their other interests or hobbies. If not for your own sake (satisfaction of helping others, learning more about your faith/God, discovering an area of passion, etc.) then for the sake of a Church that needs your ideas, and energy. You are part of the Body of Christ, the Church, NOW!

**To meet the Confirmation requirements, each Confirmation candidate must complete 10 hours of service each year of the program.** You may use this list as a reference for service ideas, but you are welcome to find another opportunity that you are interested in pursuing. Please record your hours for this year on the Discipleship Log and hand in by **April 14, 2024.**

## Opportunities at St. Vincent De Paul

Assist with Liturgy:	Tony Freeman (763) 762-7416, <a href="mailto:tonyfreeman@saintvdp.org">tonyfreeman@saintvdp.org</a>
Outreach and Social Justice:	Okey Anyanwu (763) 762-7417, <a href="mailto:okey@saintvdp.org">okey@saintvdp.org</a>
Volunteer at parish events:	Barb Wenner (763) 762-7413, <a href="mailto:barbwenner@saintvdp.org">barbwenner@saintvdp.org</a>
Family Formation	Grant O'Neil (763) 762-7406 <a href="mailto:Granto'neil@saintvdp.org">Granto'neil@saintvdp.org</a>
Cemetery Clean-up:	Tess Eiden (763) 762-7412, <a href="mailto:tesseiden@saintvdp.org">tesseiden@saintvdp.org</a>
General:	Office (763) 425-2210, <a href="mailto:churchinfo@saintvdp.org">churchinfo@saintvdp.org</a>

## Other Opportunities

- Second Harvest Heartland, CROSS, CEAP, IOCP (food shelves)
- Arc Value Village Thrift Store
- Caring and Sharing Hands, Hospitals & Nursing homes, or Pro-life Clinics
- Create your own! Look at the world around you. There may be neighbors or classmates that need help or even within your own family. If you have questions, ask your small group leader for approval.



## *Frequently Asked Questions*

***Why do you get to pick your D-Group?*** With small group discussion being a crucial component to the Confirmation program, it is important that students feel comfortable with one another and are able to support each other inside and outside of church activities. By allowing teens to pick their own D-group, this allows teens to pick who they would be most comfortable sharing with.

***Why only 18 sessions?*** We understand life gets crazy, especially for high schoolers. At SVDP our primary goal for confirmation is to provide opportunities for a transformative encounter with Christ. We know the lives of High Schoolers are incredibly busy, so with our new confirmation program we are aiming to make every moment count, bringing in well-known speakers who know how to engage teens, using the Chosen curriculum to teach to core values of our Catholic faith, and facilitating close small groups who aim to build each other up.

***Why only three absences?*** With fewer classes throughout the year, it is important that students miss a minimal amount in order to be best prepared for the Rite of Confirmation and to grow in faith with their small group.

***Why NET retreats?*** NET has established a wonderful reputation over the years of providing great Confirmation retreats that draw students into deeper relationship with God through dynamic speakers, small group discussion, Prayer and Eucharistic Adoration, as well as creating a space to step away from the busyness of life and take time to focus on Faith. We find retreats can be a transformative experience for many teens. However, it does take time to really step away and enter in, so a weekend is necessary in order to have an impactful experience.

***If I go on another church retreat (i.e. catholic school or other) do I still have to go on a NET retreat?*** Yes. While many retreats can be rejuvenating and allow us to grow in our faith, our goal is to have our Confirmation students prepare and gain a better understanding of the Sacrament of Confirmation, as well as bond with other students from St. Vincent de Paul.

***Recommend Youth Group:*** Confirmation is not a graduation from our faith, it is a starting point for each individual of their life in the Church. Youth Group can be a great way to continue to learn more about our faith, grow in relationship with God, and have a positive support network of young Catholics after Confirmation. Youth Group is not required but is encouraged. Youth Group will be on Wednesday evenings. Please see our calendar for dates and times.



***Why are we confirmed in 10<sup>th</sup> grade?*** The sacrament of Confirmation is not to be taken lightly. We believe by waiting for our teens to reach a more mature level and better decision making age, they are better able to take their faith into their own hands and start to create habits that they can carry with them throughout the rest of High School and into their adult years. Around 10<sup>th</sup> grade is when most teens start to become more independent and are making important decisions that will affect the rest of their lives (which college to attend, a career path, relationships, getting driver's license, etc.). We believe faith is also one of these important decisions that should be left to each individual teen to take into their own hands.

***Why is there a service requirement?*** Service is a great way to use our own God given gifts and talents to better others and to live out the mission of the Church. This is also why we refer to the service hours as Discipleship hours: Living out your Faith in action. We recognize that each person has different interests and skills, we hope by allowing students to pick their own service projects, they are better able to explore ways of serving that are of interest to them and better able to fit it into their busy schedules. If students do service work through school or other organizations, these hours can be counted towards their Confirmation requirements.

***What is the Confirmation preparation interview?*** It is a lot less scary than it sounds. Think of it more as a conversation than a test. Your small group leader and the staff at SVDP want to hear about your experience of Confirmation preparation, your relationship with God, and how you plan to live as a disciple of Jesus Christ following Confirmation.

***Other questions?*** Please contact Nichole Chang at [nicholechang@saintvdp.org](mailto:nicholechang@saintvdp.org) for any question you have concerning the Confirmation program.