

CONFIRMATION

CANDIDATE & PARENT GUIDE

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Pax Christi uses an email service called Flocknote to communicate with our various parish groups such as our Confirmation Small Groups. When you register for a small group we add you to our Confirmation distribution list. We will use this list to send various reminders throughout the year. You will also automatically be added to our weekly Youth and our monthly Family Ministry e-newsletters.

Flocknote allows individuals to manage their notification preferences. The default method of delivery is email, but if you wish to receive text messages you may do so by indicating such in your preferences. To change your preferences click on the "my info" text link found at the bottom right corner of a Flocknote message. Please do not unsubscribe from your Small Group or Confirmation lists otherwise you may miss out on important Confirmation related information.

WHAT IS CONFIRMATION?



A SACRAMENT

A sacrament in the Catholic Church is a visible sign of an invisible reality of divine life and grace imparted upon a soul (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1131).

Living a sacramental life both during preparation for and after receiving the sacrament of Confirmation is absolutely essential if you want this sacrament to have any lasting effect throughout your life.

A COMPLETION OF BAPTISMAL GRACE

Baptism, the Eucharist, and the sacrament of Confirmation together constitute the "sacraments of Christian initiation," whose unity must be safeguarded. It must be explained to the faithful that the reception of the sacrament of Confirmation is necessary for the completion of baptismal grace. For "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 (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1285).

A RELATIONSHIP WITH CHRIST AND HIS CHURCH

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 (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1309).



**"I HAVE COME TO SET
THE EARTH ON FIRE,
AND HOW I WISH IT WERE
ALREADY BLAZING!"**

-LUKE 12:49

CONFIRMATION AT PAX CHRISTI

Preparation for the sacrament of Confirmation at Pax Christi is a two year process, beginning typically in the fall of a teenager's 9th Grade year and culminating in the spring of his or her 10th Grade year. We utilize small groups comprised of friends/peers and led by dynamic adult and peer leaders. Teens and leaders remain in the same small group both years with the intention of building a trusting environment leading to a more intimate union with Christ and his Church.

CONFIRMATION CHECKLIST



General Responsibilities and Tasks

- ☐ Read this Guide, Sign, and Return the Code of Conduct & Discipline Policy
- ☐ Attend Holy Mass on Sundays (or Saturday's Vigil Mass)
- ☐ Participate in the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation on a regular basis
- ☐ Pray on your own and as a family on a regular, preferably daily, basis
- ☐ *Submit a copy of your baptismal certificate

Year I Responsibilities & Tasks

- ☐ Register for a Year I Small Group at paxchristchurch.org/faith-formation
- ☐ Attend your Year I Small Group Nights (held Sundays or Wednesdays)
- ☐ Attend a retreat
- ☐ Choose a Confirmation Sponsor by December 1
- ☐ Meet w/your sponsor for "Conversation I - Relationship" by May 1
- ☐ Meet with your sponsor for "Conversation II - Identity" by May 1
- ☐ Complete 6-10 hours of service at the church or in the community by May 1
- ☐ Turn in your Service Hours Log by May 1
- ☐ Turn in your Service Hours Reflection by May 1

Year II Responsibilities Tasks

- ☐ Register for a Year II Small Group at paxchristchurch.org/faith-formation
- ☐ Attend your Year II Small Group Nights (held Sundays or Wednesdays)
- ☐ Meet with your sponsor for "Conversation III - Mission" by April 1
- ☐ Complete your Candidate-Sponsor Service Project by April 1
- ☐ Create and Turn in a Saint Coat of Arms/Shield by March 1
- ☐ Write a letter to the Bishop indicating your desire to be Confirmed by March 1
- ☐ Submit a final Confirmation Application by March 1
- ☐ **Schedule a Confirmation Interview with one of our priests

**Only if you were not baptized or did not receive your first Holy Communion at Pax Christi*

***Parish Staff will provide further details at a later date about how to schedule your interview*

SACRAMENTAL FOUNDATION

"THE HOLY SPIRIT PREPARES THE FAITHFUL FOR THE SACRAMENTS BY THE WORD OF GOD AND THE FAITH WHICH WELCOMES THAT WORD IN WELL-DISPOSED HEARTS. THUS THE SACRAMENTS STRENGTHEN FAITH AND EXPRESS IT."

-CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, 1133

THE HOLY MASS



Receiving the sacrament of Confirmation in the Catholic Church indicates a willingness to live out the Catholic faith and adhere to the Church's basic tenets. The most essential element of living out the faith is attending Holy Mass on Sunday (or the Saturday Vigil).

If your family is not attending Mass every Sunday, we ask that you begin doing so before you register for the preparation process.

Regular Sunday Mass attendance will be asked of you (the candidate) and your family during and after the Confirmation preparation process. The Holy Mass is where we come to know Jesus Christ most personally through his Word (Sacred Scripture) and where we receive him in the Blessed Sacrament (Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity) during Communion.

PENANCE & RECONCILIATION



Another important sacrament for your family to continue/start receiving on a regular basis is the sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation. There will be opportunities during the Confirmation preparation process for you to receive this healing sacrament, but we ask that families make it a habit to go to Confession regularly (even monthly) or at the very least twice a year. Reconciliation is offered on Saturdays from 4-5 pm, additional times can be found in the bulletin or on our website.

Growing in Prayer

Confirmation preparation is a great time to grow spiritually as an individual and as a family. We have included some suggestions, but the best thing when it comes to prayer is to just do it. Make a commitment as an individual and as a family to pray on a regular, preferably daily, basis.

PRAYER JOURNAL

Prayer is conversation with God. We often make that conversation harder than it needs to be. A great way to have a conversation with God is to start a prayer journal. Write down your thoughts and feelings about God, your life, etc... Read Sacred Scripture and note which words or phrases stand out to you.

INTERCESSORY PRAYER

Mealtimes can be a great time to share prayer intentions as a family. Some families share "roses and thorns," (a rose is a blessing of the day, a thorn is something you want to pray for). Keep a list of your family's prayer intentions and pray for them daily, and be sure to ask your family to pray for you and your intentions as well!

POPULAR DEVOTIONS

For more information about these devotions visit:
paxchristchurch.org/prayer-resources

- The Rosary
- Divine Mercy Chaplet
- Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament
- Stations of the Cross



PRAYING AS A FAMILY

"IF YOU HAVE LOST THE TASTE FOR PRAYER, YOU WILL REGAIN THE DESIRE FOR IT BY RETURNING HUMBLY TO ITS PRACTICE."

-POPE SAINT PAUL VI

PRAYING WITH THE SAINTS

Saints are our great intercessors (people who pray on our behalf). Candidates are encouraged to start developing heavenly friendships with the saints during this preparation process. Candidates will pick a saint about halfway through Year II, though you may choose one earlier if you wish. Ask your parents/guardians to think back to their chosen (or given) saint name or pick some saints your family can look to as examples of heroic virtue and lives lived. Learn about their lives. Ask them to pray for you. Invite them to be your family's protectors and guides. Go to them often with prayers that they can bring to the Father.

PRAYING WITH SACRED SCRIPTURE

Over the course of human history God has revealed himself through the words contained in Sacred Scripture. When we struggle to hear God's voice we can always go to his Word and, in a very real sense, hear him whenever we want! Get in the habit of praying with Sacred Scripture every day.

If you don't know where to begin the daily Mass readings are a great place to start; readings can be found on the the United States Bishop's website at usccb.org. We also recommend reading small excerpts from the Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John). FYI- Mark is the shortest and most action packed! Read a chapter or even a verse a day.

Finally there are great apps such as:

- Hallow
- Laudate
- iBreivary

And, Fr. Mike Schmitz (Chaplin of the University of Minnesota, Duluth Newman Catholic Campus Ministry) has a daily podcast called "Bible in a Year." For 15-30 minutes a day you can make Sacred Scripture a priority for a whole year!

CHOOSING A SPONSOR

The best sponsor is a supportive and involved sponsor. Candidates should choose somebody they respect and admire because sponsorship extends beyond Confirmation and is a life-long commitment in spiritual mentorship.

SPONSOR REQUIREMENTS

Canon Law provides some requirements of sponsors (Code of Canon Law 874):

- Age - a sponsor must be at least 16 years of age
- Confirmed - a sponsor must have already been Confirmed
- Catholic - a sponsor must be a practicing member of a Catholic parish who leads a life of faith "in keeping with the function to be taken on"
- Non-parent - a sponsor cannot be a parent of the individual seeking Confirmation

WHEN TO CHOOSE

Sponsors are typically chosen in the Winter of Year I, however, they are welcome to choose a sponsor at any time! More information about sponsors can be found in our "Candidate & Sponsor Guide." You will find the three candidate-sponsor conversations and details about the service project in that guide as well.

SUBMIT YOUR SPONSOR'S NAME

Once you have asked and your sponsor has agreed submit his or her name on the form found online at: paxchristchurch.org/confirmation



SERVING THE BODY OF CHRIST

When one receives the sacrament of Confirmation one answers the call to be "on mission" for the Kingdom of God. One way to be on mission is to serve others. When we share God's love with those in need we become God's hands and feet in the world. There are many ways you, as a candidate, are invited to serve. In Year I, we ask that you complete a Service Hours Log & Reflection which can be found in our "Candidate Service Hours Guide." Service may be done at Pax Christi or in the local community. Some suggestions are included below but feel free to be creative and really think about how your unique gifts can meet the needs of others.

"AND THE KING WILL SAY TO THEM IN REPLY, 'AMEN, I SAY TO YOU, WHATEVER YOU DID FOR ONE OF THESE LEAST BROTHERS OF MINE, YOU DID FOR ME.'" -MATTHEW 25:40

IDEAS FOR SERVING AT/WITH PAX CHRISTI

Liturgical Ministries

Contact Brigitte Bouli at bbouli@paxchristichurch.org

- Altar Serving
- Musician in the Choir
- Usher/Hospitality
- Sacristan
- Projection
- Children's Liturgy of the Word

Social/Community Building Ministries

Contact Zach Rawson at zrawson@paxchristichurch.org

- Donut Sunday (1st Sunday, monthly)
- Pancake Sunday (3rd Sunday, monthly)
- Knights of Columbus Dinners (4th Saturday, monthly)

Outreach Ministries

Contact Zach Rawson at zrawson@paxchristichurch.org

- Family Promise (homeless ministry)
- Saint Vincent dePaul Society
- Social Justice Committee
- Community Food Response
- Sunday Lunch Program
- Dorothy Day House Meals
- High School Service Week (as a participant)
- Middle School Service Week (as a high school leader)
- Totus Tuus (as a high school leader)

RETREAT OPTIONS

The Diocese of Winona-Rochester recommends that students preparing for the Sacrament of Confirmation attend a retreat at some point during their preparation process. Pax Christi offers a yearly retreat, usually the first weekend of November, called the Waypoints High School Retreat which we encourage all our Confirmation Candidates to attend at least once. There are also a few other opportunities listed below. We will also communicate other options as they present themselves.

WAYPOINTS HIGH SCHOOL/CONFIRMATION RETREAT USUALLY HELD THE FIRST WEEKEND OF NOVEMBER

This retreat is specifically for our students here at Pax Christi. We highly encourage all of our Confirmation Students to attend this retreat. It takes place on the weekend beginning on Friday night and ending on Sunday before lunch. Our main focus is bonding as a small group along with providing tools for students to deepen their prayer lives, better understand Sacred Scripture, encounter God in the Sacraments of Penance & Reconciliation and the Eucharist, and live on mission.

TEC RETREAT USUALLY HELD PRESIDENTS' DAY WEEKEND

TEC is a diocesan spiritual movement for older teens and young adults. It begins with a retreat weekend filled with dynamic reflections, music, sacraments, adoration, small group dialogue, and prayer. Afterwards, the TEC community evolves into a network of support that both reinforces parish involvement and personal spiritual growth. TEC leads participants to integrate Christ's Paschal Mystery (dying, rising, and going forth) at a time of passage through young adulthood.

ROCHESTER STEUBENVILLE CONFERENCE USUALLY HELD THE THIRD WEEKEND OF JULY

A Steubenville Catholic Youth conference is a weekend program for high school students, from incoming freshmen through just graduated seniors. It is authentically Catholic, an oasis from the clamor of the world, a place to connect with the God of the universe; it is inspirational, high energy, and fun.

N.E.T. RETREATS (ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA) HELD VARIOUS WEEKENDS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

To view a schedule and sign-up for a N.E.T. Retreat you can visit N.E.T. Ministries' website at netusa.org/confirmation/

SAINT NAME & COAT OF ARMS

Each Candidate will choose a Confirmation name which is typically a saint who he or she desires to be like. Candidates will research the saint's life and create a coat of arms/shield on poster board paper (which will be provided in small groups). If a candidate loses his or her poster board or needs a second one for some reason, contact the Youth Ministry Office and we will provide you with a new one.

Candidates will discuss their saints in their small group in late winter early spring of Year II. The shields will be displayed at the Confirmation Liturgy and can be taken home afterwards.

Do not plagiarize someone else's work. Your shield should be unique to you.

The Pax Christi Library (located off the Dining Room below the Church) has some print resources that are free for checkout/use:

- Dictionary & Patron Saints' Names by Thomas W. Sheehan
- Butler's Lives of the Saints
- A Year With The Saints
- Saint Of The Day by Leonard Foley
- All Saints, Daily Reflections by Robert Ellsberg

The Internet is obviously a great resource as well. We recommend these websites:

- Catholic Online www.catholic.org/saints/
- Life Teen lifeteen.com/blog/biggest-best-list-confirmation-saints-guys-girls/
- My Catholic Life mycatholic.life/saints/
- EWTN www.ewtn.com/catholicism/saints

Examples of past Saint Shields will be shared in small groups so candidates can get some ideas and inspiration for their own.

Some things that could be included are:

- The Saint's Name
- The Saint's Profession/Vocation
- Date of Birth, Date of Death, Date of Canonization, Feast Day
- Miracles Attributed to the Saint
- Mini-biography
- Personal Qualities/Characteristics
- Symbols Associated with the Saint
- Picture/Photo, Quotes, Books Written, Art Created, etc...
- A Challenge the Saint might offer young people today
- One's own thoughts about the Saint, why you admire him or her

Don't forget to write your name on the back of your shield.

CONFIRMATION APPLICATION

As a candidate approaches the end of his or her preparation process we ask him or her to apply for the Sacrament. At this point most of the responsibilities and tasks should be completed and the candidate should have a good sense of his or her desire to be Confirmed or not. The application is simple, but it will let us know you are ready and will also ensure we have all the information we need to keep our sacramental record books up to date.

INFORMATION NEEDED FOR THE APPLICATION:

- ☐ Candidate's Last Name
- ☐ Candidate's First Name
- ☐ Candidate's Middle Name
- ☐ Candidate's Confirmation Name (Saint Name chosen)
- ☐ Candidate's Age (at the time of the Confirmation Liturgy/Ceremony)
- ☐ Place of Baptism (Name, City, and State of Church)
- ☐ Date of Baptism (Month, Day, Year)
- ☐ Candidate's Current Address (Street, City, State, and Zip-code)
- ☐ Candidate's Father's Name (First and Last)
- ☐ Candidate's Mother's Name (First and Last, and Maiden)
- ☐ Candidate's Sponsor's Name (First and Last)

The application will also ask questions about the various responsibilities and tasks you were asked to complete throughout the preparation process. Answer the questions in this section truthfully, your answers will simply be used as background information for our priests as they do their final interview with you before you are Confirmed.

If you have any questions when filling out the application please don't hesitate to reach out to our Youth Ministry Staff.

A link to the application will be sent to you in February before the application is due on March 1st.

LETTER TO THE BISHOP

You are free to respond to God's call to live the faith— to worship, witness, and serve as a confirmed Catholic. If you wish to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation, write a letter of request to the Bishop stating your desire. Please follow these guidelines for your letter.

GREETING

Begin your letter with a greeting:

Dear Bishop Barron,

LETTER BODY

Introduce yourself and share about your Confirmation preparation journey. Describe one or more ways you have encountered God, increased your understanding of the faith, and/or believe God might be calling you to serve his Church. If you have questions or any doubts, this is a good place to express them. Request the sacrament. Include some reasons why you would like to be Confirmed. Share how you will continue to carry out your life of service to God and others through the power of the Spirit. Tell him about the gifts of the Holy Spirit you think you might have. Tell him how you will be a witness of and for Jesus Christ throughout the rest of your life.

CONCLUSION AND FORMATTING

Conclude the letter and include your full signature.

Your letter should be one page in length and TYPED using 12 point Arial font on a separate sheet of white paper or nice stationery. Please send/drop off your letter to Pax Christi intact (not torn, crumpled, or folded multiple times). Pax Christi will send them in an envelope all together. The Bishop requires a letter from each individual requesting Confirmation; he will read every one of them. Your letter is due March 1st of Year II.

FOR PARENTS

TIME FOR YOUR GROWTH AS WELL

Recent studies have shown, unsurprisingly, that parents are the number one influence in the lives of their children. This is particularly true when it comes to practicing the faith. Children who have parents that actively practice living the faith tend to do the same as they move into adulthood. Confirmation preparation is a great time for you to reflect on and evaluate your own relationship with Jesus Christ and his Church. Are you living as a disciple? Are you praying daily, attending Mass weekly, going to Reconciliation regularly, seeking to be a committed disciple of Jesus Christ?

AN INVITATION TO MORE

Daily Prayer - No matter what, we can all grow in our prayer lives. What is yours like right now? Is there room for it to be more intentional and purposeful?

Mass - Are you attending Mass weekly? Do you know what the Mass is all about? How could Mass be more meaningful for you? Weekend Mass times at Pax Christi are 5:15 on Saturdays and 7:30, 9:00, and 10:45 on Sundays. Weekdays are at 9 am Tuesday-Friday.

Reconciliation - When is the last time you received this beautiful sacrament of healing? If it has been a while know that God is calling you back and loves you no matter what. Make it a point to schedule time to go on a regular basis (even monthly). Reconciliation is offered 4-5 pm on Saturdays or by appointment (and more often during Advent and Lent).

A Faith Community - Catholicism is not simply a private expression of faith; it isn't confined to a personal relationship between yourself and God. It is that plus a commitment to and recognition of life lived in and for community. Are you involved in your parish? Do you have or seek out holy friendships and/or people who challenge you and hold you accountable in living a virtuous life? Pax Christi has a number of ministries and small groups in which you can get involved. Don't forget that one of the best ways to find and foster community is by developing friendships with other families, take a look around the church next time you are at Mass, is there a family you could invite to your home for dinner to get to know a little better?

Further Study - When was the last time you set out to learn something new about the faith? When you read Sacred Scripture are you inspired to know more about it? Do you know where to go to learn more? Pax Christi offers a number of Bible studies and small groups for adults. If there is ever something particular that you want don't be afraid to ask.

Visit our website at paxchristchurch.org and contact staff w/questions and for more information.

HOW TO REGISTER

If, after reading through this information, asking questions, and taking time to pray, you feel that you are ready to begin the Confirmation preparation process simply let us know by registering for a small group online.

Visit: paxchristchurch.org/faith-formation

Contact our staff if you have any questions or concerns.

MEET OUR FORMATION STAFF



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