

Important Parent Meeting Notes for Confirmation (Year One)

1. Traditionally, we celebrate Confirmation at St. Joseph Catholic Church in the fall of the student's 9th grade year (or the fall of the student's 10th grade year if students are currently in 8th grade). We offer a two-year preparation program for this sacrament, and it is a journey that includes the student, sponsor, family, and parish community. The process toward Confirmation will include service and enrichment, as well as an interview and a retreat. The textbook for the two-year program is Chris Stefanick's *Chosen*. Students will also maintain a Serve-and-Learn Collection throughout their progression.

2. Students are strongly encouraged to identify their sponsor by January of Year One. Per Canon Law, the sponsor must be a confirmed and practicing Catholic who is age 16 or older. The sponsor may be a grandparent, older sibling, or family friend (but not a parent). It is important for the teen and sponsor to build on their relationship throughout the Confirmation preparation process, so ideally the sponsor should be someone whom the student admires, feels comfortable with, and hopes to continue a relationship with throughout his/her life. The sacrament preparation increases in value, after all, the more the sponsor participates in it. **Sponsors, too, are required to submit a letter of good standing from their home parish to the RE office by the end of the student's first year.**

3. Choosing a Confirmation name is optional, though encouraged. Teens will study many saints and noteworthy Christian people, so they have a wide selection from which to choose. There are many times in the Bible when a new name is given to represent the beginning of a "new life," and this name selection is symbolic of such a time.

4. Year One preparation may take place through St. Joseph Religious Education, St. Joseph School, Everest Academy, or pre-approved homeschool programs (by the pastor and Director of Religious Education). Any other situations, should they come up, are to be discussed with the RE office.

5. Students should begin a Serve-and-Learn Collection this year, which they will continue in Year Two. Ten different service or enrichment experiences to broaden their perspectives are required in Year One. Students are provided with a sample reflection and details of what should be included in the required reflection for each experience (both are included in this document). We encourage teens and their sponsors to participate in a service project together, as the experience will become more meaningful. Many ideas are provided in this document, and we send emails when we are made aware of needs in the parish or community. Progress on the collection will be monitored during the year, and the completed collection will be presented at the end of Year Two.

6. Students will be interviewed at the end of Year Two. Looking ahead to next year for the interview, they will also need to write a letter to the pastor, Fr. Jim Kean, explaining why they wish to be confirmed and what it means.

7. A mandatory retreat for the Confirmation candidate and the sponsor will take place in the fall prior to the celebration of the sacrament.

You are the most important teacher your child(ren) will ever have. Cherish your role to guide and teach them. Show them how important prayer is and talk often about God's love. Go to Mass as a family and celebrate the abundant blessings that come in so many different forms.

Please reach out the RE office with any questions at reoffice@stjoelo.org or 248-693-9555