



Confirmed in a Faithful Community

A Senior High Confirmation Process

A Complete Guide to:
2011-2012 Confirmation Preparation

“Be Sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit...”



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The Sacrament of Confirmation

There are many kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit; there are different forms of service but the same Lord; there are different workings but the same God who produces all of them in everyone. To each individual the manifestation of the Spirit is given for some benefit. - 1 Cor. 12:4-7

The Holy Spirit, the third person of the Blessed Trinity, has been active throughout the entirety of human history. The Spirit was present at the moment of creation, was with the Israelites during the Exodus from Egypt, and was with the great prophets that came before Christ. The Spirit was active in Jesus' entire saving mission, especially during his Passion, death and Resurrection. The Holy Spirit descended upon the disciples at Pentecost, and has faithfully guided the Church throughout its winding history. **It is this same Holy Spirit which our candidates will be sealed with on the day of their holy Confirmation!**



We know that “the reception of Confirmation is necessary for the completion of baptismal grace” (Catechism §1285). That means that until we are Confirmed, we are not fully initiated into the Church that Jesus Christ instituted. But after we are confirmed, we are a part of Christ's mission of building the Kingdom of God in all that we do. Preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation is a time for you to deepen your own relationship with Christ and his Church and to personally embrace the Christian mission.

Confirmation is not the end of our Faith Formation; we are always being formed in our faith. Instead, it is the last of the Sacraments of Initiation. Our program will prepare you for lifelong participation in the church; **it is a beginning rather than an ending.**

We would like to personally welcome you to this sacramental preparation program. We look forward to working with you as you continue to learn about the truth of God's Church, experience God's love through the Sacraments and live out Christ's call for social justice.

It is my utmost goal to assist the candidates and their families in any way that I am able and hope to make this an informative, life-giving experience for our young people. I look forward to working with you all in the coming year!

Sincerely,
Chuck Benincasa
Confirmation Coordinator
Youth Ministry Supervisor

Basic Information

Registration

Primary registration for the 2011-2012 Confirmation Preparation program will take place in April of 2011. Registration remains open until September 10th, 2011. **No Registrations after September 10, 2011 will be accepted!** See below for registration fee and tuition details.

A Complete schedule of the program will be available upon receipt of our Confirmation date and time from the Archdiocese. Our Confirmation date will likely be in May, 2012.

Meeting Times

Confirmation classes are held on Sunday evenings throughout the school year. There are two options for meeting time, **4:15 – 5:45pm** or **7:15 – 8:45pm**. A candidate may register for either time, but after Sunday, October 9th he/she will not be allowed to switch times. A maximum of 60 candidates will be allowed to register for each time period and they will be determined on a first registered basis. If there are no remaining slots available, the student will be placed in the alternative time period.

Please keep in mind that certain sports teams may have practices or games that interfere with one of the meeting times. Please plan ahead as **you will be unable to switch during the year.**

Arrival and Dismissal

Candidates are expected to arrive before the start of their designated meeting time and gather in Cassidy Hall. Candidates in the 4:15pm meeting will be dismissed promptly at 5:45pm and candidates in the 7:15pm meeting will be dismissed at 8:45pm. No candidate is allowed to walk home from a Confirmation meeting or activity.

Meeting Location

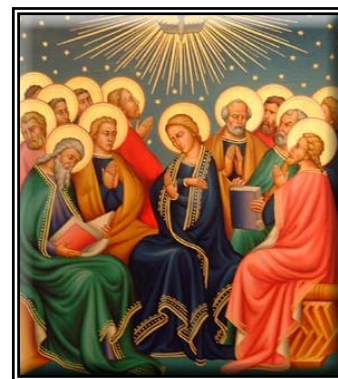
All regularly scheduled classes are held on the Our Lady of Grace campus. Normally the large group portion will take place in Cassidy Hall and the small group discussions will take place in the middle school classrooms. Guest speakers and field trips may take place throughout the year and information will be provided in advance.

Small Group Placement

Small groups are not gender specific. If a candidate has specific physical/educational/ emotional needs, these are taken into consideration when placed. Meetings will consist of students who come from different schools. Please do not expect to know more than two other candidates in the small group. Small group assignments are final. In order for a candidate to receive credit for his/her attendance, he/she must attend the discussion group to which he/she was assigned.

Tuition

The cost for the Confirmation program is \$250.00 (\$225 if registration occurs before April 17, 2011); however, **no family will be turned away for financial reasons.** This fee represents the costs included in Confirmation textbooks, Bibles and catechisms for the classrooms, guest speaker stipends, and costs that allow us to host our own Confirmation retreats.



There is a \$25 administration fee for the program that is not refundable. If a candidate chooses to withdraw from the program once it has started, the cost of the textbook and Bible will not be refunded. The amount of the refund will be prorated based on the date of withdrawal.

No candidate will be turned away for financial reasons. Please contact the Confirmation Coordinator if you require financial aid for the Confirmation fee. All requests remain confidential.

Curriculum

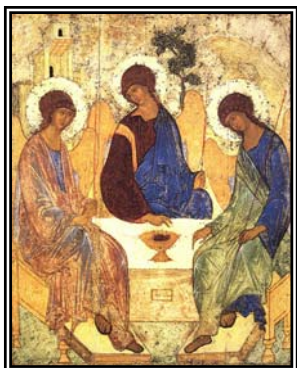
The Confirmation program uses the text *Confirmed in a Faithful Community* published by St. Mary's Press. At each meeting candidates will come together as a large group and hear a presentation about the week's topics. They will then break into their small groups and discuss the material presented. The Confirmation program curriculum is divided into three parts, which are based on the RCIA initiation process: Invitation, Formation, and Reflection. The invitation portion allows the candidate to be invited into the life of the Church and their individual role in building the Kingdom of God. In the formation process, candidates learn about the life, death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. In the reflection portion of the program, candidates are given opportunities to recognize and pray about the ways the Holy Spirit moves in their life and in the Church.

Off Campus Activities

For any event or function that takes place outside of the parish campus, a Parent Consent Form must be completely filled out and submitted for *each* participant for *each* event.

The following policies apply to drivers/chaperones:

- Volunteer drivers must have adequate insurance. The minimal acceptable liability limit for privately owned vehicles is \$100,000/\$300,000.
- Drivers must be at least 21 years of age.
- Drivers must have a valid driver's license (non-probationary).
- Drivers should not have any physical disabilities that could in any way impair their ability to drive safely.
- The driver's vehicle should be in good working order and have current registration and license plates.
- All volunteer drivers must fill out a Driver Information Sheet and it must be kept on file at the church (valid for two years).
- All volunteer drivers must attend a VIRTUS training, have a background check on file with the parish, and sign a volunteer code of conduct. All of this material is available from the Director of Youth Ministry



In the event of an accident, medical bills of injured passengers would go first to the passenger's own automobile coverage, or if the passenger is a minor, to the parent's auto insurance. If the passenger has no auto coverage, the medical bills would go to the volunteer's No-Fault medical insurance. There is no medical coverage provided for volunteers or passengers through Our Lady of Grace's insurance provider, Catholic Mutual.

Confirmation Retreat Requirements

A retreat is an opportunity for Confirmation candidates to detach from their normal busy schedules and demands, and simply rest in God's presence and reflect on their relationship with Christ. Each Confirmation candidate is required to make two Confirmation retreats - one in September, and one in either January or February.

The Opening Confirmation Retreat will be on **Saturday, September 24th** from 8:30 am to 5:00 pm. The retreat will be held at Eden Wood Camp in Eden Prairie, MN and will end with the 5:15 pm Mass at OLG. We will take buses from Our Lady of Grace. **This is a mandatory requirement of the Confirmation Program**

The second Confirmation Retreat is an overnight experience on a Saturday-Sunday at Friendship Venture's Eden Wood camp in Eden Prairie. There are two identical retreats offered for candidates: **January 28-29 and March 3-4**. Each retreat will begin by meeting at OLG at 9:30 am on Saturday, and the retreat will conclude by returning to OLG for the 11:30am Mass on Sunday. Each candidate is required to attend ONE of these retreats, and registration for each retreat will be capped at 60 candidates, on first-come, first-served basis. Bus transportation will be provided from Our Lady of Grace to the retreat site and back. **Retreat expenses are included in the registration fee for the program.**

Home Schooling

Because Confirmation (like all sacraments) is a communal experience, candidates must attend the meetings on campus; home schooling is not an option for Confirmation preparation.

Communication

To keep parents fully informed about the Confirmation program, the Confirmation Coordinator will communicate in a variety of ways. All families will receive occasional emails regarding upcoming meetings and their topics, Confirmation requirement reminders, and community service opportunities. If a candidate's family does not have an email account, a monthly letter will be mailed. The Director of Youth Ministry will also check email and phone messages regularly.

Contact Information:

Chuck Benincasa
Confirmation Coordinator
Youth Ministry Supervisor
952-929-3317 x264
Charlesbenincasa@olgparish.org

Program information is also located online at:
www.olgparish.org

Click on the Faith Formation tab and then the Confirmation tab.

Expectations & Requirements

Attendance

Confirmation, like all sacraments, is a communal faith experience and full participation and attendance are expected of those who choose to participate in the program. If for some reason a candidate cannot attend a meeting, he/she is responsible for notifying the Director of Youth Ministry and making up the material from the missed meeting. If the Director of Youth Ministry is not notified, the absence will be considered unexcused. To receive credit for attendance, a candidate is expected to attend the entire meeting period. If a candidate receives three unexcused absences, they may be asked to withdraw from the program and re-enter the following year.

Confirmation attendance includes the Rite of Sending at the 6:00 pm Mass on a Sunday prior to the Sacrament of Confirmation and the Sacrament itself. Dates for both events will be included in the 2011-2012 Confirmation Schedule upon the announcement from the Archdiocese of the 2011-2012 Archdiocesan Confirmation Dates.

Sports commitments, (practices, games or tournaments), vacations, plays, recitals, excessive homework, school trips, etc. **are NOT considered excused absences.** Excused absences include – Illness or family emergencies.

Performance Evaluation

Regularly throughout the course of the year, students will be given quizzes, tests, or assignments to evaluate their competency of the core curriculum. Full participation in Confirmation classes requires that students take notes and actively engage during lecture and small group activities. Some weeks, quizzes will be given to review the prior week's curriculum. Quizzes will cover both the large group lectures and the reading assignments in the student handbooks. If a student has missed the previous week's class, they are still responsible for getting the material and will not be exempt from quizzes. Two exams will also be given during the course of the year. One exam will be given at the end of the Formation unit and another at the end of the Reflection unit.

The Confirmation Coordinator may also choose to assign take home assignments or writing assignments throughout the course of the year. **In order for the student to be recommended for the reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation, he/she must score at least 65% or higher on all assignments, quizzes, and tests.** If the student **does not** score at least 65% or higher, the Confirmation Coordinator may allow them to be recommended for reception of the Sacrament pending the completion of a research paper or project agreed upon by both parties.

Baptismal Record & Confirmation Name

Each Candidate must turn in the **Baptismal Record & Confirmation Name Form** and a **copy** of their baptismal certificate if he/she was baptized anywhere other than Our Lady of Grace. This form must be turned in by Sunday, November 13th and a copy of this form can be found in this packet or on the parish website.

Community Service Hours

Each Confirmation candidate is required to complete **25 hours** of volunteer service work. These hours must be of service to someone (family, church, community) and the candidate cannot be compensated for the service that they do. They should be completed under the supervision of an adult.

Although some opportunities may be publicized by the Confirmation Coordinator, the primary impetus for completing the service hour requirement falls on the student. The community service requirement is meant not only to expose each candidate to the needs of the greater community, it is also designed to assist them in becoming charitable and just Catholic Christians. The needs of the community always exist whether we recognize them directly or not. Thus, each candidate is responsible for investigating the needs of their own communities and how their skills and talents can contribute to meeting those needs.

Also, as part of their service hours, each confirmation candidate is required to attend at least one session of Loaves and Fishes during the Confirmation year. Our Lady of Grace Youth Ministry serves the area's hungry on the second Wednesday of every month at the Loaves & Fishes Too Ministry at St. Stephen's Catholic Church in Minneapolis. Parent volunteers are needed to help drive and serve at the event. We meet at Our Lady of Grace's Reception Desk at 4:15pm and ride in parent vehicles to Loaves & Fishes. Return to OLG is at 7:30 pm. Additional information will be provided prior to each service trip

It is the candidate's responsibility to track service hours by fully completing the **Community Service Form** (available on the parish website under "Faith Formation"). All community service hour sheets must be filled out *by the candidate* to receive credit. **25 hours of service** recorded with Community Service Forms must be turned in by Sunday, April 22nd.

Letter of Request

Each candidate must write a Letter of Request to Father Bob requesting the Sacrament of Confirmation. These letters should be at least half a page long (double-spaced) and should be written in the candidate's own words. The Letter of Request is due no later than Sunday, March 4th.



Confirmation Sponsor

Each Candidate must choose a sponsor to walk with them in their spiritual journey towards Confirmation. The sponsor's role is to model how a person of faith is to live in today's world, while providing the Candidate the opportunity to discuss how the Spirit acts within his/her own life. If possible, "It is desirable that the sponsor chosen be the one who undertook this role at baptism" (Canon 893, n.2). Translation: It is most appropriate for one of your godparents to act as your Confirmation sponsor, but can be anyone who meets the following characteristics:

The requirements regarding sponsors for confirmation are the same as for baptism (Canon 893, n.1):

- that they be named by the candidate
- that they be at least sixteen years of age
- that they be Catholics, themselves confirmed, already have received first communion, and lead a life in harmony with the duty they are undertaking
- that they fully participate in and practice their Catholic faith

The candidate and sponsor need to completely fill out the **Confirmation Sponsor Form** and submit it to the Confirmation Coordinator by October 10th.

Confirmation Name Selection

For the Sacrament of Confirmation, each student is required to choose a *Confirmation Name* that will be used during the reception of the Sacrament. Archbishop Niendstedt has instructed the following regarding confirmation names:

“All of us need heroes! Whether it is in the area of athletics, or science, or politics, or even parenting (maybe especially parenting), all of us need role models that we can look up to and emulate.

As I was growing up, I frequently experienced attacks of asthma that would induce bronchitis and put me in bed for a week or so. My parents did not allow us, kids, to watch television, so I read books. Most frequently I read books on the lives of the saints. They became my heroes.

The late Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen once said, “The church’s job is to make saints, and she is at her best when she gives them to us.” Many people today, living amidst the secularism, materialism and hedonism of our times, question whether it’s really possible to live a virtuous and holy life. Some think that Jesus holds up for us a theoretically high ideal which none of us can attain. But after reading the lives of the saints and the flesh-and-blood circumstances in which they lived and died, you cannot fail but know that the ideals to which Jesus calls us are real and attainable. They are because others, like ourselves, have been there and done it!

It is my wish that each Confirmation candidate will choose the name of a real, legitimate saint who is well known to that individual. It may be the saint of one’s baptismal designation, or the saint’s name your parents or grandparents carry, or a saint whose life you have read and whose example you wish to follow. But the name you choose should link you with the communion of saints in heaven with whom we worship God, the Father, every time we participate in the Mass.

If you are trying to find the right saint for you, the list provided will give you a good start (see document “Saints of the Church” on website). Other saints are found in *Our Sunday Visitor’s Encyclopedia of Saints*, revised by Matthew, Margaret, and Stephen Bunson in 2003. A copy of this can be acquired through the Archdiocesan Office of Worship.

Most internet websites provide incorrect or inadequate information about the saints. Be careful about the information you collect.

Choosing a name for Confirmation is an important step in the process of preparation. I ask each candidate to pray, study, and choose a saint in whom he or she can place their confidence not just for today, but for many years to come.”

Confirmation name selections will be due with Baptismal Information. A form is provided in this packet or on the Confirmation page of the Parish Website.

Health, Safety & Behavior

Protecting God's Children

In response to a United States Catholic Bishops' mandate, the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis has implemented the Protection of Children and Youth Initiative safe environment training program.

In the Confirmation program, we will be inviting *Homeward Bound Theatre Company* to present their program "Not a Word" which highlights important issues regarding safe environments. This program has received full approval and praise from the Archdiocese as meeting the PCYI requirement. Due to the sensitive nature of this topic, **parents are STRONGLY encouraged to attend this session on Sunday, February 5th from 1-2:30pm!**

Behavior and Discipline

All candidates are expected to share in the faith learning experience of the Confirmation program. If a student's behavior disrupts the learning process for him/herself or others, the steps listed below will be followed to ensure that meeting participation may continue.

1. At first incident, the student will be reminded of expected behavior and the consequences of misbehavior.
2. If the behavior does not change, the student will be sent to the Director of Youth Ministry about appropriate behavior. At that point, the Director of Youth Ministry will evaluate the seriousness of the situation and may choose to contact the parents. If s/he decides the student understands that the behavior must stop, the student may be sent back to the classroom with catechist's permission.
3. If inappropriate behavior continues, the student will be sent back to the Director of Youth Ministry. The Director of Youth Ministry will contact the student's parents and set up a conference with the parents and/or pastor to determine best course of action.

All candidates, parents, catechists and coordinator will agree to the **Behavior Contract** and held to those standards throughout the year of ministry.

Illegal Substances

The Church of Our Lady of Grace prohibits the possession or use of alcohol, drugs, and tobacco on the church campus or at any church activity in which Our Lady of Grace is involved.

Possession and/or use of tobacco:

First Offense

In the event of an offense, the Director of Youth Ministry will take the following actions:

- Confiscate the tobacco product
- Notify the candidate's parents

Second Offense

In the event of a second offense, the Director of Youth Ministry will take the following actions:

- Confiscate the tobacco product
- Notify the candidate's parents
- Arrange a meeting between the candidate, the parents, the pastor, and the Director of Youth Ministry to decide the appropriate consequence.

Possession of Alcohol and/or drugs or selling or transmitting alcohol and/or drugs:

First Offense

In the event of an offense, the Director of Youth Ministry will take the following actions:

- Notify the candidates parents
- Notify the police
- Arrange a meeting with the candidate, the parents, the police, the pastor and the Director of Youth Ministry. Decisions regarding consequences of behavior will be decided at this meeting.

Second Offense

In the event of a second offense, the Director of Youth Ministry will take the following actions:

- Notify the candidates parents
- Notify the police
- Expel the student from the program

Emergency Meeting Cancellation

In the event of inclement weather, Confirmation meetings will be cancelled. When a meeting is cancelled, the Director of Youth Ministry will contact all families via email. An announcement will also be posted on the Confirmation Page of the Parish Website.

Fire Safety and Disaster Preparation

In each classroom there is a map indicating which exit you should use in the case of a fire and a map indicating where to go in the event of a tornado. This action plan will be reviewed with all students during the first meeting.

Health Concerns and Medication

Health concerns should be brought to the attention of the Director of Youth Ministry during registration. Please mark on the registration form whether health issues/concerns exist of which the Director of Youth Ministry should be made aware. Parents can make a confidential appointment with the Director of Youth Ministry to discuss special medical needs. If a child is diagnosed with a medical condition after registration, please inform the Director of Youth Ministry as soon as possible.



Catechists may not administer medication to students. If a youth needs medication during meeting time, contact the Director of Youth Ministry to set up arrangements.

The Role of the Candidate

The candidate approaches the preparation process with an open mind and heart.

- a. The candidate comes to meetings prepared and ready to further his/her faith development.
- b. The candidate is respectful of the other candidates and the catechist.
- c. The candidate opens him/her self to the process by participating in discussions and activities.

The candidate welcomes the friendship and guidance of the sponsor.

- a. The candidate is open and cooperative.
- b. The candidate welcomes appointments made with the sponsor.
- c. The candidate keeps the sponsor informed about the program.

The candidate shares his/her faith with their sponsor.

- a. The candidate participates in discussions with sponsor.
- b. The candidate prays with the sponsor.

The candidate must participate in:

- a. All meeting sessions.
- b. Both Confirmation retreats
- c. 25 service hours, including one trip to Loaves and Fishes with the parish.
- d. Regular Sunday Mass

Our program presents the Catholic faith to our candidates in many different ways. Meeting sessions include guest speakers, movies, games, plays, PowerPoint presentations, songs and participation in other parish offerings. Our candidates experience how alive our Church is and are exposed to ways they can participate in parish life after Confirmation.

Note:

Candidates are expected to attend all meeting sessions. Candidate illness and family emergencies are acceptable excuses for missing a meeting. A candidate who misses more than three meeting sessions will be asked to complete the Confirmation preparation the following year.

The Role of the Parents

Parents are supportive.

- a. Parents offer love and support to the candidate throughout the preparation process
- b. Parents encourage participation in the preparation process by helping the candidate attend all meetings, the retreats, and special liturgies.
- c. Parents help the candidate develop a relationship with the sponsor.

Parents are role models of Christianity.

- a. Parents pray, attend Mass, and receive the Sacraments regularly.
- b. Parents share their personal faith stories with their candidate.
- c. Parents share important faith practices and experiences with their candidate.
- d. Parents pray with their candidate.

Parents are expected to:

- a. **Volunteer in at least one capacity throughout the program.** They can be catechists, substitute catechists, Loaves and Fishes volunteers, or retreat chaperones.
- b. Attend 2 meetings with their candidate if the candidate's sponsor is unable to attend.
- c. Attend the Rite of Confirmation.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* states that “the role of parents in education is of such importance that it is almost impossible to provide an adequate substitute” (§2221). Throughout the Confirmation process parental involvement plays a primary role in the candidate's faith formation. Parents are encouraged to actively participate in the program by attending meetings when parents are invited and discussing the weekly topics with their candidate.

The Role of the Sponsor

A sponsor is an adult Catholic guide for the candidate.

- a. A sponsor is a person other than the parents of the candidate (Canon Law §893.1) who is sufficiently mature for this role, and fully initiated into the Roman Catholic Church.
- b. It is important that the sponsor lives a life in support of the Catholic Church.
- c. The candidate and the sponsor are expected to meet on a regular basis. It is desirable for the sponsor to live locally in order for this to happen.

A sponsor shares his/her own faith story with the candidate.

- a. A sponsor discusses his/her faith journey with the candidate, explaining how it has changed over the years.
- b. The sponsor shares important faith practices and experiences with their candidate.
- c. The sponsor prays with his/her candidate.

A sponsor is expected to:

- a. Attend the two candidate sponsor meetings (Sundays, November 13th and April 15th).
- b. Meet on a monthly basis with the candidate and take an active role in preparing the candidate for Confirmation.
- c. Participate in special liturgies such as reconciliation services, the Commissioning Mass, and the Rite of Confirmation.

Each Candidate must choose a sponsor to walk with them in their spiritual journey towards Confirmation. The sponsor's role is to model how a Catholic person of faith is to live in today's world, while providing the Candidate the opportunity to discuss how the Spirit acts within his/her own life.

Confirmation Sponsor Form

Each Candidate must choose a sponsor to walk with them in their spiritual journey towards Confirmation. The sponsor's role is to model how a Catholic person of faith is to live in today's world, while providing the Candidate the opportunity to discuss how the Spirit acts within his/her own life.

Sponsors are expected to attend Confirmation sessions with their candidates on **Sunday, November 13th** and **Sunday, April 15th**.

Candidate Information

Full Name: (First, Middle, Last) _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

Sponsor Information

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

***This form must be returned by the Oct 9th Meeting**

Confirmation Service Form

Supervisor Portion (to be completed by adult supervisor of service activity)

_____ has successfully completed ____ hours of service with me today. My signature
(Student's Name)
and phone number below will verify these hours of service.

Name of event and a short description of service done:

Supervisor's Signature _____ Date _____

Agency _____ Day time phone _____

Please contact Chuck Benincasa at Our Lady of Grace Church at 952-929-3317 x 264 if you have any questions or comments.

.....

Candidate Reflection (to be completed by youth)

How did you learn about this service opportunity?

Do you think your contribution was valuable? Why or why not?

Complete this thought: *As a disciple, I am called to be the hands and feet of Christ. I represented Christ during this service opportunity because....*

How did this experience make you feel? Would you do it again? Why or why not?