



AREAS OF PREPARATION FOR CONFIRMATION

St. Joseph's offers our students more options/exposure than most parishes. Why? Because we have youth with varying needs and desires as they develop an independent relationship with Christ and His Church. In addition, we have been "called" by Christ to share with our teens how dynamic their Catholic faith truly is. We realize that this is unlike what many of us as parents were offered, but St. Joe's figures if our Lord sacrificed His life for our sins through unrelenting ridicule, scourging, and crucifixion we should probably put some effort into deciphering this reality in relation to our lives. Of course, we can only offer, the rest is up to you (the main educators) and your children to participate in and be open to Jesus' invitation. The main components are:

MASS: Matthew 26:40 "Could you not spend one hour with me?" That is what Jesus was asking his apostles in the garden on his last night. He asks us this same question every time we decide for something other than him on Sundays. ***Jesus instructed all of us the night before his sacrificial death: "Do this in memory of me."*** If you are having a hard time getting to Mass, let us know how we can help. You can find Mass times on line at www.masstimes.org if you have a busy weekend or away and can't make it to St. Joseph's.

CATECHESIS: The students **should be attending regularly in 9-10th grade** so that they have some idea what their faith is about before they get confirmed in it. This is approximately 40 hrs per year. (Compare this to nine weeks of a sport season which is about 90 hrs.) We do offer some make up opportunities if Sunday nights become a problem.

FAITH ENCOUNTERS: The teens are frequently reminded that they should **encounter** their faith in a way other than Mass/class. According to studies, retreats are the second-best way to learn and experience your faith, second only to teaching it. Some of these experiences also let the kids participate in "the greater Church".

ONE "Real World" experience is required for Confirmation. Examples include:

- Steubenville East Youth Conference - held at UMASS Lowell
- Mission Trip, Camp Sunshine, Haiti, Cardboard City, March for Life
- Co-Teach 1st Lights or Edge for 6 classes OR be a Crew Chief at Vacation Bible School (VBS) which is offered during the summer. (See Sr. Agnes for details)
- Diocesan or other retreats that might become available

Anyone who is already serving in a ministry such as altar servers, choir, OR have achieved the Catholic awards for Boy Scouts/Girl Scouts will not have to consider a "Real World" experience. If you are a Catholic school student, let's talk about what you might have already done. As always, we are very flexible and open to suggestions.

OVERNIGHT CONFIRMATION RETREAT WEEKEND (REQUIRED) – NOVEMBER 30 – DECEMBER 2, 2018. Students arrive Friday evening and go home Sunday afternoon.

PRAYER: We will be providing many opportunities within the body of the program to learn about the many ways to pray. We hope that you will be praying on your own, with your sponsor and family through this journey. **It is our hope that you will come to know your basic prayers...The Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be, Apostle's Creed, and Act of Contrition as well as become comfortable with personal prayer and the Sacrament of Reconciliation.**

STEWARDSHIP PROJECT: Since we are called to serve one another, we ask the teens to share some of their God given time, talent, and treasure. We offer all the grades opportunities to serve but we do a group project specifically during their junior year and it usually lasts no more than a half day or evening.

COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS & SPONSORS: Since we do not walk this path alone, it is important to share your journey with each other. We will provide opportunities for parents and sponsors to witness to their candidates. Further information regarding dates will be provided over the next few months.

CHOOSING A SAINT NAME: A Confirmation name is that of a saint whose life symbolizes for you what it means to live as a Christian. In October, during one of our regularly scheduled classes we will discuss how to choose a patron saint for confirmation. Those who want to begin thinking about the process now can look up saints by topic on the following websites: <http://www.catholic.org/saints/patron.php>, www.catholic-forum.com and www.catholicity.com. Throughout the year, each week a few students will explain to the group why they have chosen the saint they picked. **The sponsor's name along with a sponsor certificate from his or her parish (unless the parish is Saint Joseph) will also be due by Sunday, November 4th.**

GUIDELINES FOR CHOOSING YOUR SPONSOR

A sponsor is a confirmed and practicing Catholic other than a parent. The sponsor is a representative of the whole Church and its philosophy that our faith is interactive and dependent on God and one another. The sponsor is the candidate's "spiritual faith partner" for this journey and therefore agrees to share, pray, support, and present their candidate for the sacrament. We ask the sponsor to come to a few gatherings such as the Enrollment Ceremony and communicate with you one on one. We understand that they might not be able to attend everything, so please feel free to have your parent proxy.

****Please note that your sponsor will need a sponsor certificate from the parish where they are currently an active member. Please have the sponsor put their candidate's name in the upper right corner of the certificate.**

PRAY & CONSIDER A SPONSOR: Think about who you might like to mentor you along this journey. And then use the basic minimum guidelines for being a practicing Catholic below. If they cannot check off everything, then ask your potential sponsor if they are willing to start fresh. Otherwise, you might want to pray about finding another sponsor. Any of the CORE are willing to help you too! **We strongly urge you to choose your godparent if they are still practicing their Catholic faith, to signify the unity of the two sacraments of initiation.**

- Are they 16 or older, not a parent, and already confirmed?
- Do they try and follow the commandments that God gave to Moses?
- Do they go to Mass on Sundays, not just major holidays?
- Do they believe that the Eucharist is truly the Body and Blood of Christ?
- Do they use the gift of Reconciliation (Confession) at least once a year or more if they have mortal sins?
- Do they observe Lent and its days of fasting and abstinence?
- Are they using their God given gifts to help provide for the needs of others and the Church?