

CONFIRMATION INFORMATION

Come Holy Spirit!

Hello,

My name is Chad Roden and I am excited to begin this journey toward the Sacrament of Confirmation with your student and your family. I am, in addition to being the head of the Confirmation program, the Coordinator of Youth Ministry for the parish. This year we will have many great programs and projects ready for your family. In this packet you will find all the information pertaining to your child's sacramental prep and the commitments needed from you, your child, and their sponsor. I will briefly explain the program, introduce the key players in this process, and finally lay out and explain the diocesan standards for reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation. I hope that this process is exciting and fruitful for all involved.

Peace and All Good in Christ,

Chad Roden
Coordinator of Youth Ministry
Coordinator of Confirmation Preparation
St. Joseph and SS. John and Bernard Parishes

A Simple Prayer for this Beginning:

Lord God,
You who are above all, draw near to us now.
Come fill our hearts with your Spirit,
given to us in Baptism and strengthened in the Sacrament of Confirmation.
Help us to be open to your promptings and movements.
Bless our time together and bless this journey
as we seek to grow evermore in your Love.
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ your Son.

Amen.

WHAT IS THE SACRAMENT CONFIRMATION:

The Sacrament of Confirmation is one of the seven sacraments of the church. (Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Confession, Anointing of the Sick, Marriage, and Holy Orders). It is one of the three sacraments of initiation. (Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist). A sacrament is an effective outward sign, instituted by Christ, to impart grace. In Confirmation the candidate (student) affirms their identity as a child of God. Confirmation also helps unite them more firmly with Christ. It strengthens the bond of the candidate with the Church. It seals in the candidate and strengthens the gifts of the Holy Spirit given to them at baptism. Finally reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation strengthens the candidate to spread and defend the faith by words and actions, to be fearless witnesses to Christ and the power of the cross.

“CHOSEN”

In preparing your child to receive the sacrament of Confirmation, our parishes use a program called “Chosen”. Chosen is published by Ascension Press and has received the official approval of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) for use in parishes in all the diocese of the US. Chosen uses a combination of videos and textbook work to impart the necessary information. This year all the text books will be lent to the students. They will be expected to return them in good condition at the end of the Confirmation Preparation process. For more information please go to : <https://ascensionpress.com/shop/t/category/study-programs/chosen/confirmation-preparation>.

PARENTS

Parents, you play a vital role in the preparation of your child for the reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation. As the Catechism says, “Thus the home is the first school of Christian life and a ‘school for human enrichment’. Here one learns endurance and the joy of work, fraternal love, generous – even repeated – forgiveness, and above all divine worship and prayer and the offering of one’s life”. (CCC 1657). In short, your kids learn from you! I would like to remind you of that because it is by watching you live your faith that your child will learn to love God and their neighbor. It is by seeing you pray, they will learn to pray. It is by seeing you be at the service of those in need, that they will learn to serve. The Confirmation prep is the same. They can come to all the classes, go to all the events and youth groups, they can attend all the retreats, but if you aren’t supporting and nurturing their faith life, it will not grow. I know that this task may seem daunting, as each of us comes from a different and unique life and lived experience of God, the church, and our faith. If your student has any questions about the faith that you are unsure of, please feel free to contact myself or one of the priests. We are always happy to journey with you as seek to know him who has loved you first.

SPONSORS

Sponsors are a person of the candidate’s choosing that acts as a living witness to the faith in Jesus Christ and his Church. It is a great honor and responsibility. The sponsor is called by the Church to take an active role in the candidate’s life and especially in the preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation. This is why we ask sponsors to attend the DOK Topic Nights along

with parents and the students. They are called to be above all else a Christian witness, friend, prayer warrior, and an ally to the candidate for the rest of their life. If this job seems daunting or even overwhelming, please know that the church is here to help assist you take on this role. In choosing a sponsor the candidate must choose someone who fits the following requirements set by the Church.

Sponsors must:

- Not be the parents of the Candidate
- If married, they must be married in accord with the laws and teachings of the Catholic Faith
- They must be at least sixteen years of age
- They must have received the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Eucharist from the Catholic Church
- They must regularly attend mass on Sundays and all prescribed Holy Days of Obligation
- They must regularly participate in the other sacraments of the Church.
- They must currently be a member of a parish and be in good standing with the Church

NET TEAM 14

This year in addition to the Catchiest (Teacher) for each class and regular helpers, we will have NET Team 14. The NET team is a group of young Catholic men and women from around the country that have given up a year of their lives to meet teens where they are and invite them into deeper relationships with Jesus Christ. While the team will not be at every Confirmation prep meeting, they will have a regular presence at the Confirmation, Youth Group, and other parish events. For more information please feel free to email me at 4churchesym@gmail.com.

DIOCESAN REQUIREMENTS

Below are a list of the Diocesan Requirements and a brief explanation of how we plan to fulfill each of the them for your student.

- Preparation must take place for two years prior to the reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation.
 - We begin Sacramental Prep in 7th grade for Confirmation Celebrations in the 8th grade year. The exact date is set by the parish and then confirmed by the bishop.
- The Candidate should be validly baptized.
 - Each candidate needs to submit a request to their parish to have them check the baptismal record for their parish. If your child was not baptized at St. Joseph or SS John and Bernard Parish, you will need to contact the church where your child was baptized and request a notification of baptism to be sent to your current parish. After the notification is received and recorded, the notification is destroyed. We do not have records of such previous baptismal notifications if they were requested for the celebration of first communion or other sacraments. After the celebration of the Sacrament, a notification of your child's reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation will be sent to their Church of baptism.

- Candidates and their families must attend mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation.
 - The Eucharist, is the source and summit of our Christian lives. The church teaches us that the Eucharist is both spiritual and physical food for our lives. It allows us to deepen our relationship with God and Neighbor and allow us to receive enumerable graces from our Heavenly Father. It is important to note that the preparation documents state, “Confirmation may be delayed if a candidate persists in not attending Mass.” Please make sure that you are take this commitment to heart.
- Interviews must be conducted with each student
 - This will consist of two interviews. The first at the entrance of your student to the program. This will be less formal. The second will be the exit interview. In this interview the candidates will meet with a priest to discuss what they have learned, how their prayer lives have developed, and other spiritual activities engaged in their time in the Sacramental Preparation Programs.
- A Minimum of three saints must be studied for each year of formation.
 - This mean that over the two years your child will be asked to prepare six short reports on six different saints
- Service Hours must be recorded.
 - The requirement for the service hours is that they be related to the Works of Mercy (Spiritual or Corporal) . This goes hand in hand with the Works of Mercy Project.
- The Works of Mercy Project must be competed in full
 - The Works of Mercy Project is one that all parishes are asked to complete by the bishop. The project includes the students engaging in and practicing the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy. A brief reflection and explanation of how the work was carried out is required. Details of this project can be found in the packet that will be provided to each student.
- A sponsor should be chosen, and should take an active role in the preparation of the student
 - Please see the “Sponsor” section for more information.
- The Parish must offer eight mandatory sessions for parents, sponsors, and students in a minimum of eight sessions.
 - The eight sessions will be spread out over the two years of sacramental preparation. The topics to be covered in these sessions are : Kerygma, Baptismal Promises, The Gifts and Fruits of the Holy Spirit, A Life of Prayer, Apostolic Mission, Martyrdom, Evangelization, and Life in the Spirit. The diocese also stipulates, that if you are not able to attend these meetings the material must be provided for the students, family, and sponsors to “make up”. I will offer this in the form of a packet of reading, research, and finally short answer question. These will be used to show if the material was conveyed in a full and appropriate way. These packets will be available the Friday after the session is offered, please email Chad at 4churchesym@gmail.com to receive one.

- Candidates should attend a retreat once in both years of formation
 - We will be hosting retreats in the second half of the year. One for second year students and one for the first year students. They will vary in length based depending on the years of participation in the program. Details will be announced later in the year.
- The sacrament of Confession should be offered to the students before the reception of the sacrament.
 - We will be offering Confession to the student on their Confirmation Retreats. This will be in addition to the regular confession schedules of your parish. For more information please contact your parish office, myself, one of the NET Team members, or the Youth Ministry Volunteers.
- A formal letter must be sent to the bishop.
 - This letter must contain certain information that will be provided to you during your Second year. The letters will be hand written and will go directly to the bishop. I can attest that he does read each letter presented to him. So please make sure to prepare the letter accordingly.

QUESTIONS ?

If you, your student, or child's sponsor have any questions, please feel to reach out to me by the following information:

Chad Roden:

Email: 4churchesym@gmail.com

Phone 269-983-1575

Fax: 269-983-7798

Office: 220 Church Street, St. Joseph MI 49085

Office Hours: Wednesdays from 9:00 am – 4:30 pm

The quickest way to reach me is by email

You can also email the Religious Education Office at religiusedoffice@att.net

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