

# *Confirmation Program Information and Policies*

*St. Francis Catholic Church*

*2019-2020*

## **WHAT IS CONFIRMATION?**

Confirmation is one of the seven Sacraments, the third Sacrament of Initiation in the Roman Catholic Church. (Baptism is the first Sacrament of Initiation and Eucharist is the second.) A Sacrament is a visible sign of God's love and presence in our lives. Sacraments give sanctifying grace - the free gift of God's love – aka: God's life. Confirmation establishes NOT an end or "graduation," but a BEGINNING of a life of full participation and responsibility in the Church.

Confirmation is the Sacrament in which the candidate receives the fullness of the Holy Spirit that was given at Baptism. This is the same Spirit that filled the Apostles with the zeal and courage needed by all who are to be public witnesses to Christ. Confirmation celebrates God's presence in our lives as the Holy Spirit continues to guide, strengthen, and empower us to live and witness the Good News of Jesus Christ. Christians, on the day of their Confirmation, become public witnesses to Christ and his saving works. Confirmation is not our first encounter with the Holy Spirit. The first encounter takes place at Baptism where the Trinity comes to dwell in the newly baptized as he/she is born again in water and the Spirit. Baptism brings people into a personal union with God. The Sacrament of Confirmation continues the process by having the Holy Spirit strengthened within us. Confirmation completes Baptism.

## **CLASSES**

Classes will take place an average of twice per month. These classes are geared towards teens to help them to appreciate all that has been revealed by God in our Catholic Church. We try to make the classes interactive and engaging.

### **MISSED CLASSES**

Please make every effort to attend each class since you are making a commitment to God, your peers, your teachers, and as an investment for your eternal future! But, in understanding extenuating circumstances, a maximum of 2 (TWO) missed classes during the year is allowed. A missed class is constituted as missing 30 or more minutes of class. This was put into effect since the flow of the class is crucial in understanding the topic for the candidate AND it is disruptive to the rest of the class to have individuals arrive and leave during class.

### **MAKE-UP WORK**

For any missed class, you will need to schedule with Monica a make-up one-on-one. After your missed class you will receive an e-mail to schedule a time. After the make-up meeting, you will need to write a 500 word (minimum) paper on the topic that was missed. The paper can be turned in at class or emailed to Monica.

## **RETREATS**

There will be two retreats this year.

The Fall Retreat will be a one-night retreat on Nov 16-17, 2019 (Saturday to Sunday) in the parish center. Retreat permission slip and flyer will be handed out at the first class. This retreat is an important start to the year as a class. It creates an environment for bonding to occur which will allow classes to run smoothly throughout the year. We will also be creating a prayer experience in which you will be able to take OWNERSHIP of your relationship with Our Loving Creator! **SPONSORS: Sponsors are required to attend a portion of the retreat for a meeting with dinner included (see calendar).**

The Spring Retreat will be a two-night retreat at Father Bernard Youth Center on March 13-15, 2020. This retreat is the “pinnacle” of the Confirmation year which precedes the actual Sacrament of Confirmation. After a six-month preparation period of classes, this retreat takes the candidates to a deeper level of experiencing the love of Christ.

## SERVICE HOURS

It is part of being a responsible Catholic Christian to serve those in need and work for justice and peace. There is a need to spread the love of God through our acts of service for others. And, ironically, serving others subsequently changes our OWN hearts when we learn to see others through the eyes of God. (*NOTE: Applicable service hours are from summer 2019 until service hours are due on May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020*)

### **OUT-OF-PARISH SERVICE COMMITMENT**

You, along with your parent/s, need to sit down and research an organization which serves the greater community with your natural interests in mind. This will utilize your God-given gifts and passion for service. For example, if you have an interest in the medical field, you can volunteer at the hospital, for Medical Teams International, or at an assisted living center. If you have an interest in being a teacher, you can help with after-school mentoring, voluntary tutoring, or coaching a sport. A helpful list of organizations are included in this packet.

Our program requires you to fulfill the required period of commitment set by the organization **OR** complete 3 (three) “visits” of community service, whichever is applicable. Most volunteering commitments require you to participate for a period of time; some do not. We encourage you to make a full commitment to an organization for a particular service. (i.e. coaching for a whole season and not just coaching at 3 practices, etc.) This will allow you to foster relationships with those whom you are serving as well as those who are regular volunteers.

You will need to make a commitment of how you will be serving your community by October 27<sup>th</sup>. This information will be collected in the Confirmation Information Form which will be submitted online, available after the first class.

### **PARISH SERVICE**

Our program requires 5 hours of service to your parish. St. Francis is made up of many, many volunteers who keep our parish active and alive. As you move forward in your commitment to Christ and His Church, it is important to be committed to share your time and talent to make St. Francis a better environment for your parish family. Opportunities will be posted throughout the year to help with various events or activities. There are opportunities noted in this packet as well.

Make sure to have your service supervisor sign your Service Log. Your parent’s signature will also suffice. Family involvement of service activity is always encouraged.

**\*\*DON’T WAIT to do your service requirements!\*\***

## **SPONSOR**

Please see the trifold insert in this Information Packet for more information in picking your sponsor. In short, your sponsor may not be your parent; must be 16 years or older; and must be a baptized and Confirmed Catholic who is actively receiving the Sacraments. It would be helpful if the sponsor is local, but is not a requirement.

Your sponsor's presence is needed at 1) a portion of the Fall Retreat (see calendar), 2) individual meetings with you, 3) Confirmation rehearsal, and 4) the Confirmation Mass. Proxies may stand in for sponsors. Talk to Monica about any specific questions you have about proxies.

There will be a Sponsor/Candidate booklet that will be handed out at the Fall Retreat. These are designed to be an ice-breaker for you and your sponsor to talk about life and faith. It will take 2 meetings with your sponsor to complete this booklet together (the first meeting with your sponsor will take place at the Fall Retreat). These booklets will be due at class on April 19th, 2020.

Within the booklet will be a chance to explore a Confirmation Saint's name for you. This Saint that you will pick will be a Saint that you admire or would like to emulate in your commitment to Christ throughout the rest of your life. Your sponsor and/or parent can help you with this process.

## **MASS JOURNALS**

In making a commitment to Christ and His Church in this process, know that part of your commitment is to come to Christ in the Holy Mass every Sunday. This is a tremendous gift for us! The Holy Mass has something that no other religion in the world has – the Holy Eucharist. This is the chance to receive Christ and allow Him to transform us from the inside out!

Individual Mass Journals will be kept in the back of our church. They will be handed out at the Fall Retreat. When you come to Mass, make it a habit to pick up your journal before you enter the pew. Please write down what # entry it is (#1, #2, #3...), date each entry, and write down your reflections on the Mass, particular feast day, questions you may have, how the priest's homily is applicable to you, etc. After Mass, please return the journal to the back of the church. Journals will be checked periodically. You must meet your minimum of 16 entries by May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020.

## **REFLECTION PAPER**

At the end of the year, you will be asked to write a reflection paper on all that has happened during Confirmation prep and how it has impacted your life: service hours, class, retreats, teachers, friendships, Mass journals, parent/student videos & discussion, etc. This paper should be a minimum of 500 words. Specifics will be covered later as the time nears. This will be due on May, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020.

## PARENT/CANDIDATE VIDEOS

Nothing and no one can replace the influence of the parent on the spiritual life of a child. Quoting from the Catechism of the Catholic Church:

*“Parents have the first responsibility for the education of their children. They bear witness to this responsibility first by creating a home where tenderness, forgiveness, respect, fidelity, and disinterested service are the rule. The home is well suited for education in the virtues. This requires an apprenticeship in self-denial, sound judgment, and self-mastery—the preconditions of all true freedom. Parents should teach their children to subordinate the ‘material and instinctual dimensions to interior and spiritual ones.’ Parents have a grave responsibility to give good example to their children. By knowing how to acknowledge their own failings to their children, parents will be better able to guide and correct them.” (CCC 2223)*

*“Education in the faith by the parents should begin in the child’s earliest years. This already happens when family members help one another to grow in faith by the witness of a Christian life in keeping with the Gospel. Family catechesis precedes, accompanies, and enriches other forms of instruction in the faith. Parents have the mission of teaching their children to pray and to discover their vocation as children of God. The parish is the Eucharistic community and the heart of the liturgical life of Christian families; it is a privileged place for the catechesis of children and parents.” (CCC 2226)*

You and your parent/s will sit down two different times at your family’s convenience to watch a video and have a discussion. After each of the discussions, your parent will write a brief report and e-mail it to Monica at [mconrow@sfsherwood.org](mailto:mconrow@sfsherwood.org). Last chance to turn in parent reports are March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020.

Both videos you and your parent/s chose will be from the EWTN collection of “Journey Home”. These videos are testimonies of individuals who have “come home” to the Catholic Church. There are conversion stories from agnostics, atheists, fallen-away-Catholics, Protestant ministers, pluralists, new age, etc. These can be found on YouTube searching for “EWTN Journey Home” or at this link:

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL97DC29A06F85B07E>

## INITIAL PAPERWORK

Registration payment and paperwork are due ASAP. Payment plans are available. If you are in dire need of financial assistance, please contact Monica Conrow at the office to discuss your options. [mconrow@sfsherwood.org](mailto:mconrow@sfsherwood.org) or (503)625-6187

If you were NOT baptized at St. Francis, a copy of your baptismal certificate is due ASAP as well. This provides proof of baptism for us. All Sacraments you receive are kept at your church of baptism. Therefore, we will notify your church of baptism when you receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. If you received First Holy Communion at St. Francis and were not baptized at St. Francis, we still need a copy of your baptismal certificate. (We do not keep copies of baptismal certificates from First Holy Communion at St. Francis.)

The “Confirmation Information Form” will be an online form e-mailed out after the first class. On this form will be asked: 1) Church and date of Baptism, 2) the sponsor you have chosen, 3) your formal name, and 4) how you plan on fulfilling your service requirements.. This is due by Nov. 27, 2020.

*Please remember ...*

*These requirements are designed to draw you close to our Loving Christ  
so that you may grow in your faith life.*

*Unknowingly, this will affect ALL aspects of your life here on earth!  
May God be with you always.*