



St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church

2011-12 Immediate Preparation for Confirmation Handbook



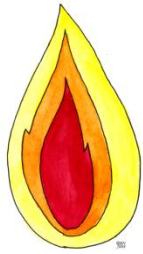
Teenagers who present themselves for Confirmation are afforded the opportunity to reflect on their faith and to demonstrate their willingness and ability to incorporate the beliefs of the Catholic community into their everyday lives.

Confirmation compliments Baptism in that the candidates have given evidence, through their years of growing in the faith that the conversion begun in Baptism is being nourished by the individual, the family, and the church community.

The candidates of Confirmation are not celebrating the beginning of their Catholic life, but rather pledging to continue their life of discipleship, a lifelong commitment to following the example and teachings of Jesus Christ.

The Immediate Preparation for Confirmation is held *in addition to* faith formation classes either from a Catholic school or Sunday night High School Youth Ministry. Faith Formation is a life-long commitment to spiritual growth. It is the expectation of the Church that all faithful followers of Christ will continue to be involved in religious education their entire life.

This handbook is meant to help understand the program for the *Immediate Preparation for Confirmation*.



St. John's Parish Immediate Preparation includes:

1. Attend monthly Immediate Preparation classes on Sunday or Wednesday *in addition to* High School Youth Ministry or Catholic School Religious Education.
2. Provide service to the community and continued sharing in the Church's social mission.
3. Attend the Confirmation Pilgrimage. You may choose either Saturday, November 3 or 10. (One bus is going on each day. Sign up early to get your first choice.)
4. Participate in the Confirmation Retreat on March 1-2.
5. Attend practice on March 10 from 6:30-8pm at St. John's.
6. Attend Confirmation on Saturday, March 16 at St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church.

Catechesis / Faith Formation

Understanding “why” is an important component to our faith. It is during this exploration of these questions that a teenager will create his/her Catholic identity.

Encourage questions – the process of finding answers is a great way to bring a family together.

Here are some great websites to get good answers to Catholic faith questions:

www.usccb.org

<http://www.lifeteen.com/>

<http://www.disciplesnow.com/>

<http://www.americancatholic.org/>

Faith Formation is a life-long commitment to spiritual growth. It is the expectation of the Church that all faithful followers of Christ will continue to be involved in religious education their entire life.

Preparation for Confirmation is not limited to prayer and understanding.

Service – Each Confirmation small group will be required to plan and carry out a service project for their group.

The Church's social teaching is a rich treasure of wisdom about building a just society and living lives of holiness amidst the challenges of modern society. Below are the key themes that are at the heart of our Catholic social tradition. Service is a key component to Confirmation Preparation. We will connect our faith to Christ who "did not come to be served but to serve and give His life as a ransom for many. Mt 20:28"

Life and Dignity of the Human Person

- **Call to Family, Community, and Participation**
- **The Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers**
- **Rights and Responsibilities** – Every person has a fundamental right to life and a right to those things required for human decency.
- **Care for God's Creation** – We are called to protect people and the planet, living our faith in relationship with all of God's creation.
- **Solidarity**
We are one human family whatever our national, racial, ethnic, economic, and ideological differences. Pope Paul VI taught that "if you want peace, work for justice." Our love for all our sisters and brothers demands that we promote peace in our world.
- **Option for the Poor and Vulnerable**
The story of the Last Judgment (Mt 25:31-46) instructs us to put the poor and vulnerable first.



Pilgrimage

The Pilgrimage will help us prayerfully prepare to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Pilgrimages remind us that the journey we take to a place of special devotion designated as a shrine mirrors our present journey as the pilgrim people of God, for the Church on earth is a pilgrim Church (*Lumen Gentium* VII, 48–51). The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches that "pilgrimages evoke our earthly journey toward heaven" (2691). Tourists go on tour or vacation to see things. Pilgrims go on pilgrimage not necessarily to see something, but to receive something, such as renewed spirit, greater devotion, or a closer relationship with God. Pilgrims are changed by the experience. Hearts and minds transformed forever, pilgrims have returned home with a new sense of their Christian calling to take up a new way of life. Pilgrimages are a mode through which we deepen our connection with God and shrines provide an environment which is conducive to the cultivation of this great moment of prayer.



Confirmation Pilgrimage: Washington, DC

Stop #1 - The Shrine of the Immaculate Conception

To make a pilgrimage means to set out in a particular direction towards a specific destination. The ultimate destination is heaven and shrines help us to get there. Pope John Paul II thought of a shrine as being like an "oasis of the spirit". Designated by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops as a National Sanctuary of Prayer and Pilgrimage, the Basilica is the nation's preeminent Marian shrine, dedicated to the patroness of the United States—the Blessed Virgin Mary under her title of the Immaculate Conception.

Stop #2 - Franciscan Monastery

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops urges Catholics to visit the Holy Land in the spirit of true pilgrims, to walk prayerfully and devoutly in the steps of our Lord and with openness to the movement of the Spirit of Jesus in their lives. The Franciscan Monastery was designated a National Historic Site in 1991 and has been a place of worship and pilgrimage for thousands of visitors since the church's dedication in 1899.

Confirmation Retreat — *a continuation of prayerful preparation*

When:

Friday, March 1 (6pm arrival) to

Saturday, March 2 (9pm departure) – Sunday vigil Mass included

Where:

Bellarmino Jesuit Retreat House, Wayesboro, PA

A retreat is a withdrawal from ordinary activities for a period of time to talk with God in prayer and reflection. Jesus spent forty days in the desert in prayer and fasting before entering his public ministry.

The purpose of a spiritual retreat is to temporarily leave behind the usual distractions in order for a change of heart and a deepening of faith to occur. In order for this to happen, *the Confirmation retreat is a NO electronics retreat.*

Please leave your cell phone, iPod, and video games at home.





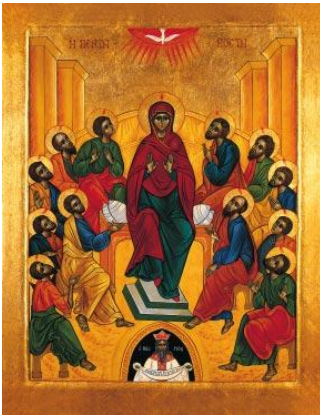
Confirmation Sponsor

The role of a Confirmation Sponsor is very special and important. The sponsor will profess his/her Catholic faith and serve the Candidate in his/her lifelong faith journey. Ideally, the sponsor is a Godparent – linking the Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation. Candidates will be given an interview sheet to help nurture a relationship with his/her sponsor.

Here are the requirements for Sponsors in the Catholic Church, according to Canon Law #874:

- ❖ be at least 16 years old
- ❖ be fully initiated into Catholic Church (have received sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist)
- ❖ be in good standing with the Catholic Church (attend Mass each Sunday, follow the Catholic Church regarding marriage laws)
- ❖ not be the child's mother or father

Each sponsor will need a letter of good standing from his/her parish by January 15, 2013.



Rite of Confirmation

The Rite of Confirmation will take place during a Mass on Saturday, March 16. Candidates will have the opportunity to choose 10am or 2pm (each time is limited to 40).

The confirmation liturgy marks the final stage of initiation and celebrates the candidates' gradual and continuing growth into the Eucharistic community. Confirmation is most appropriately celebrated in the context of the Eucharist.

The Rite of Confirmation includes:

- a. Presentation of the candidates by the pastor.
- b. Homily of instruction by the bishop.
- c. Renewal of baptismal promises.
- d. Laying on of hands.
- e. Anointing with chrism.

The gifts of the Holy Spirit are sealed in this liturgy. The Confirmation Sponsor will present the Confirmation Candidate to the bishop. The bishop will anoint the forehead using Chrism Oil. (Chrism Oil is a mixture of oils and perfumes blessed by the Archbishop during Holy Week.) After each Mass there will be a reception and time for photos with the bishop.



Immediate Preparation for Confirmation Calendar:

Tuesday, September 4	7pm – Parent/Teen Confirmation Meeting
Monday, September 10	7pm – Parent/Teen Confirmation Meeting
Sunday, September 23 (Spanish)	7pm – Parent/Teen Confirmation Meeting
Sunday, October 14	10am – Small Group Confirmation Class
Wednesday, October 17	6:30pm – Small Group Confirmation Class
Saturday, November 3	Pilgrimage #1
Saturday, November 12	Pilgrimage #2
Sunday, November 11	10am – Small Group Confirmation Class
Wednesday, November 14	6:30pm – Small Group Confirmation Class
Sunday, December 9	10am – Small Group Confirmation Class
Wednesday, December 12	6:30pm – Small Group Confirmation Class
Sunday, January 13	10am – Small Group Confirmation Class
Wednesday, January 16	6:30pm – Small Group Confirmation Class
Sunday, February 3	10am – Small Group Confirmation Class
Wednesday, February 6	6:30pm – Small Group Confirmation Class
Friday, March 1-2	Confirmation Retreat
Sunday, March 10	6:30pm – Confirmation practice
Saturday, March 16	Rite of Confirmation (10am or 2pm)

Cost - \$150

The fee includes: small group materials, Pilgrimage transportation and tour fees, retreat house fees, and other expenses for the Confirmation program.

The only costs not included are: lunch on the Pilgrimage and each retreatant will be asked to bring a bag dinner to the retreat on March 1.

You may pay the entire fee at registration or pay in 3 installments of \$50. If you pay by installments, \$50 is due at registration, \$50 due by Nov. 1, and \$50 due by Feb. 1.

If you are unable to pay the full cost of the Confirmation program, please see Irene for a scholarship application.





The clergy, staff, and catechists of St. John's
are honored to walk with you on your
journey towards the Sacrament of
Confirmation.

For more information, please contact:
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or

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St. John the Evangelist Catholic Church

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