

THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION

Student's Booklet

Name: _____

Throughout the coming school year, you will be given a number of details regarding the Sacrament of Confirmation which will be administered in the spring of this school year.

Every student is responsible for completing and submitting the Confirmation Information Sheet by January 15th to the Religious Education Office. Parents and students should read through the following pages in order to determine how to expedite the completion of the material in the timeliest manner. Some matters need to be attended to immediately (Sponsor Eligibility Certificate and Letter Requesting the Sacrament), while other matters require constant attention (service projects).

Please feel free to contact the Religious Education Office if you have any questions regarding this booklet. Good luck to you this year as you begin your formal preparation for this important Sacrament.



CONFIRMATION...WHAT IS IT?

Confirmation means, “making strong” or “strengthening”. Through the Sacrament of Confirmation, the Holy Spirit comes to us in a special way to join us more closely to Jesus and His Church and to seal and strengthen us as Christ’s witnesses. We are accepted as fully initiated members of the Church and are expected to take up the challenge of becoming mature Disciples of Jesus Christ. We view Confirmation as a sealing of our Baptism. It is an opportunity for us to say “yes” to the vows taken for us by our Godparents in the sacrament of Baptism and share more fully in the mission of Jesus Christ and His Church.

GIFTS AND FRUITS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Gifts of the Holy Spirit help Christians live their lives more fully committed to Christ.

These gifts are:

- **Wisdom** enables us to see that all of life can be reduced to one simple truth: love of God and neighbor.
- **Understanding:** to see beneath the surface of a problem or an issue and to recognize what is really involved.
- **Knowledge:** to get the facts straight. To be able to recognize the difference between truth and error.
- **Courage** gives us the strength to hold onto and defend that which is good no matter how difficult or dangerous it might be.
 - **Right Judgement** helps us recognize how best to act in a tough situation.
- **Reverence:** this gift enables us to be sensitive to the love and holiness God offers us through Jesus and the Christian community.
- **Awe in God’s Presence:** this gift enables us to have a keen awareness of just how special and awesome God really is.

From the Gifts of the Spirit, come the Fruits, which are:

<i>Charity</i>	<i>Joy</i>	<i>Peace</i>	<i>Patience</i>	<i>Kindness</i>	<i>Goodness</i>
<i>Long suffering</i>		<i>Mildness</i>	<i>Chastity</i>	<i>Modesty</i>	<i>Faith</i>
			<i>Self-restraint</i>		

Dear Parents and Confirmation Candidates:

In the coming months, we will all participate together on a Journey of the Spirit. During this period of preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation, the cooperation of parents and candidates is absolutely essential. We have prepared this booklet to serve as a guide for the candidates and parents.

The challenge ahead is exciting and demanding. In order to strengthen our enthusiasm for the Spirit, a number of basic tasks and a variety of activities are recommended. This will require a forthright commitment from the candidate and ongoing support from the parents.

The duty to guide your children along the sacramental path is a concern to all Catholic parents. To date you have formed and nurtured the spirit of faith through your life example, religious instruction and the reception of the Sacraments of Baptism, Penance, and Holy Eucharist.

Once again, you are being called upon to actively participate in the next step of your faith mission – the preparation of your child for the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Your role now takes on an added dimension because you are called upon to allow your child the right of free choice in the decision to be confirmed. This does not ease your obligation, but rather requires that you share as partners with them as they prepare for this significant event.

On behalf of the Confirmation Team, may God continue to bless you and your family.

*Kim Lorentzen
Director of Religious Education*

OUTLINE OF CONFIRMATION PREPARATION:

Spiritual Journey: As you know, your upcoming Confirmation is related to your Baptism. It gives you a chance to restate what your loving and believing parents shared with you at infancy, a life in the Spirit. Your preparation, therefore, must be on many levels.

Readiness for Candidacy: The Rite of Confirmation calls upon the pastor to testify before the Bishop that a candidate is properly disposed to receive the sacrament. Therefore, a good knowledge of the Catholic faith through class attendance and class participation is necessary. Participation in the liturgical and sacramental life of the Church and a life style that reflects Gospel values is essential. Weekly Mass participation is a must.

Mass Attendance: All Students are required to attend the assigned class masses Students will sit with their families in the church and may leave once Mass is over. In addition to 3 class masses, each student is required to attend 9 Masses throughout the school year. Also, every student must attend a Christmas Mass and an Easter Mass preferably at Church of Epiphany. Each student will write a Homily Reflection (a few notes) based on the Priest/Deacon's homily which will be stamped after Mass. All students will submit a minimum of 14 Homily Reflections for the year.

Interview: Candidates will be interviewed by a Priest or Deacon at a designated time. The interview is designed to determine the readiness for the Sacrament of Confirmation.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation: The Sacrament of Reconciliation will be celebrated in a special ceremony in the spring. Parents and sponsors are encouraged to join the candidate for this grace filled service.

Retreat: As a culmination of the preparation for the sacrament celebration there is a **mandatory retreat** that each candidate must attend with their sponsor. *If the sponsor cannot attend, the candidate must attend with a parent.* **All Confirmation candidates are required to participate in the Retreat. If the candidate does not attend, the Confirmation will be delayed a year.**

Saint Poster and Worksheet: Submit Saint Poster together with worksheet for the story of your Saint. * See attached worksheet

Letter requesting the Sacrament: Each candidate is required to write and submit a typewritten formal request to Father Mike in his/her own words. The request should include:

- a description of what he/she is doing to prepare for this Sacrament;
- a statement of what he/she plans to do in the future to live out this commitment;
- a formal request for the sacrament.

Letter Requesting the Sacrament

You are free to respond to God's call to live your faith more deeply – to worship, witness, and serve as a confirmed Christian. If you wish to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation, write a letter of request to your pastor stating your desire. Follow these guidelines:

The letter should be typed

Address your letter as follows:

To: Father Michael Santangelo
Church of Epiphany
615 Thiele Road
Brick, New Jersey 08724

Greeting: Begin your letter with the greeting: Dear Father Mike:

Body of Letter

Paragraph 1:

Introduce yourself. Tell something about your family, background, interests, etc.

Paragraph 2:

Request the Sacrament: Give several reasons why you want to be confirmed.

Paragraph 3:

Explain how you plan to prepare for the reception of this sacrament, be specific, for example: Liturgy - Mass, your prayer life, your celebration of the other sacraments, your service for other exercised at home, within the parish, and/or within your community.

Paragraph 4:

Tell how you will continue to carry out your life of service to God and others through the power of the Spirit. Tell how you plan to make your Confirmation in the faith real and alive in the future. How do plan on remaining a practicing Catholic?

Paragraph 5:

Confirmation Name – Briefly explain why you chose your Confirmation name and why it is important to you.

Conclusion: Conclude the letter and write your complete signature below your actual signature

Candidate Interviews between 5:30 - 8 PM in the Church

MANDATORY DATES

(Due to the nature of the events, there are no makeup dates or times available)

Date	Event
October 28 th or 29 th , 2023	8 th Grade Mandatory Mass Required
December 12, 2023	Saint Poster, Worksheet & report are due
December 12, 2023	Deadline for Letter to Father Mike.
December 24/25, 2024	Attend Christmas Mass – Stamped Homily Reflection <u>Required & Mandatory</u>
January 16, 2024	Deadline for Confirmation Information Sheet, Sponsor Eligibility Certificate
January 27 th or 28 th , 2024	8 th Grade Mandatory Mass: Required
February 2024	Confirmation Gown \$ and size . <i>Please send in a check payable to “School Uniform Shop”</i>
February 13 th , 2024	Penance Service – 5:30 PM – 6:30 PM <u>Required & Mandatory</u>
February 20, 2024	Confirmation Prep class – Fall & Summer students - <u>Required & Mandatory</u>
February 27, 2024	Confirmation Prep class – Fall & Summer students - <u>Required & Mandatory</u>
March 5, 2024	Confirmation Prep class – Fall & Summer students - <u>Required & Mandatory</u>
March 9, 2024	Sponsor / Candidate Retreat <u>Required & Mandatory</u> 9:00AM – 2:00PM
March 12, 2024	Confirmation Prep class – Fall & Summer students <u>Required & Mandatory</u>
March 19, 2024	Deadline for service hours log
March 23 rd or 24 th , 2024	8 th Grade Mandatory Mass: <u>Required & Mandatory</u>
March 31 st , 2024	Attend Easter Mass – Stamped Homily Reflection <u>Required & Mandatory</u>
April 16, 2024 *subject to change*	Candidate Interviews between 5:30 - 8 PM in the Church - <u>Required & Mandatory</u>
May 2, 2024	Practice for Confirmation with Sponsor 6pm-7pm Church - <u>Required & Mandatory</u>
May 7, 2024	Confirmation 4:00PM

CONFIRMATION PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

The Confirmation program is a two-year process. This process begins in 7th grade and will continue right up until the time of Confirmation. Below is an outline of the expectations of our candidates.

- **First and foremost, candidates MUST be practicing Catholics who attend Mass and receive Communion on a regular basis. If you are not attending Mass, you put your candidacy at risk.**
- Religious Education Classes - Candidates are to attend classes once a week and adhere to the attendance policy already in place.
- Parental supervision – While candidates are primarily responsible for fulfilling the requirements of Confirmation, we ask that parents play an active role in this preparation.
- Picking a sponsor – A sponsor is a person chosen by the candidate who acts as a spiritual guide and support system. This person may not necessarily be a relative. The sponsor should be someone who has a very strong spiritual life and **MUST** be an active parishioner of his/her church. Please give careful thought to picking a sponsor. The sponsor must do the following:
 1. Apply to his/her home parish for a letter of eligibility to be a sponsor.
 2. Supply the candidate with this letter ASAP and it should be attached to this booklet. Please keep in mind, every church may have different requirements for a person to be considered eligible. Do not delay in asking your sponsor in case they have steps to take in order to be considered eligible by the Pastor of his/her church.

****IF YOUR SPONSOR IS A MEMBER OF EPIPHANY CHURCH, PLEASE CALL OUR OFFICE (732-458-0220) FOR VERIFICATION OF SPONSOR ELIGIBILITY. IT IS NOT NECESSARY TO COME TO THE CHURCH TO PICK UP AN ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATE.**

- Confirmation name – The name chosen as your Confirmation name should be name that identifies a person as a Christian, as does their Baptismal name. In fact, candidates may retain their Baptismal name rather than pick another name. However, if another name is chosen, this name must be a Saint's name, and the student is asked to briefly explain why this name was chosen.
- Successful completion of the 7th grade curriculum.
- Complete 20 hours of community service in the 7th and 8th grade for a total of 40 hours.

The Role of Your Sponsor

Candidates, guided by their parents, choose a sponsor. The role of the sponsor is an important one. A Sponsor must be a person who knows the candidate, is willing to share his/her own faith and can support the candidate on this spiritual journey to Confirmation.

The Sponsor is a companion on the journey of faith. He/she is present as a friend, specifically, as a Christian friend. Just as friends do things together, share themselves and their resources, support and encourage each other, so do sponsors in the area of Christian and church life.

Sponsors affirm, teach, advise, console, strengthen, and guide. They personally introduce the candidate to the Church.

Requirements:

- Sponsor must be 16 years of age.
- Sponsor must have received the three Sacraments of Initiation in the Roman Catholic Church (Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist), and be an active, practicing Catholic in good standing in their home parish.
- If married, the sponsors marriage must be recognized sacramentally valid by the Roman Catholic Church.
- Sponsor may be the candidates Baptismal Godparent, or a new sponsor selected specifically for Confirmation.
- Sponsor may be either male or female for any candidate.
- Sponsor *may not* be a candidates parent or a step-parent.

*Please note that these requirements are established under #872 Canon Law of the Roman Catholic Church and the directives of the Diocese of Trenton. They cannot be adapted or altered in any way. *

If the sponsor is a member of the Church of Epiphany, they must complete the sponsor Eligibility Form and have their eligibility verified by the Parish Office.

If the sponsor is not a member of the Church of Epiphany, please be sure that the sponsor you have selected meets all the requirements noted above. No one may serve as a sponsor without meeting the above noted requirements. Your sponsor must obtain a sponsor eligibility certificate from his/her parish, and it must contain the church seal.

Saint Report and Poster Directions

1. **Report:** Using the information/worksheet that is provided in the confirmation packet and which you have completed, **type** a brief report that consists of 5 paragraphs with 5 to 7 sentences in each paragraph.
*In researching your Saint, be mindful that there are many websites that provide information but not all of them are Catholic or accurate. We suggest that you use the following sites to gain the most accurate information:

- ✚ www.catholic.org/saints
- ✚ www.theworkofgod.org/saints
- ✚ www.americancatholic.org/features/saints/byname.aspx
- ✚ www.catholic-saints.info
- ✚ www.franciscanmedia.org/saint-of-the-day/calendar
- ✚ www.americancatholic.org/saints/patron

2. **Poster must include the following:**

- Create a poster 28 x 22 (standard size), any color;
- Your first and last name;
- Saint's name clearly displayed at the top of the poster;
- Picture of the saint and any appropriate symbols pertaining to your saint;
- Bulleted facts about your saint. Please do not copy and download from the internet paragraphs about your saint and glue to the poster. This makes it difficult to locate the important information you would like to convey;
- You may type the facts using a large and readable font or neatly write using a black sharpie for facts;
- Your poster should be neat, colorful, informative, and easy to read.

3. **Turn in by December 15:**

- a. Completed information/worksheet;
- b. typed report;
- c. poster.

In what two ways was this Saint most like Jesus?

1. _____

2. _____

Name one way this Saint showed love for other.

How could you follow this Saint in your daily life today? Be Specific. Give 3 examples.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

I chose this Confirmation name because...”

Summarize or list 5 key events in your Saint’s life story.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Part Two: Type your Saint Report.

Part Three: Create a Poster of your Saint’s life story using the above information. It must contain a picture of your Saint.