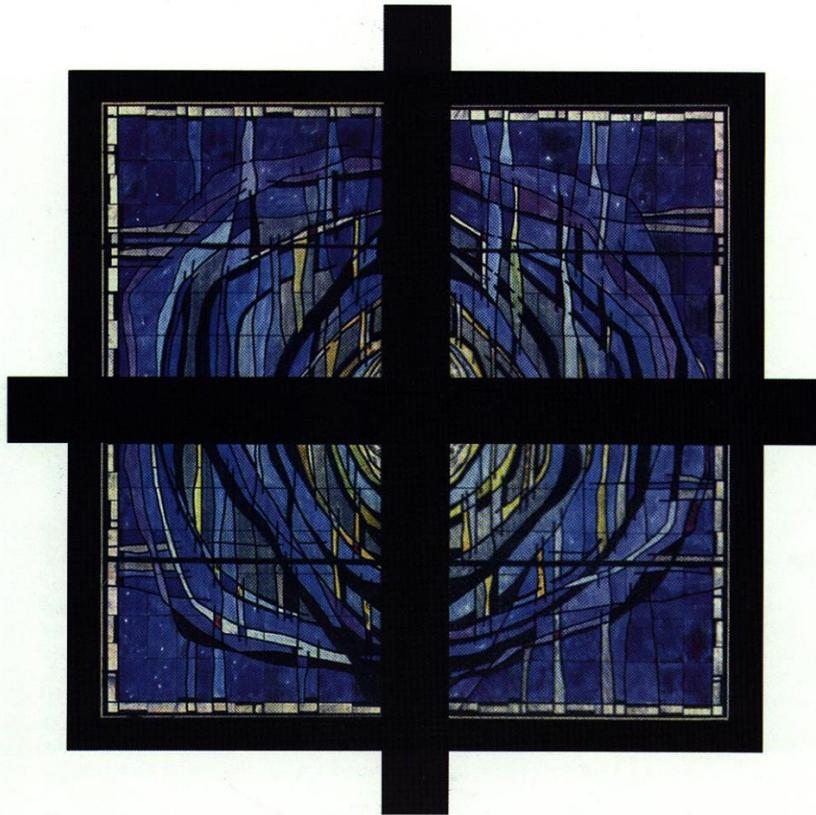


Confirmation Preparation

A GUIDE FOR CONFIRMATION CANDIDATES, PARENTS, AND CATECHISTS



“...that their hearts may be encouraged as they are brought together in love, to have all the richness of fully assured understanding, for the knowledge of the mystery of God, Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.”
Col 2:2-3

The Church of St. Gerard

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome! We are looking forward to walking alongside you as you prepare for Confirmation and sharing with you in this part of your faith journey. As you will see, Confirmation preparation involves learning, sharing, serving, fellowship, spiritual growth, and fun! You will be given the opportunity to learn more about your Catholic faith and what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ.

What is expected of a Confirmation Candidate?

- Participate in Mass every week.
- Participate in Confirmation classes. (Page 3) (The complete 2018-19 schedule can be found on page 9)
- Choose a qualified sponsor and meet regularly with him/her. (Page 3)
(Select sponsor and fill out sponsor info form by **Oct. 28th**)
- Participate in Rite of Welcome Mass and the sponsor/candidate meeting on **Oct. 28th**.
(Page 4)
- Write a letter of intent. (Page 4) (**Due Dec. 2nd**)
- Choose a Saint's name as a Confirmation name and write a biography on that Saint's life and why you chose him/her. (Page 5) (**Due Dec. 2nd**)
- Participate in the Confirmation retreat on **March 3rd, 2019**. (Page 6)
- Participate in at least one parish group, event, or activity at least once a month October-April (or the equivalent) throughout the Confirmation process and write a one-page reflection on your experience. (Page 6) (**Due March 10th**)
- Participate in the Rite of Sending Mass and the parent/candidate meeting afterward on **March 10th**. (Page 7)
- Participate in the Confirmation Mass on **Saturday, March 16th at 10:00am** at the Basilica of St. Mary and receive the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Participate in Confirmation Classes

Regular attendance at Confirmation classes is extremely important in preparing candidates for reception of the Sacrament. We understand that families and students are busy, but we expect that you will make classes a priority. If you do miss a session, you will be expected to complete the lesson on your own before our next meeting. Our Confirmation program is available online at

[http://dynamiccatholic.com/confirmation/view-program/;](http://dynamiccatholic.com/confirmation/view-program/)

there is also an app available for your phone that you can download. **Students are allowed to miss no more than 2 classes (except in the case of serious circumstances). Emily MUST be contacted if a student is going to be absent from class.**



Choose a Qualified Sponsor and Meet Regularly with Them

Your Confirmation sponsor should be a person who is a strong role-model as a faith-filled Catholic. This person will be a companion in your faith journey both now and in the future. Your sponsor should therefore be able to meet regularly with you and help you prepare for Confirmation through prayer, study, service, and discussion. Sponsors must be able to attend the Confirmation Mass on March 16th.

Requirements for sponsors:

- Must be a practicing Catholic who attends Mass regularly.
- Should know the candidate well and be willing to serve as a strong and long-lasting Catholic influence on the candidate.
- Must be a fully initiated Catholic themselves, having received Baptism, First Eucharist, and Confirmation.
- **May not be the parents of the candidate.**

Once you've decided on your sponsor, you will fill out the Confirmation Sponsor Information Form which is due at the sponsor/candidate meeting on October 28th.

Participate in the Rite of Welcome Mass

All candidates, parents, and sponsors (if able) should plan to attend the **Rite of Welcome Mass at 10:30am on October 28th, 2018**. During the Mass, the candidates will declare their intent to seek the Sacrament of Confirmation with the Saint Gerard's community as witness. In return, the community agrees to support and pray for all those involved in this faith journey.

Participate in Sponsor/Candidate meeting

The candidate and his or her sponsor will **attend a meeting together following Rite of Welcome Mass on October 28th**. We will go over expectations, what it means to be a sponsor, and talk briefly about the Rite of Confirmation.

Write a Letter of Intent

The purpose of this letter is for the candidate to demonstrate in writing her/his desire to be Confirmed, and why making this commitment is important to them. This letter should be one page in length.

Please use the following as a guide for the letter:

First- Introduce yourself and share some information about yourself, such as your family, your interests and hobbies, and a little about your background.

Second- Explain where you are in your faith journey right now. Do you have a good relationship with God? Do you pray, go to Mass regularly, and live a Christian lifestyle? What is your favorite way to be involved in the church and why? What are some things you struggle with about your faith?

Third- Explain why you want to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. How will it strengthen your relationship with Jesus? How will it help you as you strive to live out your Catholic faith at church, at school, and in your everyday life?

***This letter must be turned in by December 2nd.**

Choose a Confirmation Saint Name and Write a Short Biography

One of the traditional practices in the Church at the time of Confirmation is choosing a Saint name. At Baptism, your name was chosen by your parents because you were too little to make the selection alone. Now, in Confirmation, another name, in addition to your first and middle names, can be added, or your original baptismal name may be used. **When you celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation, this is the name you will be called by.** It must be a Christian name, such as a Saint or person from the Bible. If you decide to choose a new name, you might want to choose the name of a Saint who represents the type of person you want to be, or someone whose life you admire.

Here are some resources as you begin to pray about what name you would like:

Catholic Online-Saints: <http://www.catholic.org/saints/>

Catholic Saints.Info: <https://catholicsaints.info/>

It is important to learn as much as you can about your patron Saint. After all, you are asking this Saint to be your friend and advocate. You'll then complete a short biography of that Saint; use the questions below as a *guide*. This is to be a biography, please do not just answer the questions below as your paper. **The Saint Biography is due by December 2nd.**

- Your Patron Saint's full name and feast day.
- Facts about your Saint such as birthplace, career, ministry, family, etc.
- In what ways did your patron Saint serve God?
- What qualities did she/he possess that you admire?
- What can you learn from the life lived by your patron Saint? How will learning about this Saint help you in the future to serve God and others?

Participate in the Confirmation Retreat

Candidates must attend the Confirmation retreat on Sunday, March 3rd, 2018. This will be an all-day event at Camp Eden Wood in Eden Prairie. We will attend the 8:30am Mass together at St. Gerard and then take a bus to the retreat center. The retreat will go from 10:30am-7:00pm.

Youth must be picked up from Camp Eden Wood at 7:00pm.

As attending a retreat is a requirement for Confirmation, if you are unable to attend the retreat on March 3rd, it is expected that you will make arrangements with another parish or Catholic youth organization to fulfill the obligation. **If you need help finding an alternate retreat to attend, contact Emily at least one month before March 3rd.**

Participate with a Parish Group or Event

You are required to participate with a Parish group, event, or activity **on at least a monthly basis October-April (or 2 big events during the year)**. Then, write a one-page reflection on your experience. Your reflection is due by **March 10th, 2019**. The goal is that you'll find a ministry that you're passionate about and continue to be involved in this ministry after Confirmation.

There are many opportunities to be involved at Saint Gerard's. Just a few examples are:

- Be an assistant small group leader for Elementary Faith Formation (Wednesday nights) or Pre-K (Sunday mornings during 10:30am Mass).
- Attend high school youth group (Meets after Confirmation class once a month)
- Assist with Liturgy of the Word for Children at Sunday Mass
- Participate in Mass as a Reader, an Usher, or a Greeter
- Help with hospitality (coffee and donuts) after Mass
- Run the PowerPoint slides for the screens during Mass
- Be an altar server
- Sing or play an instrument with the choir at Mass
- Prepare and serve meals with Loaves and Fishes (Fourth Friday of the Month)
- Volunteer with Sharing and Caring Hands (First Saturday of the Month)

Here are several bigger volunteer opportunities **(Choosing two of these events takes the place of volunteering once a month):**

- Volunteer for Vacation Bible School (June 11th-14th 2018)
- Participate in the High School Mission Trip to Catholic Heart Work Camp (July 9th-14th 2018)
- Volunteer at Cornfest (August 10th and 11th 2018)
- Participate in Summer Stretch, a youth ministry event beginning the day with Mass, completing a service project, and participating in a fun activity in the afternoon (every Wednesday in August 2018)
- Participate in other Stretch events that will be scheduled throughout the year over school breaks
- Help with Winterblast, our middle school lock in (December 14th-15th - must be in 10th grade or older)
- Volunteer with Pumpkin Fest (Date TBA)
- Help with Advent Tea (Date TBA)
- Help with a Pancake or Burrito Breakfast (Dates TBA)

Many of these opportunities need to be scheduled in advance, so don't wait until the last minute to make arrangements. Other opportunities will be listed in the weekly bulletin and on the website. Here are a few questions to help guide your 1-page reflection:

- What group or event did you participate with? What did you do? Any responsibilities or duties?
- What did you like/dislike about being a part of this ministry?
- Who are some of the other parishioners you met?
- Is this a group or event you would participate with again?
- How did participating in this event help you to grow in your faith?
- Do you think it's important to be involved in a church ministry after you're Confirmed? Why or why not?

Participate in the Rite of Sending Mass and Parent/Student/Sponsor Meeting

The Sunday prior to the Confirmation Mass, we will have a Rite of Sending Mass at St. Gerard at 10:30am on Sunday, March 10th. This is an opportunity for the parish community to express their support for you, recognize your preparation, and to send you forth to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. Following Mass, we will have a brief parent/student/sponsor meeting to discuss the details of the Confirmation Mass.

Participate in the Confirmation Mass

You will be Confirmed on Saturday, March 16th at 10:00am at the Basilica of Saint Mary in Minneapolis.

Confirmation Schedule:

Sunday Nights – 6:00pm-7:30pm

9/30/18 Parent/Student Meeting

10/7/18 Session 1: Life is Choices

10/14/18 Session 2: What's Holding You Back?

*****10/28/18 Rite of Welcome Mass at 10:30am and Student/Sponsor meeting** (*No class in evening*)

11/4/18 Session 3: The Jesus Question

11/11/18 Safe Environment Training (This is a requirement of the Archdiocese) PARENTS MUST ATTEND WITH YOUTH

11/18/18 Session 4: The Prayer Process

12/2/18 Session 5: The Bible

12/9/18 Session 6: Relationships

12/16/18 Session 7: The Eucharist

1/6/19 Session 8: The Holy Spirit

1/13/19 Praise and Worship Night

1/27/19 Session 9: The Church

2/10/19 Session 10: Confirmation

2/24/19 Session 11: Made for Mission and Session 12: Holiness is Possible

*****3/3/19 All Day Sunday Confirmation Retreat** (*No Class in evening 3/3*)

*****3/10/19 Confirmation Rite of Sending at 10:30am Mass and Final Parent Meeting** (*No class in evening*)

*****3/16/18 Saturday Confirmation Mass 10:00am at the Basilica**

3/17/19 I've Been Confirmed: Now What? – A Panel Discussion