

A PREPARATION GUIDE FOR

CONFIRMATION 2017



**A Guide for
Students and Parents**

Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament

Office of Religious Formation
Sacramental Preparation Coordinator, Rosalie Days, (202) 449-4618, rdays@blessedsacramentdc.org

3630 Quesada Street, N.W. Washington, DC 20015 Fax: (202) 966-9255
www.blessedsacramentdc.org/sacraments/confirmation

Confirmation Requirements

- Enroll online into Confirmation Program
- Attend Confirmation Orientation Meeting (Spring 2016)
- Perform 20 hours of community service from at least 2 organizations
- Submit the following paperwork:

Confirmation Pledge Form (at Orientation Meeting)

Copy of baptism certificate (at Orientation Meeting)

Letter of Intent

Confirmation Saint Report

Sponsor Certification Form

Letter to the Pastor

Service Hours Log and Service Reflection

- Attend Confirmation Masses (Rite of Enrollment, Rite of Commission, Rite of Election – dates provided in handout)
- Attend Retreat
- Interview with a Priest
- Confirmation Exam
- Attend Rehearsal

CONFIRMATION 2016-2017

Preparation Guide

Under the guidance of the pastor, the candidate's "home parish" is responsible for the preparation and celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Confirmation will be scheduled for Spring 2017. The exact date will be finalized in Fall 2016.

Who May Be Confirmed?

To be confirmed, one must:

- Be a baptized person who has not been confirmed, have celebrated his/her twelfth birthday, and be in the eighth grade or above.
- Have received Roman Catholic religious instruction from grade 1, including religious education **during** the last 2 years prior to the reception of the sacrament, with an adequate attendance record. Normally, this will mean enrollment in a parish school or a parish religious education program, or private Catholic school.
- Give evidence of knowledge and understanding of the responsibilities of being a member of the Catholic Church, as well as some appreciation of sacramental life, with a sincere desire for the sacrament.
- Have completed the requirements prior to the Confirmation date and met the deadlines as outlined in this guide.

SPRING / SUMMER 2016

- Be a registered parish family (Online link to become a parish member is below).
- Enroll online into the 2017 Confirmation Program/\$70 fee which covers administrative costs, retreat and robes. (link is below).
- Attend the Confirmation Orientation Meeting, **Thursday April 28, 2016**, Blessed Sacrament School Auditorium, 7:00 – 8:00 pm.
- Provide a copy of the student's baptism certificate to the Orientation Meeting.
- Provide \$70 check if paying by check, made out to Blessed Sacrament Church.
- Attend the Confirmation Mass of Enrollment Mass on Sunday, **May 1, 2016** at 5:30 pm.
- Students can start on their service hours immediately following the Orientation Meeting. Please make good use of your summer break to work on the service hours to complete the required 20 hours necessary for Confirmation.

To become a New Parishioner:

<https://markmccaffrey.wufoo.com/forms/px2f5vu1knfqg2/>

To register online into the 2016-2017 Confirmation Program

<https://markmccaffrey.wufoo.com/forms/confirmation-enrollment-form-20162017/>

Confirmation Orientation Meeting

At the Orientation Meeting, the candidate will be asked to think about how they are living the Christian life now, and what their responsibilities as candidates will be. This is the time for the candidate to indicate his/her desire to be prepared for the sacrament, and to discern any initial questions and concerns.

Before leaving the meeting, the candidate must complete the Confirmation Pledge Form and provide a copy of his/her baptism certificate. In addition, he/she must also turn in a Letter of Intent by **June 6, 2016**.

Please use the example on the next page to write the Letter of Intent. All submissions must be typewritten.

Letter of Intent

Date

Dear Mrs. Days,

1st Paragraph introduce yourself. Tell something about you – your hobbies, your interests and your family; share a little bit about your background.

2nd Paragraph request the sacrament. Why do you wish to receive the sacrament of Confirmation? In your own words, write one or two paragraphs giving several reasons why you would like to be confirmed.

3rd Paragraph provide a quotation from one passage of Scripture that will inspire you throughout the preparation process. The quotation can be either a sentence or a few sentences. **Explain** how you found the passage and why you chose this particular passage. Be sure to **cite** your passage by noting the Biblical book, chapter and verse. (i.e. Psalm 1:1-2)

Thank you.

Sincerely,

YOUR NAME

Confirmation Masses

The three mass celebrations specifically linked to Confirmation are:

- **Rite of Enrollment** – Sunday, **May 1, 2016** at 5:30 pm.
- **Rite of Commission** – Sunday, **October 16, 2016** at 5:30 pm.
- **Rite of Election** – Sunday, Spring 2017 (date TBA) at 5:30 pm (scheduled on the Sunday before Confirmation).

Rite of Enrollment Mass

At the 5:30 pm evening Mass on Sunday, May 1, 2016, the candidates will be formally welcomed into the program and commissioned to do their service projects. During this induction service, the candidates make a covenant to enter into a program of preparation, with the parish community as witness. All candidates and parents are encouraged to attend.

Rite of Commission Mass

At the 5:30 pm evening Mass on Sunday, October 16, 2016 the candidates will receive a blessing prior to attending the Confirmation retreat and are reminded that they bear a responsibility to spread the Word of God. All candidates and parents are encouraged to attend.

Rite of Election Mass

At the 5:30 pm evening Mass on the Sunday in Spring 2017 (date TBA) prior to Confirmation, the candidates will receive a blessing as they take their final steps towards full membership into the church. All candidates and parents are encouraged to attend.

Sponsor Selection

Responsibilities and Roles

The sponsor is an invaluable assistant to parents in transmitting the faith. The sponsor needs to be able to fulfill several requirements.

- The Church requires that the sponsor be an active, practicing Catholic who attends Sunday Mass on a regular basis and has already celebrated the sacrament of Confirmation. The Church recognizes that a person cannot pass on what the person does not have.
- It is important that the sponsor be mature, more informed, and experienced in the ways of our faith and culture than the candidate is. He or she should strive to be an example of wholesome Christian living and embrace the moral teachings of the Catholic Church.
- The sponsor should be a person who already has a trusting relationship with the candidate, is a mature friend or relative to whom the candidate can confide in.
- It is recommended that the sponsor be a mature person who has some experience with his or her faith and, hence, a clearer perspective from which to speak.
- The sponsor should be available to meet with the candidate on a regular basis prior to the celebration of Confirmation and to make a commitment to continue the faith journey after the celebration of Confirmation.
- The sponsor (not more than one) can be male or female and at least 16 years of age.

- The sponsor is one who is willing to share his or her faith with the candidate.
- The sponsor is an assistant to the parents as the primary communicator of the faith.
- The sponsor is to “walk and talk” with the candidate on the faith journey.
- The sponsor needs to be an open, honest, caring, committed, and encouraging person who will help the candidate grow in his or her understanding of the faith as the young person comes to a deeper appreciation of God in his or her life.

Parents cannot be sponsors since they are already responsible for their children’s spiritual growth. Sponsors are there to help the parents.

If for some reason the student is using a proxy sponsor, that person also has to be certified from their parish as a practicing Catholic.

The Sponsor Certification Form must be signed by the sponsor’s Pastor, certifying that he or she is a practicing Catholic. If the sponsor’s church is out of town, it often takes time to obtain certification, so it is advisable that the student get the form processed as soon as possible. This form is due on retreat day. Please bring this form to turn in at the retreat.

Confirmation Name

Almost everyone has two names: a first name and a last name. The first name tells who the student is. The last name tells what family the student belongs to.

Names are a sign of power. At baptism, all sin was forgiven *in the name of* the Father, of the Son, and the Holy Spirit. We were given a “Christian” name - the name of one of the saints or heroes of the Bible, for example, who became our “patron.” Many examples can be found in the New Testament of the Apostles’ curing and forgiving in the name of Jesus. There are many Bible stories in which a person’s name was changed to show that he or she had entered into a new relationship with God.

Confirmation is an opportunity to enter into a deeper relationship with God and with the Church. One Confirmation custom is to choose a new name to symbolize this relationship. This “Confirmation name” is used in the ceremony. The student may even choose his/her baptismal name because there is a close connection between Baptism and Confirmation.

The student should pick a saint’s name that would symbolize a new beginning in his/her faith life and a connection with that particular saint. This would be especially true if he/she felt that he/she may have not been particularly strong in his/her faith and are now making a renewed commitment to his/her faith. This commitment would be symbolized with the taking of a new name to show that he/she is in some ways now a new person. This new name would be used after the student’s present middle name and before his/her family name.

The particular saint's name chosen will represent the direction that the student feels his/her faith life is taking, or will represent a strength or attribute that he/she feels is needed. It is important and necessary to learn something about the saint chosen before deciding on that name. Selecting a saint name because the student likes the sound of the name, how it fits with the student's other names, or because it is the name of a nice friend or relative should not be among the reasons for choosing a saint.

Answer the following questions. Students should talk over the answers with their families, and use online references or books if necessary.

1. What is your complete baptismal name?
2. Why did your parents give you these names?
3. What do these names mean?
4. What name do you like your friends to call you? Why?
5. What would you like your Confirmation name to be?
6. Why would you like this name?
7. What does it mean to you?

Confirmation Saint Report

In the back of this handout, an outline is available to help the student in the research for a patron saint for Confirmation. This outline can help the student to organize the Saint Report. Do not use this form as the final report. Please hand in a one page type-written Saint Report.

The student should ask him/herself if this saint can be their patron/patroness saint and to help prepare them to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation, and be the companion in their Christian journey. The student can honor this saint through prayer and meditation. The student may choose his/her baptismal name as a confirmation saint name.

Saint Reports are due at the Confirmation Retreat. The following are some helpful web sites to assist in the saint report research:

www.newadvent.org

www.catholic.org/saints

www.catholic-pages.com

www.americancatholic.org/Features/Saints

Fall 2016

Confirmation Retreat

Friday, October 21 will be the day for the Confirmation Retreat. The retreat will take place on a weekday and therefore students are asked to be excused from their respective schools. Written excuses for schools can be requested by emailing Rosalie Days. All candidates should attend the retreat if at all possible.

Winter 2016

The students will be divided into two groups for the Confirmation Masses. Final group lists will be emailed to families in January 2017.

Before the celebration of Confirmation, the Pastor is required by Canon Law to know that candidates have been properly prepared. The Pastor should also know that candidates have a desire for knowledge of the sacrament.

To help the Pastor meet his responsibility, the student is asked to type a formal letter to the Pastor. On the next page, this letter addresses three questions that the student must answer. The format of the letter should be similar to the Letter of Intent.

Letter to the Pastor

Question #1 “What does the sacrament of Confirmation mean to you?” In the student’s own words, write one or two paragraphs explaining what the sacrament of Confirmation means.

Question #2 “Why do you feel you are ready to celebrate the sacrament of Confirmation?” Again, in the student’s own words, state in two or three paragraphs why he/she feels ready to celebrate this sacrament. The Pastor would also like to hear what the student did to fulfill his/her community service and what was learned from this experience.

Question #3 “How do you think Confirmation could strengthen your role in the life of the Church?” In other words, how is this sacrament better able to connect the student to the life of the Catholic Church? Through prayer? Through service? Through family?

This letter should be one page in length and must include the same format as the Letter of Intent, except with the salutation ...Dear Father Ron.

Letters are due into the Sacramental Preparation Office by **Friday, January 6, 2017**.

Confirmation Exam

The purpose of the Confirmation exam is to assess the student's knowledge of basic Catholic teachings, as well as prepare him/her for questioning by the bishop on Confirmation day. Therefore, the most integral part of the exam will treat material pertaining to the sacrament of Confirmation.

The information needed to study for the exam will be provided to students in the form of a Study Guide, which will be emailed home by **December 2016**.

The exam will take place **January 22 and January 24, 2017** for School of Religion and Private School students, and **January 23, 2017** for Blessed Sacrament School students. The test will consist of objective type questions (multiple choice, true/false, matching, and fill-in-the blank). The passing grade is 75% or higher. If the student does not pass the exam, a meeting between parents and the religion teacher will be scheduled. Special accommodations are available for students with a documented learning disability, in need of extra time or distraction-reduced environment. Please email Rosalie Days at rdays@blessedsacramentdc.org for accommodation requests.

Interview with a Member of the Clergy

The interviews will take place **January 16 – February 3, 2017**, Monday through Friday, after school from 3:00 pm to 4:30 pm in the priests' offices located on the ground floor of the Parish Center. The purpose of the interview with one of our parish priests is to ascertain the willingness and readiness of the candidate to receive the sacrament of Confirmation. It is a conversation in which the candidate may ask any further questions, in a one-to-one setting at the Parish Center. The interviews will be scheduled online and the website link will be given out in December. **Please do not call the priests directly.**

Service Projects

After the Confirmation Orientation Meeting, the candidates may start their community service. As they prepare for Confirmation they will want to use their gifts to serve others. Their attitudes and actions will indicate how they are growing in their love for Christ. Christian service should reach out beyond the family circle to the larger community. With that in mind, a requirement of twenty (20) hours of service be completed by **January 6, 2017**.

It is highly recommended, that the service begin now and continue over the summer so as not to have anyone scrambling weeks before Confirmation.

The service is to be fulfilled through two (2) or more distinct service sites. It is important that the choice of a Christian service project be something specific and practical that the student can do for others. That it involves using the student's skills and talents to meet a real need in the parish or the neighborhood; and that it is something the student gives time and effort to outside of his/her everyday responsibilities.

The student should consider the following points when planning his/her service requirements. Think about people's needs, problems, and fears and ask what he/she can do to help. Who needs time, effort, service and love from the student? What does the student have to share? Make specific plans ahead of time and carry out the project on a regular basis. When making commitments, the student should be there when he/she says he/she will be. When the project is completed, the student might look back over his/her experience and investigate other ways he/she can continue to be of service, to his/her parish and community after Confirmation.

The Service Project and Student Reflection must be submitted by **January 6, 2017**, describing your service and how you benefited from this outreach.

If students are not sure if a particular project qualifies, please email Rosalie Days at rdays@blessedsacramentdc.org for clarification. Do not be caught in a situation where the service does not meet all the requirements and there is little time left to fulfill the rest of the requirement.

Please find a list of some approved Service Project Opportunities as part of the handout. These are only suggestions. Please note that many programs require adult supervision and therefore always call ahead to arrange work.

Spring 2017

Confirmation Rehearsal

The week before Confirmation, there will be rehearsals for Group 1 and Group 2 (Date TBD). These rehearsals are **mandatory** and the sponsors should attend; if sponsors are out of town, an adult can stand in.

On the day of Confirmation, it is standard practice in the Archdiocese of Washington for the Bishop to randomly ask questions of the Confirmation candidates on some basic area related to Catholicism and/or the sacrament of Confirmation. While each bishop varies as to whether or not he will follow this practice, students are encouraged to review their Confirmation Study Guide from the Confirmation exam. The material studied from the guide will help prepare students for any questions that the Bishop may ask at the Confirmation Mass.

Confirmation Paperwork Checklist

To help parents and students keep track of the required paperwork and when it is due, please use the following checklist:

DUE NOW

- Enroll online to Confirmation Program

<https://markmccaffrey.wufoo.com/forms/confirmation-enrollment-form-20162017/>

DUE JUNE 6, 2016

- Confirmation Pledge Form
- Letter of Intent
- \$70.00 check if CHECK PAYMENT was selected and made out to Blessed Sacrament Church
- Photocopy of Baptismal certificate
(All Students must provide a copy.)

DUE ON RETREAT DAY, OCTOBER 21, 2016

- Confirmation Saint Report
- Sponsor Certification Form

DUE JANUARY 6, 2017

- Letter to Pastor
- Service Project Form and Student Reflection

CONFIRMATION PLEDGE FORM
BLESSED SACRAMENT ❖ YOUTH MINISTRY OFFICE
3630 Quesada Street, NW ❖ Washington, DC 20015

STUDENT'S NAME: _____

The Confirmation process is a year-long journey in which the Candidate is invited to expand his/her faith through prayer, service, self reflection and deeper understanding of the Church's teachings. This process necessitates a full commitment from the Candidate, Parents/Guardians and Sponsors as this Sacrament looks to examination of one's faith and participation in the life of the Church.

Candidate Pledge:

- ❖ I have read the Confirmation booklet and understand the requirements expected of me.
- ❖ It is my choice to enter into this year of preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation.
- ❖ I will fulfill the requirements set forth in the Handbook and will seek to allow the Holy Spirit to work in me through this period of preparation.

Candidate's Signature: _____

For the Parent/Guardian to sign:

I have read the Confirmation booklet and I recognize that my involvement as a parent is of special importance in preparing my child to receive the sacrament of Confirmation. Therefore, I ...

- Promise to do my best to help my child fulfill the requirements.
- Will pray for my child, and through my example will witness to the faith of the Church.
- I will help my child further his/her education in the Catholic faith after being confirmed.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Parent/Guardian Signature

SPONSOR CERTIFICATION FORM

DUE ON RETREAT DAY – October 21, 2016

Candidate's Name: _____
(PLEASE PRINT)

CANDIDATE'S INVITATION

As I begin my journey in preparation for Confirmation, I invite you to become my Sponsor, knowing that you'll be a friend and spiritual guide.

SPONSOR'S PLEDGE

I pledge that I am a practicing Catholic in good standing at

Parish Name

- ◆ Have been Baptized and Confirmed
- ◆ Practice fulfilling my Sunday Mass obligation on a regular basis
- ◆ Live in a manner that is in accord with the moral teachings of the Church

After prayerful consideration, I am willing and eager to guide this candidate. I realize my life must be a testimony of my commitment to the Lord and to the Church. If it becomes necessary, I will be responsible for the further religious education of the candidate.

Sponsor's Name: _____
(PLEASE PRINT)

Sponsor's Signature: _____

PASTOR'S CERTIFICATION

I certify that this person is an active member of the Roman Catholic Church in good standing, and not bound by any canonical penalty, and is thereby eligible to be a sponsor for Confirmation.

Parish Name: _____

Parish Seal

Pastor's Signature: _____

**The Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament,
3630 Quesada Street, NW
Washington, DC 20015
Fax Number (202) 966-9255**

CONFIRMATION SAINT REPORT OUTLINE
(Use this Form as a guide for your report)

DUE ON RETREAT DAY – October 21, 2016

Student's Name: _____

The Saint I choose to pray to and imitate and whose name I have chosen for the Sacrament of Confirmation is _____.

What is your saint's feast day in the Church? _____

What three events in the life of this saint most impress you? Why?

1.

2.

3.

Describe one outstanding virtue (a virtue is a good habit that enables a person to act with moral excellence, according to God's will) that characterizes this saint's life. How did this saint exercise this virtue? Include a brief story.

(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

In what two ways was this saint most like Jesus? Explain.

How could you follow this saint's example in your daily life today? Be specific. Give 3 examples.

1.

2.

3.

Why did you choose this Confirmation name?

Find a prayer to your saint, and include it in your report. Pray it often.

CANDIDATE INFORMATION FORM

THIS SERVICE PROJECT FORM IS **DUE JANUARY 6, 2017**

CANDIDATE'S NAME: _____

PLEASE NOTE WELL: Use a space to note each time you went to work at a service site. So, if you worked at a soup kitchen and went twice for 5 hours each time it should appear twice, once for each time you went. (NEED TOTAL OF 20)

SERVICE HOURS

Project Name/Location	Date	# of Hours Worked	Supervisor Signature	Phone # of Supervisor

TOTAL HOURS =

PLEASE REMEMBER TO FILL OUT OTHER SIDE

STUDENT REFLECTION

Think about your one of your service projects and respond to the following questions in a written reflection below.

- Briefly describe your project and why you chose it.

- What did you learn about yourself as a result of this experience?

- Read Matthew 25:14-30. Based on your experience, what does this passage teach us about the importance of service in the life of every Catholic Christian?
