

Confirmation Handbook
2010 – 2012



Our Lady of the Valley Parish
Wayne, New Jersey

CONFIRMATION PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Confirmation is a sacrament for those who have been baptized, and are continuing along the path of Christian growth into the church community. You claim as your own the life you received at baptism. The sacrament of Confirmation binds you more closely to the Church. It deepens your commitment to be a witness to Jesus, to spread and defend the faith. It celebrates the presence of the Spirit within you and intensifies the Spirit's gifts and your response to them.

Like Jesus, you will grow in wisdom, age, and grace. You will come to realize God's love for you and what great things God has done for you. When you have completed our Confirmation program, you will be ready to accept for yourself the privileges and responsibilities of a Christian.

A Confirmation candidate must be a baptized Christian who has attended sequential religious instruction from 1 through 8.

A candidate will be responsible to complete the Confirmation Preparation Program.

All candidates are expected to complete the program and have submitted all documents for confirmation preparation. Any requirements not completed by the due date may necessitate the candidate's confirmation until the following year.

If you should have any questions or requirements, please feel free to call the Parish Office at extension 7252.

Come join our journey with Christ.



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RITE OF ACCEPTANCE

To involve the whole parish community in the journey of the youth into full initiation, the Rite of Acceptance will be celebrated at a weekend liturgy during the first year of the Confirmation Program.

LITURGICAL CELEBRATIONS

You are called to be an active participant in the communal life of your church. Sunday liturgy is the way to experience community, as well as deepen your faith and spirituality. As a candidate in the sacramental preparation program for Confirmation, you are required and expected to attend weekend liturgy.

FAITH THEME CLASSES

The Faith Theme Classes are where you will begin to grow as the young adults of our parish community and truly understand the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit and understand God's love for you and our community. The faith theme classes are presented in various forms: these experiences will deepen your commitment to be a witness to Jesus and to spread and defend your faith. Sharing of your beliefs will help each other integrate your past learning with your lived experience as you prepare to be confirmed in your faith. During the monthly meetings, the students will also have the opportunity to pray together. Students will be responsible for any work assigned for a particular Faith Theme.

ATTENDANCE

*Confirmation candidates are **REQUIRED** to attend all of the faith theme classes, both small and large group meetings, retreat and required service hours. They are expected to **be on time for meetings and prepared for the class.** Leaving a class early is not permitted. If the student can not attend a meeting due to **illness** or a **family emergency**, a parent/guardian must notify the candidate's catechist that the student will be absent. [***Sports events/practices, trips, weekends away, homework, and all other reasons are not acceptable for being absent.***]*

A make-up assignment must be completed for any session missed regardless of the reason. It is the responsibility of the candidate to contact their catechist and get the make-up assignment. The assignment must be handed in at the next class session.

If a candidate misses two sessions over the two year period, the candidate and his/her parents/guardians will meet with the Youth Minister concerning continued participation in the program.

REGISTRATION / TUITION INFORMATION

The Confirmation Program at our Lady of the Valley Parish begins in September of the candidate's freshman year of high school and continues through October of his/her junior year of high school. It has been the custom at OLV that the Sacrament of Confirmation is conferred in October, but the date is set by the Bishop's office.

If a student chooses to enter the Confirmation Program at a later date they are still required to fulfill two full years of catechesis and would be eligible to be confirmed in the fall of the third year.

For Year I of the Confirmation Program the tuition fee is \$140.00.

Each candidate must re-register for Year II of the Confirmation Program.

Re-registration forms will be mailed in May.

The tuition fee for Year II will be \$120.00.

For Year III of the Confirmation Program a Sacramental fee of \$75.00 will be assessed. This fee will cover the cost of flowers, programs, Confirmation reception and a Sponsor-Candidate event.

The cost of the Confirmation retreat will be an additional fee.

All classes will be held either in the Church, the rectory, the school or the parish center.

To ensure the safety of our young people and in compliance with diocesan policy, all adult volunteers (Catechists and others involved in the Confirmation Program) have been fingerprinted and background checked. Additionally, they have attended the diocesan workshop, "Protecting God's Children" and have registered for online follow ups.

CONDUCT / DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

Good manners and polite language will be used at all times. All people will be treated with courtesy and respect. The Catechist and Director of Confirmation reserve the right to discipline students who through their lack of responsible behavior and conduct, infringe upon the rights of others. The Director of Confirmation and the Pastor determine the seriousness of the offense and impose appropriate sanctions, which may include expulsion from the program. After discussion and deliberations, a judgment will be made in each individual case for offenses that disturb the general good order of the Confirmation Program. If a student shows a consistent pattern of behavior unbecoming to a candidate for Confirmation, he/she may be asked to withdraw from the Confirmation Program.

SERVICE

In order to help our young people understand the important role that service to those in need plays in the life of a Christian, each candidate will be expected to fulfill the following requirements:

FIRST YEAR:

- ***Preakness Health Care Center*** – 5 sessions - Each session may be slightly under 2 hours or slightly over 2 hours. The sessions are scheduled from September through August on Sunday mornings - (Class schedules will be mailed in September.)
This is a mandatory service and can not be substituted.
- 10 Additional Hours of **Community** Service to the OLV or Wayne Community.

SECOND YEAR:

- ***New Jersey Community Food Bank*** – 2 hours on Saturday in November. (Date to be announced in September.)
This is a mandatory service and can not be substituted.
- 10 Additional Hours of **Community** Service to the OLV or Wayne Community.

Please Note:

1. All service hours must be documented on the green Service Hours – Verification Form and signed by person supervising candidate. (Signature must be other than parent/guardian.)
2. Service hours required by the local high schools can not be used for Confirmation service.
3. Service hours must be done for the Wayne community, such as Safety Town, Wayne library, Habitat for Humanity, Boys & Girls Club, PAL, START, FOWA etc... and the candidate must do this service without receiving any payment for their time.
4. Any service performed for the Church community is acceptable, such as Ministers of Hospitality, Babysitting during Mass, Choir, Altar Server, Living Stations, Lectors, CCD teachers/aides, First Saturday, Day with St. Nick, After School Care, Parish Festival, etc.
5. Ongoing service opportunities will be listed in the weekly church bulletin.
6. **Service hours which will not be accepted: Chores at home, babysitting within the family member or friends, lawn and yard work for family or friends, bible school at another church.**

RETREAT

*Our Lady of the Valley Confirmation Program requires each candidate to attend a Retreat Experience in preparation for Confirmation. **All retreats must be made at Our Lady of the Valley Parish only.** In order to be credited with fulfilling the retreat requirement, the candidate must be in attendance for the entire retreat.*

Late arrivals and/or early departures will void the fulfillment of this requirement.

Our Confirmation Program offers the following Antioch Retreat:

*The **Antioch Retreat** begins on Friday evening and ends on Sunday afternoon. It is an overnight weekend experience which fosters a sense of community among the young people and gives the candidates an opportunity to establish a closer relationship with God and their peers. The Antioch Retreat offers the best example of communal Christian experience. This retreat is offered in the Fall and Spring of each year. Dates will be announced in September.*

Catholic High School retreats do not fulfill this requirement.

Regrettably, no exceptions will be made to this policy.

CANDIDATE'S DESIRE TO BE CONFIRMED

Each candidate will be asked to write a letter to the Pastor requesting the Sacrament of Confirmation. In the text of the letter it should include the following:

- a. Why do I want to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation?*
- b. What does the Sacrament of Confirmation mean to me?*
- c. What have I learned about the Sacrament of Confirmation during the two years of preparation?*
- d. What impact has being of service to God's people had on me?*
- e. Who have I chosen to be my sponsor, their relationship to me, and why I chose him/her.*

The letter should be no less than two type-written pages. The letters will be reviewed by the Director of Confirmation before the candidate's final interview.

CONFIRMATION INTERVIEWS

In June at the end of the second year of preparation, each candidate will be interviewed by the Director of Confirmation to insure readiness of the candidate to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. No candidate will be interviewed until all forms, make-up assignments, service hours, attendance and the letter to the pastor has been handed in.

All of the above must be handed in to the candidate's catechist no later than May 1st of the second year of preparation.

CONFIRMATION OFFICE

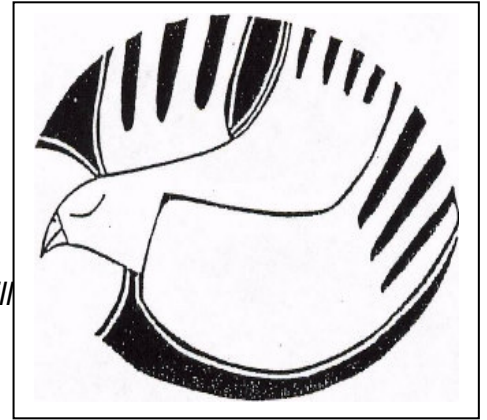
The Confirmation Office is located in the Parish Center on the second floor. My assistant, Pat Malecki, is in the office on Wednesday afternoons, between the hours of 2 and 7:00 p.m. The telephone number for the office is 973-696-8307, extension 7252. If no one is in the office at the time of your call please leave your name, your child's name, the grade they are in and why you are calling. Either Pat or I will return your call as soon as possible.

When sending in paperwork for your child, please place it in an envelope with your child's name, his/her catechist's name on the front of the envelope and leave it on the back porch of the Parish Center in the box marked Confirmation.

In the event of an emergency, please call the Parish Secretary and she will contact us immediately so that we may return your phone call.



OUR LADY OF THE VALLY PARISH
CONFIRMATION PROGRAM



REQUIREMENTS FOR ACCEPTANCE

1. A confirmation candidate must have sequential attendance in the Religious Education Program in grades 1-8.
2. Any candidate who does not meet the above requirement will be evaluated and may be required to attend supplemental classes prior to enrollment in the Confirmation Program.
3. A candidate must be willing to participate fully in ALL PHASES of the Confirmation Program.
4. NOTE: No candidate will be accepted simply because of age.
5. A candidate in the Confirmation Preparation Program WILL NOT AUTOMATICALLY receive the Sacrament of Confirmation unless certain requirements are met.

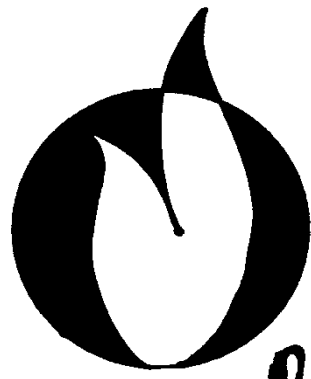
REQUIREMENTS FOR RECEPTION OF THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION

A baptized person may receive the Sacrament of Confirmation when evidence of readiness on the part of the candidate has been demonstrated.

EVIDENCE OF READINESS INCLUDES:

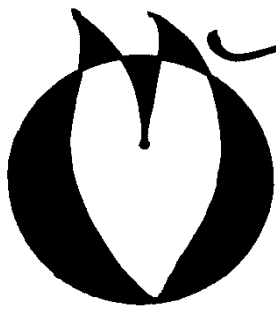
1. An understanding of the Sacrament of Confirmation as a personal commitment to assume fuller responsibility in the community, and in the ministry and service aspects of parish life.
2. A sense of unity with the parish community as evidenced by full participation in the Liturgy and the Eucharist, with an awareness of what is taking place. The willingness to celebrate Eucharist with the community each week can be seen as one of the criteria by which a candidate can judge his/her own readiness to celebrate Confirmation.
3. A basic understanding of Christianity including a deepened awareness of Jesus. His teachings and the role of the Church in continuing His mission. The candidate should be able to express his faith in ways which others can understand and appreciate.
4. A witnessing in the way the candidate lives a Christian life. The candidate may be called upon to witness to his/her faith in a world often dominated by outside pressures. His/her actions should reflect a loving reverence for God and God's law.
5. Total participation in all aspects of the Confirmation Preparation Program including: retreats, faith theme sessions, interviews, service components, and liturgical celebrations.

THE DETERMINATION FOR READINESS IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PASTOR, THE CO-ORDINATORS OF THE CONFIRMATION PROGRAM AND THE SPONSOR CATECHISTS.



Give
us
hearts

and



tongues

of
fire



to
praise
and
praise
and love