

2018/2019 St. Joseph & Nativity Parishes Confirmation Guidelines

Confirmation of teens is offered for those young adults, grades 8 and up, wishing to complete their Initiation into the Catholic Church. Traditionally, Confirmation is celebrated during their Eighth Grade Year. These parishioners (both from St. Joseph Parish School, and St. Joseph & Nativity PSR) take part in a parish-based preparation process for the reception of this sacrament and regular attendance is a big part of the preparation process and attendance each session is tracked and recorded. Contact the Religious Education Office for more information.

Confirmation Saint Essay:

Each candidate is asked to write a short one page three paragraph essay, **essays should be typed not hand written**, about the saint they've chosen who's name they will take on their Confirmation day. All candidates for confirmation are encouraged to select a saint that inspires them, who they relate to or who has had some kind of influence in their lives. Perhaps there is a family name that means something to you. However, you have come to choose the particular saint is up to you. We would like to hear why this saint has made an impact on your life.

Confirmation Service Component:

Service to God and one another are essential to being Catholic Christians. Information on Catholic Social Teachings are available at any time. Please ask, as there are a variety of resources on these teachings. Students preparing to receive the sacrament of Confirmation at St. Joseph (this includes those from Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary) are asked to participate in at least 3 service experiences, to reflect thoughtfully on those experiences, to put those reflections into writing and to turn them into the Religious Education Office. Please read the Confirmation Service Experience Overview that is contained in this packet. Once you have completed your service experience, prepare answers to the reflection questions. If you have questions about the service component of our preparation, contact Carol Wallington, our Director of Religious Education, at the Religious Education Office.

Service Opportunities:

There will be many opportunities to serve during the coming year – but do not procrastinate!! Read the parish bulletin and check the parish website regularly to see what upcoming events need volunteer assistance. Attend the Ministry Fair when we have them. Read the newspaper to see what is happening in the greater communities of Amherst and South Amherst. **It is your responsibility to find the opportunities to fulfill the service requirement for Confirmation. Start early!!**

Parent Responsibilities:

We ask all of our parents to walk this journey with each of your Confirmation Candidates. You are their first teachers and your examples are the best way for them to continue on in their faith. There is a parent component to our Confirmation program. In the seventh (7th) grade year parents will receive a parent book that goes along with each session in the student books, so they know and understand what their child is experiencing in this program. There are many

helpful tips and resources in this book for parents. This book will be with you through to your Confirmation Candidate's Confirmation Day so keep it in a safe place.

We also want to encourage you to participate in the service experiences with your child. If they see you serving others they are more likely to continue this practice as they get older. This can be a wonderful experience for all of you and some time for you to connect with one another.

In addition, there will be a **MANDATORY** parent information education session & meeting held in the beginning of the preparation program and process. This session will be held at St. Joseph on **Sunday, September 23, 2018 after the 11:00 AM Mass in the MPR Room of the school.** We require you to attend so that you can get the most out of our program and understand what is expected of you & your candidate.

Sponsor Responsibilities:

You as the sponsor are a critical piece in the journey for our candidates. You have the honor of standing up with your candidate on their Confirmation day, the day they say "yes" to walking a lifelong relationship with God. Sponsor expectations are as follows:

1. Sponsors must be at least 16 years of age, have received all the Sacraments of Initiation themselves (Baptism, Eucharist and Confirmation), be actively practicing the Catholic faith, and be in a valid Catholic marriage if they are married. A valid Catholic marriage is one that has been blessed and approved by the Catholic church. If your sponsor has been divorced and remarried an annulment must have been procured and the new marriage blessed (convalidated) in the Catholic Church. If you need assistance in procuring an annulment or a convalidation to serve as a sponsor for someone please call the St. Joseph or Nativity Parish offices at (440) 988-2848 and we will be happy to assist you!
2. If you are not a parishioner at St. Joseph or Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary you will need to request a sponsor certificate or letter from the parish where you are actively practicing your faith. **(We do not need YOUR Baptismal Certificate).**

We want to encourage you to stay in contact with your candidate. We are providing a sponsor book for you, so you can see what your candidate is learning and help engage them in conversation and activities together. We also want to encourage you if you are able to participate in the service experiences with your candidate. This is a great way to spend some time together and help them understand that as Catholic Christians service is part of their life long faith journey.

Any and all questions about these guidelines should be directed to our Director of Religious Education, Carol Wallington, dre@stjosephamherst.com, (440) 988-2848 ext. 242.

Confirmation Service Experience – Overview

Students preparing to receive the sacrament of Confirmation at St. Joseph Parish & Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish are asked to become more involved in service both at the parish and community levels. We know you already have service experiences at your school. As part of your sacramental preparation, please take time to experience service at both St. Joseph Parish and Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish beginning in **September 2018**. We ask that all Confirmation candidates have **at least three service experiences, and that one experience should include your Confirmation sponsor and or a parent/guardian:**

- One at the parish level, which means St. Joseph Parish or Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish
- One at your school
- One within the larger Amherst/South Amherst community

The experience with your sponsor may occur at the parish, school and community or in the greater Amherst or South Amherst area. This is a great time for sponsors and students to explore service opportunities in other areas. **Service at home or for family members is encouraged daily but is really part of being a family member. These do not count for your Confirmation service experience.** Please use Confirmation service as an opportunity to open new doors for service. The ability to serve others should be ongoing and your experiences should never end. As a result, we do not ask for a specific number of hours. Our goal is for you to understand the need to help others always.

Once you complete a service experience, please answer the Service Reflection Questions contained in this packet and found on the St. Joseph Parish website (www.stjosephamherst.com/confirmation), and turn in your completed service essay within one week of completing the service experience. You may drop it off at the St. Joseph Parish Office or mail it to Ms. Wallington at St. Joseph Parish, Religious Education Office, 200 St. Joseph Drive, Amherst, OH 44001. Please note that Fr. Tim and others may read your reflection papers, so do your best work. We ask that you put some thought into your reflections, use complete sentences and make your reflections at least one paragraph (minimum of four sentences) in length.

In order to assist you in finding service experiences in both of our parishes, please read the bulletin, visit the stewardship page (www.stjosephamherst.com/stewardship) to see our joint parish ministry guide and for contact information for the various ministries. Contact the person or persons in charge directly and sign up to help.

Take a proactive approach to finding service experiences. Do not wait around to be told which experiences are available; look for opportunities to serve. Also, do not wait until

the last minute. As we get closer to Confirmation experiences may be limited and we want you to have enough time to thoughtfully complete your service experience.

Some suggestions for Service Experiences at St. Joseph Parish & Nativity Parish:

Parish Picnic, Parish Dinners, decorating for specific holidays/feast days, Fish Fry, Steak Fry, First Communion Reception, Hospitality/Donut Sundays, Choir, Ushers, Altar Servers, Lectors, Advent Giving Trees, Parish Mission, Parish Gardeners, Vacation Bible School...and many more! There are countless ways to help live out your faith within our parish communities.

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