

Living the Sacramental Commitment

Year 1

Dear Confirmation Candidates, Parents and Sponsors:

***May the grace and peace of God our Father,
the Love of Jesus his Son
and the communion of the Holy Spirit
be with you on your journey.***

Welcome to Living the Sacramental Commitment, our parish's Confirmation preparation ***journey***. Preparation for Confirmation is a journey. Note that ***journey*** is defined as a forward movement of a person that brings him/her closer to their destiny, their goal.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (1309) explains the preparation for Confirmation "should aim at leading the Christian toward a more intimate union with Christ and a more lively familiarity with the Holy Spirit.

The concept of ***Journey*** is a powerful one for people of faith because the very journey in and of itself, becomes our point of encounter with God. In truth, ***Journey*** offers us new experiences, teaches us new insights, and introduces us to new people who bring us closer to God and His Church through study and practice of the Catholic faith.

As every journey involves planning and mapping out of the course, we would like to suggest a spiritual pre-planning activity. Would you, the Confirmation candidate, with your family and/or sponsor, read the following Scripture passages:

- ***From the book of Genesis, Chapter 12 verses 1-9, the calling of Abram.***
- ***From the Gospel of John, Chapter 1 verses 35-42, the calling of the first disciples.***

You are embarking on something bold! So, before you begin, take the time to pray and reflect on the journey that you are about to undertake. Ask the Holy Spirit to be your guide and strength throughout the journey.

On a practical point, this workbook will be your guide to understanding the life commitment you make to the Church in the reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation. It will help you to expand your knowledge and understanding of faith in God. It will also give you the opportunity to put into practice all that you have learned on your journey. Your book has pages which you will hand in during the year. This will assist us in monitoring your work as well as giving you an opportunity to show your interest in deepening your commitment. The book should not be looked at as “tasks” to get done; but rather, as a milestone on a faith journey that will lead you to the celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Know that the parish community will be praying for you during this journey. May the Holy Spirit enlighten your mind and open your heart.

Rev. Fr. Nicholas Zientarski
Pastor

Mr. James LaRocca
Confirmation Coordinator

Sr. Joan Klimski, O.P.
Director of Religious Education

Mrs. Anne Lederer
School Principal

“Please note that if you have any difficulty with any part of this workbook, please contact the Religious Education Office at 223-5813 or Mr. LaRocca directly at jaLarocca11@gmail.com”.

Confirmation Preparation Process Guidelines and Expectations

- Each Confirmation candidate enrolled in our parish Confirmation Preparation Process will receive the following books:

Year 1: CALLED TO WITNESS

Year 2: ALIVE IN OUR FAITH

- The books are designed to complement the candidate's "classroom" instruction as presented by his/her catechist. Therefore, the book ***CALLED TO WITNESS*** will be presented to the Confirmation candidate in the fall as he/she enters the preparation process.
- The format of these books consists of various projects, to be completed during the course of the year. Each project is explained in detail throughout the book. Read through it all and plan out your journey. Your book will be reviewed by the catechetical leaders in the parish. Please see dates that the booklet is to be turned in to the classroom teacher.
- It is our hope that candidates, their parents and their sponsor will work together on projects contained in these workbooks.

Table of Contents

Basics (pgs. 5-7)

Booklet will be handed in to your classroom teacher 2x as follows:

Religious Education: January 23 in class (hand in workbook with the first 4 projects completed) & **April 24** (entire workbook completed and handed in).

Students attending the Latin School may hand their booklet in at the
Grade Level Masses on 2/11 and 4/8

Projects

- #1 **Baptism-History & Reflection (pages 8-11)**
This project has **4 parts** & each is required
for the project to be complete!

- #2 **Reflections on Eucharist (pages 12-15)**
This project has **2 parts** and each one is required
for the project to be complete!
One Reflection in Ordinary Time & **One** Reflection in Advent

- #3 **Reconciliation Reflection (pages 16-17)**

- #4 **Reflection on a Saint (page 18)**

- #5 **Service/Ministry Reflection & Description
of Service Hours (pages 19-23)**
This project has **2 parts** & each is required
for the project to be complete!

- #6 **Confirmation Sponsor (pages 24-26)**

- #7 **Prayer Experience (pages 27-28)**

BASICS (Things we should know)

SIGN OF THE CROSS

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

OUR FATHER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

HAIL MARY

Hail Mary, full of grace, The Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

GLORY BE

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning is now, and will be forever. Amen

ACT OF CONTRITION

My God, I am sorry for my sins with all my heart. In choosing to do wrong and failing to do good, I have sinned against you whom I should love above all things. I firmly intend, with your help, to do penance, to sin no more and to avoid whatever leads me to sin. Our Savior, Jesus Christ, suffered and died for us, in his name my God, have mercy.

THE CREED

PROFESSION OF FAITH

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty maker of heaven and earth, of all that is seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven: By the power of the Holy Spirit he was born of the Virgin Mary, and became man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered, died and was buried. On the third day he rose again in fulfillment of the Scriptures; He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshipped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets. We believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen

BIBLE

The Bible is a “Library” of books: 73 in all: 46 in the Old Testament and 27 in the New Testament.

Two ‘Sections’: Old Testament: Hebrew (Jewish) Scriptures
New Testament: Christian Scriptures

The Old Testament is the story of God’s Covenant with His people (Jewish). The key event for the Jewish people, which revealed God’s love for them, is the **EXODUS** from their slavery in Egypt. In this story we find the Passover, the Red Sea, the giving of the Ten Commandments, Moses and the promise of a Land flowing with milk and honey, which was to be their own—*The Promised Land*.

The Old Testament books are a collection of MYTHS (stories as in Genesis 1-11), Poetry, Psalms, historical books (as in Chronicles, Samuel, Kings), Proverbs, Prophetic books (as in Isaiah, Jeremiah) and the Apocalyptic books (as in Daniel).

The New Testament is the story of God dwelling in the flesh, Jesus and the final action of God to reconcile humanity to Himself through Jesus’ Life, Death and Resurrection (*The Paschal Mystery*).

The New Testament books are a collection of gospels, epistles (letters written by St. Paul to various Christian communities), historical (Acts of the Apostles) and apocalyptic (Revelation).

THE FOUR EVANGELISTS (writers of the Gospels)

Matthew, Mark, Luke and John

HOLY WEEK

- **Palm Sunday** Jesus enters Jerusalem
- **Spy Wednesday** Judas Iscariot makes arrangements to betray Jesus for 30 pieces of silver
- **Holy Thursday** Jesus celebrates the last supper with the twelve apostles
- **Good Friday** Jesus is tried and condemned to die upon the cross, by the Roman Governor, Pontius Pilate, as a criminal. **INRI** is the charge: Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews
- **Holy Saturday** Jesus is in the tomb
- **Easter Sunday** Jesus rises from the dead

Ascension Thursday - 40 days after Easter, the day Jesus ascended into heaven.

Pentecost - 50 days after Easter, the sending of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles as Jesus promised. The empowerment of the Church to give witness to Jesus as Lord.

THE SEVEN SACRAMENTS

Initiation (3): Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Eucharist

Healing (2): Reconciliation, Sacrament of the Sick

Vocation (2): Holy Orders, Holy Matrimony

Reconciliation is also known as *Penance and/or Confession*

Eucharist is a Greek word meaning *thanksgiving*. It is used as the proper word for the ritual action we more commonly call *the Mass* (which is itself a Latin word taken from the last action in the Eucharist—the blessing and dismissal; in Latin called *missio*). The *Eucharist* is the Christian Passover—life in and through the Blood of Christ and His sacrifice upon the Cross.

Project #1 - Baptism History - Part 1

In the sacrament of Baptism, the Church welcomes children and adults into the faith community. In infant Baptism, the priest or deacon asks the parents, "What do you ask of God's Church for your child?" The response to this is "faith," "baptism," "entrance into the community of faith." The gift of faith comes to you from God through the Church and the community of believers, your family and the parish family. The gift of faith must be accepted if it is to be truly a gift for you.

At Baptism, your parents and godparents accepted this gift in your name. They promised to nurture you in the faith of the Church and help you to understand this gift by their lived example, so that one day you would be able to accept it yourself.

The sacrament of Baptism is the first step of our faith journey. It is probably one of the most important steps of that journey.

Ask your parents to tell you about the day you were baptized.

- What were their hopes and dreams for you in faith?
- Ask for a copy of your baptismal certificate and fill in all of the following information:

BAPTISMAL NAME: _____

WHO WERE YOU NAMED FOR: _____
(WHAT FAMILY MEMBER OR SAINT)

CHURCH OF BAPTISM: _____

DATE OF BAPTISM: _____

PRIEST/DEACON: _____

GODPARENTS: _____

Project #1 - Baptism - Part 2

Ask your parents to write a letter to you stating how they will continue their promise, made at your baptism, to help you grow in faith and in love of God.

(Attach it to this page)

Project #1 - Baptism - Part 3

Ask one of your godparents (if possible) to write a brief note to you about how they feel about being your godparent.

(Attach it to this page)

Project #1 - Reflection on Baptism - Part 4

Each candidate must attend a parish celebration of Baptism and then write a reflection on what they saw and how they felt as they watched the ceremony. The candidate's reflection should include their impressions of the ceremony's dynamics and their thinking on why the Presider (priest or deacon) did what he did (e.g.: the questioning of the parent's intention; the presence of the Paschal Candle; the giving of a candle; the blessing of the senses; etc. We remind the candidates to review the **Baptism** section of this workbook, especially the material about their parent's promise and reasons for their receiving their name.

Our parish celebrates Baptisms **on the second, third and fourth Sunday at 2:00 pm** and **on the second and third Saturday at 1:00 p.m. in the Church**. Be sure to call the Rectory at 223-0723 before attending a service to make sure that there will be a celebration of Baptism that particular day.

- *If there is a Baptism of a family member or friend that you attend **this year**, you may reflect on that experience.*

***NOTE:**

It is recommended that you attend a Baptism early on (in October or November) **of this year** as December and January are typically light months for the celebration of the Sacrament.

Project #2

Reflections on the celebration of Eucharist

The Sunday Liturgy (**Mass**) is the gathering of the faithful to pray and give praise to God. During the liturgy we hear the Word of God proclaimed; the Celebrant (Priest) or Deacon shares his thoughts on the Word so that we may take the Word with us as we leave the Church. One way for us to truly live out the Word of God is to spend time reflecting on what these words mean to us.

Each candidate, with the help of his/her parent(s), must write a reflection on the Gospel and homily for two (2) Masses during the year:

- ♦ (1) Mass during Ordinary Time
- ♦ (1) Mass during Christmas

There are designated pages in this book for your reflection.

Suggestions on how to write these papers:

- Write down the Scripture reference (e.g. Luke 5:1-5) of the Gospel so you can refer back to it when you are writing your paper.
- Discuss what you heard and write it down on the way home in the car, asking everyone to participate.
- Ask yourself and your family what the Scripture and homily has to do with your life today.
- When you get home, write your reflection in your workbook while it is fresh in your mind.

Remember, this is a reflection paper; what you write is what you feel the Scripture is saying to YOU at this moment of your life's journey.

Project #2

“SAMPLE” - Mass Reflection

Date: January 6 (Epiphany) Time: 9:30 am Mass
Celebrant: Fr. Zientarski
Gospel Evangelist: Matthew Citation (Chapter & Verse) 2:1-11

Brief Summary of the Gospel:

The Magi come searching for the King of the Jews. They followed a star and found Jesus in the city of Bethlehem. They offered Him gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

Reflection on what the Gospel means for you. How does it challenge you and your lifestyle?

It makes me ask the question of how faithful I am in following/searching for Jesus in my own life.

The Kings come to Jesus through a star whose light lead them. How do I come to Jesus, what leads me to Him? Parents, Church, friends, nature? What are the signs that direct me to Jesus and allow me to proclaim Him the King, the Lord and truth of my life?

The Gospel also makes me ask – “What are the gifts that I offer to Jesus?” “How willing am I to offer them to Jesus or other people?” I guess my gift is my time with my family, especially when I help out at home. Also my being respectful of other people, especially if they are different from me.

Most importantly it is to be like the Kings and listen to how God calls me to come to Him, to follow Him. So I know that it is important to make sure I pray every day and go to Mass.

Project #2 - Part 1

SUNDAY MASS REFLECTION in Ordinary Time

Date: _____ Time: _____

Celebrant (Priest's Name): _____

Gospel Evangelist: _____ (Chapter & verse): _____

Brief Summary of the Gospel:

What the Gospel means for you.

How does the Gospel challenge you and your lifestyle?

Project #2 - Part 2

MASS REFLECTION for Advent OR Christmas

Date: _____ Time: _____

Celebrant (Priest's Name): _____

Gospel Evangelist: _____ (Chapter & verse): _____

Brief Summary of the Gospel:

What the Gospel means for you.

How does the Gospel challenge you and your lifestyle?

Project #3

Reconciliation Reflection

The Sacrament of Reconciliation (Penance) is one of the few sacraments that we can receive more than once in our lifetime. It is a wonderful experience of God's mercy and love for each of us. Many young people who receive this sacrament say that it lifts the burdens of their hearts. Although many young people struggle with this sacrament because they do not understand it, it is important for all Catholics to participate regularly. Jesus told his apostles, "Whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven." This established the apostles, and today, priests, as the representatives within the Christian family invested with the power of forgiving sins in Jesus' name.

Each Confirmation candidate is **strongly encouraged** to celebrate this great sacrament of God's healing forgiveness and love often during the course of his/her journey.

Project #5

Level I Confirmation

Community Service Project Guidelines

Service is based on the spiritual and corporal works of mercy and, most of all, on the example of Christ, who came to serve. When giving service, the following points should be considered:

- Your service is not just a job to be done. It is selflessly and lovingly helping those in need.
- You should reflect on how your service project is helping you take on the mind and heart of Christ, fulfill the needs of others and build up the Christian Community.
- The giving of service should continue after your Confirmation and all through your life.

Below are listed suggestions of ways you can serve others selflessly without pay.

- Visit the elderly in a senior citizen center, residences or home.
- Perform volunteer work in your neighborhood or school
- Help a handicapped person or support the family of a handicapped child by playing or caring for the child.
- Participate in a walk-a-thon to support your favorite charity.
- Contribute our services to your local library.
- Initiate a clean-up campaign in a local playground, park etc.
- Help a teacher before or after school.
- Visit with and help to take care of someone who is sick.
- Care for lawns, rake leaves or clear snow for elderly or sick neighbors.
- Do some service for senior citizens or shut-ins in your neighborhood by shopping, gardening or housekeeping.
- Volunteer in a homeless shelter or food pantry.
- Contribute your services to your Parish (223-0723) assisting in the Pantry or as an Altar Server.

Project #5

Community Service Project

Each candidate is required to complete a minimum of 10 HOURS of service each year for a total of 20 hours. The 10 hours MUST come from a combination of projects.

No community service hours will be given for household chores done for any immediate family members.

Other projects must be approved by the Religious Education Office as a suitable Apostolic Service.

Project #5 - Level I Community Service Reflection

(a copy of this page must be submitted with every project)

Candidate's Name: _____

Service Project: _____

Organization's Contact Person: _____

Phone Number: _____

Dates & Times Service Performed: _____

Signature of Contact Person: _____

(will not be accepted without this signature)

Describe your experience during the service project. What happened? What did you learn? What gifts and talents did you share with others?

Student Signature: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____

***(Extra copies are available in the Religious Education Office and
Religious Education webpage: <http://stchrisreligion.weebly.com>)***

***Project #5 - Level I
Community Service Reflection***

(a copy of this page must be submitted with every project)

Candidate's Name: _____

Service Project: _____

Organization's Contact Person: _____

Phone Number: _____

Dates & Times Service Performed: _____

Signature of Contact Person: _____

(will not be accepted without this signature)

Describe your experience during the service project. What happened? What did you learn? What gifts and talents did you share with others?

Student Signature: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____

***(Extra copies are available in the Religious Education Office and
Religious Education webpage: <http://stchrisreligion.weebly.com>)***

***Project #5 - Level I
Community Service Reflection***

(a copy of this page must be submitted with every project)

Candidate's Name: _____

Service Project: _____

Organization's Contact Person: _____

Phone Number: _____

Dates & Times Service Performed: _____

Signature of Contact Person: _____

(will not be accepted without this signature)

Describe your experience during the service project. What happened? What did you learn? What gifts and talents did you share with others?

Student Signature: _____

Parent Signature: _____

Date: _____

***(Extra copies are available in the Religious Education Office and
Religious Education webpage: <http://stchrisreligion.weebly.com>)***

Project #6

Confirmation Sponsor

The final choice of a sponsor for the reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation will take place in Project #1 of the Level II Workbook.

During the preparation for the reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation, each candidate must choose a sponsor. A sponsor's role is that of one companioning the candidate throughout the preparation time.

In choosing a sponsor, the Church's law gives us some requirements that must be met:

- *A sponsor must be at least sixteen years of age.*
- *A sponsor must be fully initiated Catholic (one who has celebrated Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist) who "leads a life in harmony with the faith and the role to be undertaken."*
- *A sponsor must not be bound by any Church penalty (i.e. married outside the Church (a civil marriage), divorced and remarried without an annulment.*
- *A sponsor must not be a parent of the one to be confirmed*

It is also important to reflect on the following characteristics when choosing a sponsor:

- *Local residency, to ensure consistent involvement throughout the Confirmation process.*
- *A positive and comfortable relationship with the candidate.*
- *A willingness and capacity to engage in the Confirmation process as a means of enhancing his or her own growth as a Catholic Christian adult.*

The person you choose for your sponsor should be willing to participate with you in the preparation for the sacrament. If they are not able to, you may consider choosing someone to act as a "proxy" for the preparation period. Inviting your sponsor to prayer nights, community service projects, and the Confirmation Commitment Prayer Service will give him/her an opportunity to join you during this journey, rather than just having him/her "check-up" on you about fulfilling your obligations.

It is our hope that when you choose a sponsor for Confirmation you will look to someone who will be a good listener, a guide and confidant; a person who is interested in not only your growth as a Christian, but willing to grow in faith along with you.

FOR NOW - *we would only ask you to consider two or three people you would consider asking to be your sponsor. Who are they? What is special about them that you would consider asking them to be your sponsor?*

Project #6

Whom might you choose as your Sponsor?

Name: _____ *Relation:* _____

Characteristics:

Name: _____ *Relation:* _____

Characteristics:

Name: _____ *Relation:* _____

Characteristics:

Project #7

Prayer Service Reflection

In preparation for the reception of Confirmation, each candidate should strive to deepen his/her own faith, develop his/her own prayer life and participate in the communal prayer services of the parish community.

*In this stage of the Confirmation Preparation process (Year 1), **the candidate is required to attend ONE of the following:***

PARISH PRAYER EXPERIENCES

◆ **Advent or Lent Evening Prayer:**

- *See bulletin or contact rectory at 223-0723*

◆ **Holy Hour Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament:**

- *First Friday evening of every month at 8:00 p.m.*

◆ **Stations of the Cross:**

- *During the Season of Lent on Friday evenings – may be experienced as part of regular class sessions*

◆ **Creative Ministries:**

- *Tuesday, March 27th -Stations of the Cross led by the Creative Ministries Prayer Group*

Write a reflection on the PRAYER EXPERIENCE that you attended.

- ***What happened?***
- ***Who attended?***
- ***How did you feel?***
- ***Would you go to that kind of a prayer experience again?***
- ***Why or why not?***

