



Holy Trinity Parish
Confirmation Formation Process
2017 - 2019

Introduction

Welcome to the formation process for the Sacrament of Confirmation to be celebrated in the Fall of 2019! Our goal in this process is to assist candidates, with the help of their parents, sponsors and the whole community, in a journey leading to full initiation in the Catholic Church as disciples of Jesus Christ. In this Sacrament, the newly confirmed experience the fullness of the gifts of the Holy Spirit (already received in Baptism) to help them as they continue to grow in faith throughout their lives as disciples of Jesus. The process involves the following components:

- Catechesis
- Choice of a sponsor to act as a mentor for discipleship
- Choice of a saint to imitate
- Retreat
- Service

Each of these components will be explained in further detail in this booklet. Know that the parish and staff hold you in prayer as you undertake this important journey to full initiation in the Catholic Church.

Catechesis

The catechetical component of our formation process is twofold:

1. Life Nights
 - a. Our parish offers LifeNights about three times a month during the school year as the primary form of catechesis for those who do not attend Dowling Catholic High School AND as our youth ministry program. Students who do not attend Dowling Catholic will be required to participate in a minimum of SIX LifeNights during their freshman year and a minimum of SIX LifeNights during their sophomore year. Of course, it is our hope that all high school students will participate in as many LifeNights as possible, but six is the minimum.
 - b. Recognizing that Dowling Catholic High School students take Catholic theology courses every semester AND that formation for Confirmation requires that the young person be involved in their parish youth ministry program, Dowling Catholic students will be required to attend a minimum of THREE LifeNights during their freshman year and a

minimum of THREE LifeNights during their sophomore year. Again, it is hoped that students will attend many more, but three is the minimum.

2. Immediate Catechesis for Confirmation

Those preparing for the Sacrament of Confirmation need an understanding of the Sacrament and its symbols, and how the Confirmation liturgy is celebrated, as well as a deepening of their relationship with the Holy Spirit. This “immediate preparation” as it is called, will span the freshman and sophomore years over the course of ten to twelve Wednesdays (none of which will be LifeNights). The curriculum to be used for the immediate catechesis is from the same publisher as LifeTeen and will blend nicely with that program.

The schedule of this year’s Confirmation meetings is on p. 6. The LifeTeen schedule will be published soon, and will be emailed to all participants.

Choice of a Sponsor to Act as Mentor for Discipleship

Canon Law states that a sponsor for Confirmation must meet the following criteria:

- A confirmed, practicing Catholic
- At least 16 years of age
- NOT the parent of the candidate

Please keep in mind that these are *minimum* requirements. Choose someone who is an **excellent** example and mentor of active discipleship in the Catholic Church. Make sure this individual has the time to meet with the candidate several times over the two year formation process. These meetings may be facilitated by electronic communications (Skype, FaceTime, phone conversations, etc.) and need not all be in person meetings if the person lives far away.

Students are expected to choose their sponsor during the fall months and to come to the December Confirmation gathering with the name, address, phone number and email address of their sponsor. The parish will mail the sponsor a packet with information describing their role and a resource to facilitate conversation with their candidate. Please note that sponsors DO NOT have to come to class with their candidate or to the rehearsal for Confirmation. Their role is strictly on their own time during the formation process. They should be able to be present for the Confirmation Mass.

Choice of a Saint to Imitate

The Catholic Church has a long tradition of choosing a saint's name for Confirmation. The saints are the heroes and heroines of our Church, and their example of holiness in the midst of everyday life inspires us on our journey. Each student is expected to choose a saint who inspires them and to try to follow that saint's example as they prepare for Confirmation and as they continue to grow in faith beyond Confirmation.

For information about the saints, there are many resources available on-line:

- Go to www.americancatholic.org where you will find a "Saints" tab where you will find saints listed by name, date and patronage
- Go to <http://saintsresource.com/> where you will find another listing of saints.

Our parish library (located in the Reconciliation Room of our church) has resources on the lives of the saints as well. Please see John Mertes, Director of Faith Formation for additional resources.

Students are to choose their saint during the fall of 2017. They are to write a report on that saint with a minimum length of one full typed page and turn it in at the September Confirmation session. The report will include a separate sheet with a picture of the saint. All pages must be stapled together, and the student must include their first and last name at the top of the report.

Retreat

A retreat provides an opportunity to step away from the busy-ness and distractions of everyday life and spend some time with God, growing in one's faith. As such a retreat is a valuable component to the formation process for Confirmation. Candidates are asked to engage in a retreat some time during their formation for the Sacrament of Confirmation. Dowling Catholic High School offers a retreat for freshmen (Metanoia) and one for sophomores (Quest) that count toward this requirement. Go to <http://www.dowlingcatholic.org/dchs-retreats> for more information on these retreats

The Diocese of Des Moines offers retreat opportunities for all students. When the dates for these retreats become available, they will be provided to the Confirmation candidates and their parents.

Once a Confirmation candidate has made a retreat, contact John Mertes with the name of the retreat and date(s).

Service

Living as disciples of Jesus in the Catholic tradition means living a life of service to others. We recognize that many of our young people already engage in service, so during this time of formation for Confirmation, we want to recognize the service they do and challenge them to try new things. Think of it as a kind of apprenticeship.

Students are required to engage in a minimum of six service experiences over the course of their two years of formation. These experiences include at least two in each of three categories:

- Extended Family/Close Friends/Neighbors
- Parish/School
- Wider Church and Civic Community

Students are provided with a service record form to document these experiences over the course of their two years of formation. They are expected to complete AT LEAST half of the service requirement by the April 2018 Confirmation session and turn in the record form at that time. The form will be copied and returned to them so they may continue to document their service experiences.

Service performed for another purpose (Dowling Catholic High School theology class hours, Scouts, Silver Cord, etc.) can also be counted toward Confirmation service requirement. Candidates will fill out the appropriate paperwork for each institution and secure the appropriate signatures. Dowling Catholic High School students must adhere to Dowling's guidelines for service for it to count toward their 10 hour per semester requirement. In other words, a project that counts toward your Confirmation requirement may not count toward Dowling's requirement.

Go to <http://www.dowlingcatholic.org/service> to verify the Dowling requirements.

Ideas for Parish Service

Holy Trinity is a very active parish with many opportunities to get involved! Listed below are but a few ideas of ways you can serve. There are opportunities in the areas of liturgy, pastoral care, faith formation, facilities, and others. Big events and fundraisers such as our garage sale, gala auction, craft boutique and fall festival provide many different kinds of opportunities for service. Watch the parish website, bulletin and other communications for announcements of events year-round.

CONFIRMATION MEETING DATES for the 2017-18 Program Year

(All meet from 6:30 – 8:00 p.m. on WEDNESDAYS)

October 11, 2017

November 8, 2017

December 13, 2017

February 21, 2018

March 21, 2018

April 18, 2018

The LifeTeen calendar will be emailed to all Confirmation families when it is finalized. It will also be published on the parish website: www.holytrinitydm.org.