

*Guidelines
For the
Sacrament of Confirmation*



*Saint Vincent de Paul
Catholic Church*

Dallas, GA

WHY BE CONFIRMED?

Confirmation is the last of the three Sacraments of Initiation in the Catholic Church. While Confirmation is a distinct and complete sacrament in its own right, its purpose is to perfect in us that which was begun in Baptism. In the Sacrament of Baptism we are born spiritually and become children of God. Through the celebration of the Eucharist, we participate in the sharing of Christ's Passion and become one Body with the Church. Confirmation gives us an *indelible spiritual mark* by which we are sealed by the Holy Spirit and become a witness for Christ.

With the onset of adolescence a child begins to assume the responsibilities of adulthood and begins to see their place in the community at large. Similarly, the confirmed Christian becomes more concerned with his or her responsibility to Christ and neighbor. The confirmed become more equipped to participate in the evangelization and the sanctification of the entire world. Our catechism states that the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the Sacrament of Confirmation will have the following effects:

- root us more deeply in divine filiation which makes us cry "Abba, Father!"
- unite us more firmly to Christ
- increase the Gifts of the Holy Spirit in us
- render our bond with the Church more perfect
- give us a special strength of the Holy Spirit to spread and defend the faith

"Reception of Confirmation is necessary for the completion of baptismal grace [and] recipients of the Sacrament 'are more perfectly bound to the Church and are enriched with a special strength of the Holy Spirit. Hence they are, as true witnesses of Christ, more strictly obliged to spread and defend the faith by word and deed.'" CCC 1285, 1303, 1830.

Let us become saints so that after having been together on earth, we may be together in Heaven.

~ St. Pio of Pietrelcina (Padre Pio)

DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAM

Per the Archdioceses of Atlanta, the earliest a child may be confirmed is during his or her 10th grade year. Ordinarily, youth should have attended a Catholic school or a parish religious education program for at least two years before enrollment in the free-standing parish Confirmation formation program. Exceptions to this policy may be made as the Pastor deems appropriate. The Confirmation formation program must be distinguished from the required two year religious education foundational program. This can be accomplished through off-site retreats or on-site classroom models as determined by the Pastor. Confirmation candidates should be confirmed in the parish their family is registered.

At St Vincent de Paul, Confirmation is a 2-year program: Year 1 (Preparatory Year), and Year 2 (Sacramental Year).

Each year of Confirmation has different requirements and requires separate registration. The following is a brief description of each year – see description of activities and yearly registration for more details.

YEAR 1 – PREPARATORY YEAR

- Attend Holy Mass every Sunday
- Register / Attend Parish Religious Education classes
- Complete a minimum of 15 service hours
- Have a growing knowledge of prayers and the Catholic faith
- Receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation
- Attend the required retreats

YEAR 2 – SACRAMENTAL YEAR

- Attend Holy Mass every Sunday
- Register / Attend Parish Religious Education classes
- Turn in Baptismal and First Communion Certificates with Registration
- Attend the Rite of Enrollment
- Complete a minimum of 25 service hours
- Improved knowledge of prayers and the Catholic faith
- Receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation
- Complete a Saint Report
- Choose a Sponsor / Turn in Sponsor Form
- Complete an interview with the Pastor
- Attend the required retreats
- Attend Confirmation Rehearsal

DESCRIPTION OF REQUIREMENTS

ATTENDANCE

All faithful Catholics are required to attend Holy Mass every Sunday and on Holy Days of Obligation. Each Sunday (except during times of dispensation), students preparing for Confirmation are asked to sign the Holy Mass Attendance log sheet that is located in the narthex of the church before all Holy Masses or located outside the RE workroom if after 9:00am Holy Mass. If you have attended Holy Mass at another parish, please sign your name on the bulletin of the parish attended and leave the bulletin with the logbook. **The Holy Mass and Holy Eucharist is the center of our faith, without it, we are lost.**

Confirmation candidates (like all elementary, middle, and high school students) should attend religious education classes. Instructional time can come from the local Catholic school, an approved homeschool curriculum, or from the parish religious education program. **A ninety-percent attendance record is expected. Please note: the parish will not automatically recommend a student for Confirmation without some form of proof that he or she is committed to their faith.**

REGISTRATION

All students should register for Confirmation with the religious education department in the parish their family is registered as parishioners. This practice is meant to build a sense of community and a shared faith that helps all to grow spiritually. Please see the bulletin for announcements regarding the registration process. **Baptismal and First Holy Eucharist Certificates should be turned in at the time of registration.**

RITE OF ENROLLMENT

During the beginning of the sacramental year of Confirmation (Year 2), all candidates will participate in a Holy Mass in which they will be enrolled in the Rite of Confirmation. The purpose of this rite is to officially mark the beginning of your sacramental year. During the rite, the candidates declare that they are ready to make a mature commitment to grow spiritually and participate fully in the life of the Church. Everyone must dress appropriately for Holy Mass. Details of the rite will be explained nearer the date.

SERVICE HOURS

St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church requires each Confirmation candidate to complete service hours. First year candidates are required to complete 15 hours of service and second year candidates are required to complete 25 hours of community service. Half of the required service hours should be in service to our church. This may include singing in the choir, ushering at Holy Mass, help with VBS, the Paulding Meadows Art Festival Food Booth, Mardi Gras Appreciation Dinner, Fall Festival, *Journey to Bethlehem*, or various other options. The remaining half of the service hours should be dedicated to the community in the form of a Corporal or Spiritual Work of Mercy. Ideas may include work at St. Vincent de Paul Thrift Store, volunteering at a nursing home or hospital, helping a neighbor in need, or preparing meals for the homeless. *"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms."* 1Peter 4:10

KNOWLEDGE

Confirmation candidates should be able to demonstrate sufficient knowledge of their Catholic faith. All Confirmandi should be familiar with the Holy Mass, the Bible, the Gospels, the seven Sacraments, the Ten Commandments, the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Rosary, common prayers, and more. It is only through our knowledge of God that we come to love Him more deeply and can better live our call to evangelize. *"It is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment."* Phil.1:9

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Confirmation Candidates must be in good standing with the Catholic Church to receive Confirmation. This means that, among other things, the candidate receives the Sacrament of Reconciliation at least once a year. We encourage all faithful to frequent this sacrament even monthly. At St. Vincent de Paul, the Sacrament of Reconciliation is offered every Wednesday from 5:00-6:00pm and on Saturdays from 2:00-3:00pm, or by appointment.

SAINT REPORT

Confirmation candidates will choose a new name as part of this sacrament. Names are important! God says, *"Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name: you are mine."* Isaiah 43:1. Examples of this are given in the Bible: Abram became Abraham, Jacob became Israel, and Simon became Peter. New names often signify a drawing closer to God. Candidates should choose a saint name that has special meaning to them. This saint will forever intercede for them in their faith journey. It is not just about a name you like, rather a saint of whom you aspire to be like in virtue and in holiness. See below for more specific guidelines for the saint report. Also, please provide the DRE a portrait style picture of the candidate (2" x 3")

SPONSOR / SPONSOR FORM

Each candidate will choose a Confirmation Sponsor that is to help and encourage the candidate to live their faith. The sponsor **MUST** be at least 16 years of age, **MUST** have received the Sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist, **MUST** be a practicing Catholic and in good standings with the Church. The sponsor must **NOT** be the mother or father of the candidate. The sponsor is expected to provide a Sponsor Form that has been signed by the pastor of the church in which they are registered. The sponsor is asked to attend the rehearsal and the Confirmation Holy Mass. During the liturgy, the sponsor presents the candidate to the bishop immediately before he/she receives the Sacrament of Confirmation. A baptized non-Catholic may only act as a witness where a Catholic sponsor has been designated.

INTERVIEW WITH THE PASTOR

In the months preceding Confirmation, candidates are expected to meet with the Pastor to discuss their openness to receiving this sacrament. No one should ever feel or be forced to receive a sacrament. Topics discussed during this meeting may include the sacraments, the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, their chosen saint, prayer, their expectations, or what they have learned in preparation for Confirmation.

RETREATS

The archdiocese requires a free standing Confirmation formation program that is separate from the two year foundational religious education classes (PSR). This can be accomplished through off-site retreats, additional on-site classroom instruction, or various other models deemed appropriate by the Pastor. Confirmation candidates MUST participate in these as they become available. Dates and times for these will be announced.

REHEARSAL

Immediately prior to reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation, the parish will hold a rehearsal. The confirmation candidate and their sponsor should plan to attend this practice.

TOPICS TO BE COVERED FOR CONFIRMATION

- God's Call and our Response
- Scripture, Tradition, and Magisterium
 - 12 Articles of the Creed
 - Christ's Incarnation and Paschal Mystery
 - Pentecost and the Church
- Overview of the History of the Catholic Church since Pentecost
- Holy Mass and the Sacraments
- Catholic Morality
- Prayer and Spirituality
- Gifts and Fruits of the Holy Spirit
- Obligations to defend the faith and to evangelize

Students will receive a study guide to help them along the way!!

My son, if you receive my words and treasure up my commandments with you, making your ear attentive to wisdom and inclining your heart to understanding...you will walk in the way of good men and keep to the paths of the righteous. Prov. 2: 1-2, 20.

SAINT REPORT GUIDELINES

- Cover sheet is attached to the front of the report
- Cover sheet shall include: student name, saint name, and picture of saint
- Report shall be 1-2 pages not including the cover sheet
- Report shall be 12 pt. font and double spaced; approximately 500 words

Suggestions:

1st Paragraph - Introduce your saint and give a brief overview of your report

2nd Paragraph - Outline the life of your saint: date of birth, parents' names, where he/she was born, important life events, accomplishments, date of death

3rd Paragraph - What virtues were prominent in the life of this saint? Why did you choose this saint?

4th Paragraph - Conclusion: How I hope to imitate this saint?

Normal Rules for Plagiarism apply!

QUESTIONS ??

Contact: Mary Ware *Co-Director of Religious Education*
Church: (770) 443-0566 (ext. 7)
Email: mware@svdpatl.com

CONFIRMATION SERVICE HOURS REPORT

STUDENT NAME: _____

CONFIRMATION YEAR (I OR II): _____

DATE SUBMITTED: _____

Confirmation I students must complete a total of 15 service hours.

Confirmation II students must complete a total of 25 service hours.

Name of Organization Helped	Service Description	Authorizing Signature	Date of Service	# of Hours

CONFIRMATION CHECKLIST

CONFIRMATION YEAR I

STUDENT NAME: _____

- Registration
 - Baptismal Certificate
 - First Eucharist Certificate
- Holy Mass Attendance: _____%
- Class Attendance: _____%
- Retreat Attendance
- 15 Hours of Community Service
- Knowledge of the Faith
- Reconciliation

CONFIRMATION CHECKLIST

CONFIRMATION YEAR II

STUDENT NAME: _____

- Registration
 - Baptismal Certificate
 - First Eucharist Certificate
- Holy Mass Attendance: _____%
- Class Attendance: _____%
- Retreat Attendance
- Rite of Enrollment
- 25 Hours of Community Service
- Knowledge of the Faith
- Reconciliation
- Saint Report
- Sponsor Form
- Sacramental Records Form
- Pastor Interview