

Saint Thomas Aquinas Confirmation Resource Book SPRING 2023



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Your Journey of Faith

You are on a lifelong journey of faith, and Confirmation gives you strength for that journey.

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you know me, you will know my father." John 14:1-6

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WHAT IS CONFIRMATION? THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION....

- Welcomes us and deepens our belonging to the faith community
- Deepens our relationship to God, as Creator, Redeemer and Spirit
- Strengthens us as disciples

- A Sacrament is part of the way that God loves us and calls us. A sacrament is God's love expressed as a free, undeserved gift.
 - The Gift within Confirmation is that of strengthening us for discipleship and deepening our belonging to the faith community through the Trinity.

- God uses visible signs to communicate invisible love. To communicate God's love, God uses senses: eyes, ears, touch, smell, and taste, and the elements of our world.
 - In Confirmation, the signs we will celebrate include being anointed with oil and the laying on of hands as we remember the water of Baptism and the nourishment of the Eucharist.

- God calls and invites; we respond. An attitude of openness communicates a "yes" to God's invitation to a deeper relationship. This "yes" does not mean we know that we will always be faithful or that we are worthy of the gift. "Yes" means we are open to be strengthened by God who calls and loves us.
 - In Confirmation, we have the opportunity to say "yes" through the various responses in the prayer.

- The community witnesses to and celebrates the sacraments. A sacrament is a powerful sign that God is alive and present in the world. At the same time, we celebrate the sacraments as our most important prayer.
 - In Confirmation, the community witnesses our celebration and provides a sponsor who represents the love of the community for us.

ROLE OF PARENT(S)

Parents play a vital role in their children's continuing initiation into full membership in the Christian Community. Parents of Confirmation Candidates:

- Are called to be the primary educators of their children
- Represent the Church by walking in virtue in their day-to-day life
- Are responsible for initiating their children into the sacramental life
- Serve as models for their child by being committed Christians
- Encourage their child to worship with the parish community
- Are called to encourage their child to reflect on and thoughtfully consider the decision to receive the sacrament of Confirmation
- Are called to assist their child with the immediate preparation for the sacrament of Confirmation through prayer, study, and Christian service
- Should stress the initiation aspect of the sacrament by encouraging their children to continue learning more about their faith
- Are called to lead their child to understand that Confirmation service activities are the beginning of a life committed to Christian service
- Are not permitted as Confirmation sponsors for their own child
- Commit to daily prayer for the candidates
- Are called to encourage their child to attend Mass and the sacrament of Reconciliation frequently

Prayer for a Teen's Confirmation

Creator Spirit, strengthen this teen with your gifts of grace, to love and serve as a disciple of Christ. Grant that s/he may grow into the fullness of the stature of Christ. Fill her/him with the joy of your presence. Increase in her/him the fruit of your Spirit: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of love, patience and gentleness, the spirit of wonder and true holiness.

Amen

ROLE OF TEEN

As candidates prepare for Confirmation, they must:

- Listen attentively and participate willingly in religious education
- Respect each other's point of view
- Ask questions – this helps to develop a more mature understanding of Christian beliefs and make their own commitment stronger
- Attend Sunday Mass weekly
- Invite an active practicing Catholic to be your Confirmation sponsor (review and complete attached Sponsorship form). Communicate with them regularly throughout this period.
- For your Confirmation name, identify and select the name of a saint to whom you feel a connection
- Bring binder to class each session with completed assignment.
- Attend the Confirmation weekend retreat
- Remain an active part of the Catholic community
- continue to learn about and practice your faith
- Form a stronger relationship with Christ!
- Remain in daily prayer

A DAILY PRAYER FOR YOUR CONFIRMATION

O God, I pray that you give me a right heart, that I may come to know you in Jesus. Lead me to know the sinfulness of my own heart, and your great love for me, in Christ Jesus. Help those who teach me, to give me the teaching I need. Grant that, on my Confirmation Day, I may be ready to give myself to be your faithful soldier and servant to my life's end, Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

Confirmation Dress Code

Why have a Dress Code?

At the Sacrament of Baptism, the baptized person receives a white garment, symbolizing that he or she has “put on Christ.” The reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation is a completion of baptismal grace and an anointing to share more completely in the mission of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. This is a moment of joy and celebration. It makes sense to dress in a way that reflects this attitude.

While the Church greatly respects the uniqueness and individuality of each of its members, it holds that modesty is a fruit of the Holy Spirit and that “teaching modesty to children and adolescents means awakening in them respect for the human person” (Catechism of the Catholic Church 2523-2524).

It is in this spirit of fostering respect for each other and for the sanctity of the Sacrament of Confirmation that we set forth a code of dress consistent with a sense of modesty. **This dress code applies to sponsors and proxies, as well.** Semi-formal, modest attire is appropriate to the beauty of this occasion.

For the young men:

What to Wear:

- Suit-jacket or Sports Coat (optional)
- Dress Shirt
- Dress pants/slacks
- Tie
- Dress shoes

Inappropriate Attire:

- Sports wear
- T-shirts, tank tops
- Shorts / jeans
- Sneakers / sandals
- Novelty ties

For the young ladies:

What to Wear:

- A modest dress, skirt or suit
- Shirts or dresses should be semi-formal with shoulders covered.
- Dress/ skirt should reach the knee
- Jackets or sweaters to cover shoulders.
- Dress shoes (Heels, flats, etc.)

Inappropriate Attire:

- Anything low cut or see-through
- Mini-skirts, denim skirts, shorts
- No fitting/tight dresses
- No spaghetti straps nor strapless garments
- No cutouts that expose abdomen or sides
- Refrain from prom or home-coming dresses
- Flip-flops, sneakers

Lastly, candidates should not be carrying cell phones or purses in the Mass. Parents/ Sponsors should take them prior to them checking in.

SPONSOR INFORMATION

A sponsor is required for the candidate being confirmed. It is considered an honor and privilege to be chosen as a Confirmation Sponsor. The Sponsor will be a witness to the Confirmation candidate's initiation into full Christian Life. Through the Sacrament of Confirmation, the candidate is strengthened by the Holy Spirit, made a true witness of Christ in word and deed, and invited more deeply into the life of the Church.

Role of the Sponsor

- Bring the candidate to receive the sacrament, present them to the minister for the anointing, and will later help them to fulfill their baptismal promises faithfully under the influence of the Holy Spirit whom they have received
- Is to take care that the confirmed person behaves as a true witness of Christ and faithfully fulfills the obligations inherent in this sacrament
- Submit a Sponsor Eligibility/Certificate form. These should be obtained from the church of the sponsor. This form is due June 28, 2022.

A Sponsor

- must be mature enough to undertake this responsibility
- must have received the three sacraments of initiation, namely Baptism, Eucharist, and Confirmation
- must be not less than 16 years of age
- must know the fundamental truths of the Faith and be a practicing Catholic who goes to Mass on Sunday, receives the sacraments regularly, and sees to the religious instruction of his/her family
- must be a member of the Catholic Church, canonically free to carry out this office
- must not be father or mother of the one to be confirmed (however, Godparents are appropriate sponsors)

CONFIRMATION REQUIREMENTS

Registration for Confirmation: Registration will be open online. Please go to www.sta.org/confirmation to register. Forms, down payment, and copy of Baptism Certificate are due by February 17, 2023.

Mass attendance: Attending and participating in weekly Sunday Mass is the best way to grow in faith. Candidates are asked to attend Mass on a regular basis. Parents and family members are also encouraged to attend with the Candidate.

Preparation – Preparation will be in 2 parts: Sessions and Retreat

Confirmation Sessions: will attend sessions. Candidates will have 6 sessions over the course of the program. Candidates must attend 80% of sessions.

Class	Sunday, 8:30 – 9:30 AM, Parish Hall
# 1	February 5
# 2	February 26
# 3	RETREAT March 19 (All Saint Names Are DUE)
# 4	March 26
# 5	April 30
# 6	May 21

Retreat: Candidates must attend weekend retreat:

Saturday, March 4, 2023
Confirmation Retreat - Camp Hidden Lake
Leave STA Saturday morning, 7:00 AM – 5:00 PM
Bring Snacks to share. Lunch and T-shirt are provided.

REQUIREMENT CHECKLIST

- ___ **January 12** - Confirmation registration and parent meeting
- ___ **February 26** - Sponsor Name & Reflection Due (Provided in Confirmation Guide/Binder)
- ___ **March 19** - Saint Reflection Due (Provided in Confirmation Guide/Binder)
- ___ **March 19** – Sponsor Form Due
- ___ **September 16-18** - Confirmation Retreat at Camp Covecrest
- ___ **June 22, 2023. 6:00 PM** - Confirmation Rehearsal at 6:00pm.
- June 23, 2023** – Confirmation Day 6:00 PM

Service Hours:

Each candidate is required to complete **10 Hours of Service** prior to Confirmation.

CONTACT

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Prayer to the Holy Spirit

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created. And You shall renew the face of the earth.

O, God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit, did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may be truly wise and ever enjoy His consolations, Through Christ Our Lord, Amen.

Gifts of the Holy Spirit

The seven gifts are enumerated in [Isaiah 11:2-3](#) and conform to the Latin [Vulgate](#)^[1], which takes the list from the [Septuagint](#) ^[2]. According to the [Catechism of the Catholic Church](#)^[1] and descriptions outlined by St. [Thomas Aquinas](#) in the [Summa Theologica](#),^[2] the seven gifts are as follows:

- **Wisdom:** Also, the gift of wisdom, we see God at work in our lives and in the world. For the wise person, the wonders of nature, historical events, and the ups and downs of our lives take on deeper meaning. The matters of judgment about the truth, and being able to see the whole image of God. We see God as our Father and other people with dignity. Lastly being able to see God in everyone and everything everywhere.
- **Understanding:** In understanding, we comprehend how we need to live as a follower of Christ. A person with understanding is not confused by all the conflicting messages in our culture about the right way to live. The gift of understanding perfects a person's speculative reason in the apprehension of truth. It is the gift whereby self-evident principles are known, Aquinas writes.^[3]
- **Counsel (Right Judgment):** With the gift of counsel/right judgment, we know the difference between right and wrong, and we choose to do what is right. A person with right judgment avoids sin and lives out the values taught by Jesus. The gift of truth that allows the person to respond prudently, and happily to believe our Christ the Lord
- **Fortitude (Courage):** With the gift of fortitude/courage, we overcome our fear and are willing to take risks as a follower of Jesus Christ. A person with courage is willing to stand up for what is right in the sight of God, even if it means accepting rejection, verbal abuse, or even physical harm and death. The gift of courage allows people the firmness of mind that is required both in doing good and in enduring evil, especially with regard to goods or evils that are difficult, just like [Joan of Arc](#) did.
- **Knowledge:** With the gift of knowledge, we understand the meaning of God. The gift of knowledge is more than an accumulation of facts.
- **Piety (Reverence):** With the gift of reverence, sometimes called piety, we have a deep sense of respect for God and the church. A person with reverence recognizes our total reliance on God and comes before God with humility, trust, and love. Piety is the gift whereby, at the Holy Spirit's instigation, we pay worship and duty to God as our Father, Aquinas writes.
- **Fear of the Lord (Wonder and Awe):** With the gift of fear of the Lord we are aware of the glory and majesty of God. A person with wonder and awe knows that God is the perfection of all we desire: perfect knowledge, perfect goodness, perfect power, and perfect love. This gift is described by Aquinas as a fear of separating oneself from God. He describes the gift as a "filial fear," like a child's fear of offending his father, rather than a "servile fear," that is, a fear of punishment. Also known as knowing God is all powerful. Fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom (Prov 1:7) because it puts our mindset in its correct location with respect to God: we are the finite, dependent creatures, and He is the infinite, all-powerful Creator.

