

St. Paul the Apostle Confirmation Formation



Parent/Student Handbook 2024-2025

Just as Baptism **gives** new life, Eucharist **nourishes** life, and Reconciliation **restores** life when it is broken, Confirmation **strengthens** that life by the gifts of the Holy Spirit (cf. CCC 1285). It is about strengthening what God has given, and continues to give to us today.
(cf. CCC 1302-1303).

About Confirmation Formation Program

We are excited about our Confirmation Formation Program (CFP) for grades 7 thru High School and believe the opportunities presented this coming year will encourage growth in faith, strengthen students' relationship with Christ and build a better understanding of our shared Catholic Faith.

All students will be presented with grade appropriate material under four main categories:

CREED / LITURGY AND SACRAMENTS / MORAL LIFE / CHRISTIAN PRAYER.

Our curriculum is designed to share the beauty of the Church and her teachings with students. Students will receive teachings on Salvation History, the Catholic Church, the Eucharist & the Mass, Mary, the Apostles and Saints, Faith in action, Vocations & callings, and so much more. Classes are intended not only to present information but to help students learn about and understand the roots of our faith, highlight the relevance of Jesus in our lives today, the power of the Holy Spirit, the significance of faith sharing, the power of prayer, and offer encounter with our loving God for whom we were created to know, love, and serve.

Material and lessons will be taken from a variety of sources:

7th Grade/Year 1: Called to be Catholic (Loyola Press) / Teen Bible / YouCat

8th Grade/Year 2: Confirmed in the Spirit (Loyola Press) / Teen Bible / YouCat

High School: Confirmed in the Spirit (Loyola Press) / Teen Bible / YouCat

In addition, material and lessons will be taken from the Catechism of the Catholic Church, Theology of the Body for Teens, Connected (Ascension Press) and other Catholic articles, Bible studies and videos from **FORMED.org**. Scripture teachings, reflections, discussions, prayer services and guest speakers, along with participation in weekly Liturgy will round out our Faith Formation Confirmation Preparation program.

Running a Marathon vs Confirmation

*With a **marathon** it's your physical strength that is being tested.*

*In **Confirmation** it's important to prepare your Soul, your inner self.*

*In a **marathon** you draw on your own Reserves of strength.*

*In **Confirmation** you take divine power into yourself (on which you can draw later).*

*A **marathon** increases your self-confidence As a person.*

*In **Confirmation** God himself affirms your identity as His beloved child and co-worker.*

7th, 8th and HS students will meet three times a month on Sundays from 3:30-6pm. Classroom time will be 3:30-4:50 followed by 5:00 Mass. Mass attendance is required for all students with families welcome and encouraged to join us!

Philosophy, Curriculum and Goals

| CREED |

We believe that the doctrine of the Church is articulated in its creeds. These truths we profess as Catholic Christians flow from Scripture and embody a rich Tradition passed down from the first followers of Jesus Christ. This Tradition is God's revelation through time. An understanding of these beliefs provides the foundation of a faith development for children.

Students will:

- Articulate basic beliefs of the Catholic faith.
- Know the history of the Catholic Church.
- Integrate knowledge of the Communion of Saints through understanding of Mary and the saints.
- Understand that the Church is the community of believers into which they are baptized and called to discipleship.

| LITURGY AND SACRAMENTS |

We believe as Catholic Christians that the Liturgical Year with its seasons and feasts celebrates God's presence in the cycle of human life. As a community of faith we are invited into the liturgical and sacramental life of the Church.

Students will:

- Understand and live the communal nature of Church by participating in Sunday Eucharist.
- Participate in the sacraments meaningfully and freely.
- Recognize and celebrate the liturgical seasons and feasts.

| MORAL LIFE |

We believe we are called to a moral life that embodies Jesus Christ's example of faithfulness, forgiveness, compassion, justice, and service.

Students will:

- Make moral choices guided by the Commandments and Beatitudes.
- Develop a conscience informed by knowledge of Scripture and Church Traditions.
- Be grounded in an understanding of Catholic Social Teaching.
- Grow in appreciation of the diversity of humankind, recognizing that all persons are made in the image and likeness of God.

| CHRISTIAN PRAYER |

We believe prayer is integral to the Christian life. It sustains and nurtures our relationship with God, enlightens our relationships with others, and provides a greater sense of well-being.

Students will:

- Express their innermost thoughts and feelings to God through prayer, both formal and informal.
- Value private and communal prayer.

CONFIRMATION FORMATION: CLASS DAYS, ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE

Classes will meet **3x/month (exceptions: Oct/Dec), from 3:30-6:00pm (including Mass)**. Our class time is precious and our catechists spend many hours preparing lessons & materials. Just as schools have a specific start and end time, so do we. Please be respectful of our catechists and other students and ensure your student arrives on time and is present until the end of Mass. Students arriving late or leaving early are a distraction to others and quite often miss significant teachings.

CONFIRMATION FORMATION: MASS ATTENDANCE

Weekly Mass Attendance is a Chicago Archdiocese requirement for all Confirmation candidates. While we will not be taking attendance on the “off weeks”, we strongly encourage students and families to make weekly Mass a priority. St. Paul’s offers 5 Masses each weekend and there are multiple Catholic Churches in the area if the St. Paul’s Mass schedule doesn’t fit your family’s activity schedule.

Mass is part of our curriculum so if a student is absent for Mass on a class day, they will be marked absent for the entire class.

CONFIRMATION FORMATION: RETREAT

A Retreat is required for all Year 2 and HS students.

8th Grade & HS students will participate in a full day Retreat, Saturday, Sept. 28, 2024

St. John Bosco Youth Day - Holy Hill Shrine

Round trip bus transportation will be provided from St. Paul’s.

There will be no organized 7th grade retreat during the 2024-25 Faith Formation Year. 6th & 7th grade students are welcome to attend the St. John Bosco Youth Day on Sept. 28th with their family & friends. Individual transportation required.

CONFIRMATION FORMATION: CONFIRMATION INTERVIEW

In February, Year 2 & HS students will complete a 15-minute confirmation interview with Fr. Chris, one of our deacons, a Faith Formation catechist or staff member. Interview conversations are used to help guide Fr. Chris and our staff in assessing the readiness of our students for Confirmation. Students will have an opportunity to ask questions that can be answered during the interview or addressed by their catechists in class. Dates, times and sign-up information will be provided in January.

CONFIRMATION FORMATION: PARENTAL & SPONSOR INVOLVEMENT

Family & sponsor participation is encouraged. There is no stronger testament to the value of this program than students & families praying together, worshiping together at Mass, and being fully engaged in the spiritual growth of each other. Sponsor & candidate conversations are extremely beneficial to their faith relationship & candidate formation.

There will be **two prayer services this year - Dec. 8 & Mar. 16**. Parents and Sponsors are encouraged to attend, participate, and pray with the students. Showing support of your child's faith journey towards Confirmation and beyond is invaluable.

(New) Faith Enrichment for Parents: Oct. 20 & Jan. 26. We will have a speaker here to discuss topics similar to what your students are learning in their classrooms. These sessions will be in the church from 3:30-4:45 (ending just before Mass).. Specific speakers will be announced later.

(New) Sponsor Night: Jan. 12, 3:30-6pm. Year 2 & HS students and their sponsors only.

Additional information on the retreat, Faith Enrichment for Parents & Sponsor Night will be provided later but please mark your calendars with these important dates.

CONFIRMATION FORMATION: SERVICE HOURS

Confirmation Students are required to complete twenty (20) Service Hours, each year of formation, based on Catholic Social Teaching and Corporal Works of Mercy.

Service Hour deadlines: 10 Hours completed & turned in by Dec. 15, 2024
10 Hours completed & turned in by Mar. 9, 2025

Service to Community - 10 hours

Joyfully help others without being compensated

- Nursing Home or Memory Care Unit - read to or pray with residents
- Volunteer at a food pantry, soup kitchen, or St. Vincent de Paul Activity
- Feed My Starving Children - <https://www.fmssc.org/>
- Lindenhurst Park District - Allison Tibor, Recreation Program Manager
<https://www.lindenhurstparks.org/> or atibor@lindenhurstparks.org
- Gurnee Park District - <https://www.gurneeparkdistrict.com/volunteers-menu-item>
- Bernie's Book Bank - <https://www.berniesbookbank.org/>
- Warren-Newport Public Library (HS Students only) -
<https://www.wnpl.info/volunteering-at-wnpl/>
- Equestrian Connection - Minimum age 13. For information contact
volunteering@equestrianconnection.org
- United Way of Lake County -
<https://www.liveunitedlakecounty.org/portfolio/one-time-volunteer-opportunities/>
- Lake County Forest Preserve - <https://www.lcfpd.org/who-we-are/volunteer/all-positions/>

Service to the Church - 10 hours

- **Classroom Assistant for a Faith Formation class:** Advance registration & regular attendance required. Contact the Faith Formation office. **1-1.5 hrs per session**
- **Choir:** Contact Ruth Peck, Julie Jester or Tom Wattlelett. **1 hr/per Mass**
- **Go to Reconciliation:** here or at another parish (**30 min.per session**)
- **Visit a Shrine/Write a review:** Marytown- National Shrine of Maximilian Kolbe; Holy Hill, Hubertus, WI; National Shrine of St. Therese of Lisieux (Carmelite Campus, Darien IL); The National Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows, Belleville, IL; National Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Des Plaines, IL (**1-3 hrs**)
- **Catholic Charities Gift Sunday:** Assist with organizing & packing trucks after the 11:30 Mass. Parents welcome! (**2-3 hrs**)
- **Set-up and tear down of Christmas decoration in church:** This activity requires a student & parent team. 2 Saturdays in December and 1 Saturday in January (dates to be announced later), **9am-1pm.** Contact the Parish Office 847-918-0600 to register.
- **Stations of the Cross/Holy Hour:** Attend any Stations of the Cross service or Holy Hour service during Lent (**1hr/per service**)

Mass Services Requiring advance training and/or advance scheduling (no walk-ins)

- **Altar Server:** Training required. Contact Dcn Andy Baker (abaker@spa.church). **1hr/Mass**
- **Hospitality Sunday:** Assist w/set up & clean up, before & after Mass. Contact Anna Richardt to be scheduled (arichardt@spa.church). **1 hr/Mass**
- **Lector:** Advance training required. Contact Keith Kouba (kkouba@spa.church) **1hr/Mass**
- **Usher or Greeter:** Advance scheduling required. Must commit to a regular schedule for a minimum of 3 months and be in attendance for the full Mass. Contact Jerry Simpson (jsimpson@spa.church). **1hr/Mass**
- **Soundbooth Tech:** Advance scheduling required. Must commit to a regular schedule for the year and be in attendance for the full Mass. Contact Jerry Simpson (jsimpson@spa.church). **1hr/Mass**

Students registered and assigned a service at a Mass (altar server, lector, choir, greeter/usher, soundbooth, hospitality) must sign-in at the desk in the Gathering Space.

NOTE: Activities that are NOT considered service - cleaning your house, mowing your lawn, raking your leaves/shoveling snow, babysitting your siblings, general household chores, dog walking or pet sitting (with the exception of volunteer service at a local shelter), coaching, booster club activities, fundraising, or anything you get paid to do.

Students will keep a written log. 10 hours must be completed with the first log turned in by Dec. 15th. The 2nd log with the remaining 10 hours is due by Mar. 9. Logs may be turned in earlier if hours are complete. Please be sure they are legible and your name is printed on them.

The above lists are pre-approved service hour opportunities. **Please contact a member of the Faith Formation staff if you are uncertain of the validity of your service before starting.**

****Check the Parish Website or the weekly bulletin for additional opportunities**

CONFIRMATION FORMATION: *CHOOSING A SPONSOR*

<https://www.saintpaultheapostle.church/confirmationformation>

Year 1 students: *Sponsor choice due by January 19, 2025*

Year 2 students: *Reconfirm sponsor name no later than November 3, 2024*

High School: *Sponsor name due by November 3, 2024*

The word “sponsor” comes from Latin which means “to give assurance, promise solemnly.” Within the Catholic Church “sponsor” means one who presents a candidate for baptism or confirmation and undertakes the shared responsibility with parents for the person’s religious education and spiritual welfare.” Each Confirmation candidate must choose a sponsor during their first year of formation. Choosing a Confirmation Sponsor early allows the student and sponsor to engage and develop their faith relationship with one another and the Lord, growing spiritually together.

The role of a Confirmation Sponsor:

- Continues the work begun by the Godparent(s) of the Confirmation Candidate.
- Commits to being an example of a faithful follower of God throughout their life.

Canon Law states that in order to serve as a sponsor, a person:

- Must be a Confirmed Catholic
- Displays a visible commitment to living their Catholic faith
- Has the ability and intention to carry out the responsibility as the candidate’s spiritual guide, understanding it is a lifelong commitment
- Regularly attends Mass
- Takes regular advantage of the sacraments (Eucharist & Reconciliation)
- Is at least sixteen years of age

Other Considerations:

- **May not be a parent of the individual to be confirmed**
- Each candidate may choose only one sponsor
- Because the Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation are so closely connected, the Church suggests a Godparent as a preferred choice, but it is not required

Questions to help determine who would be a good sponsor choice:

- Who is someone who has nurtured my faith?
- Is there someone in my life who’s faith I admire?
- Who is/has been a guide, a confidant, a listener, in my life?
- Who will continue with me on my faith journey after Confirmation?

CONFIRMATION FORMATION: *CHOOSING A SAINT NAME*

<https://www.saintpaultheapostle.church/confirmationformation>

Y2 & High School: *Saint name due by November 3, 2024*

God Himself said, "Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name: you are mine" (Isaiah 43:1).

Choosing a Confirmation name is an opportunity to choose a name that has special meaning to you, a name that will help you in your journey of faith. This is both a privilege and a responsibility. **By choosing a saint's name, you're asking him or her to pray for you in a special way and you are telling that Saint that you admire what they stood for and will honor their name.** Also, having a special connection to someone in Heaven is a big deal!

Your Confirmation Saint Name:

- Is the name of a Catholic Saint
- Reflects your identity as a member of the Catholic Christian Community
- Is associated with someone whom you respect
- Is an example of love and holiness
- Can be your Baptismal name

Where to begin:

PRAY! Just as you should pray about any decision, ask the Holy Spirit for guidance. Also, in this case, the internet can be your friend! Search "Patron Saint of _____." Read about some of the amazing men and women who lived ordinary and extraordinary lives. Discuss with your parents and your sponsor how and why they chose their saint.

The following website may be helpful:

<https://www.catholic.org/saints>

<https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/saints>

<https://mycatholic.life/saints>

Many Saints have their own websites! Check for yours!

CONFIRMATION FORMATION: SAINT REPORT

Y2 & High School: Saint Report due by February 2, 2025

The report serves as a way for each Candidate to “get to know” their chosen Patron Saint. Report should be 1-3 typed pages.

MY CONFIRMATION SAINT

Content of paper:

- Date and place of birth & death. Some significant facts about the saint's life.
- Describe the challenges, holiness and/or specific works of this Saint that led you to choose him/her.
- Include specific ways this saint has impacted your faith journey.
- In what ways will you need your patron saint to help you after Confirmation?
- What have you learned about your patron saint that you personally desire to imitate? What about their life inspires you? What qualities would you like to have as your own? Why?
- Are there any ways that you are already similar to him/her?

Sources Page:

You will need at least two sources as references for your paper. They can be a printed source (book), or the internet. If you use a website, be sure to include the FULL web address as the source. If one of your sources is a book, include the title, author and publishing date. List your sources on a separate Bibliography or Sources Page.

Wikipedia is not an acceptable source.

Possible Bibliography Sources

Books:

- Lives of the Saints
- Butler’s Lives of the Saints
- Catholic Encyclopedia
- Saint of the Day (series)
- Saints for Young Readers (series)

Catholic websites:

- www.ewtn.com/saintsholy
- <http://www.catholic.org/saints/>
- <http://www.americancatholic.org/>

The Saint Report Activity will be during class on March 2nd, 2025. Parents and sponsors are welcome to attend.

CONFIRMATION FORMATION: *BISHOP LETTER*

<https://www.saintpaultheapostle.church/confirmationformation>

Y2 & High School: *Bishop letters due no later than March 9, 2025*

It is your choice to respond to God's call to live your faith more deeply – to worship, witness and serve as a confirmed Catholic Christian. **If you wish to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation**, write a formal letter of request to Bishop Grob, stating your desire to be confirmed.

Please pray about this and give serious thought to what you want to convey to Bishop Grob before writing your letter.

Follow these guidelines:

GREETING:

Begin your letter with the greeting: Your Excellency or Dear Bishop Grob



BODY OF THE LETTER:

Paragraph 1: Introduce yourself. Say something about your family or your background.

Paragraph 2: Request the sacrament. Explain why you want to be confirmed. Be honest!

Paragraph 3: Name at least 3 things that have helped you prepare for confirmation this year.

This can be anything from a classroom discussion or teaching, something you discovered while researching saints, a group activity, inspiration received while doing service, a particular homily or Mass experience.

Paragraph 4: Write some of the effects of confirmation that you expect, and what you think God may be calling you to do as a confirmed Catholic. Tell how you plan to make your Confirmation in the Faith real and alive in your life.

CONCLUSION:

Conclude the letter with a thank you or a blessing and write your complete name (signature).

Letters are to be typed into the space provided on our website. You may cut and paste from a Word Doc or Google Doc but do not include a link for your document. All letters will be reviewed by Faith Formation Staff before printing for students to sign during class on March 16th. Letters will be delivered to Bishop Grob's office on Tuesday, March 18th.

Abbreviations used on Faith Formation Calendar

S/W = Faith Formation classes on Sunday or Wednesday

CF = Confirmation classes (7th, 8th, HS)

SCU = Sacramental catch up classes for grades K thru 6

SPC = Sacramental Pathway to Confirmation (Sacramental catch up for Confirmation students (7th, 8th, HS))

Faith Formation Office: 847-816-8677

Faith Formation Staff:

Amy Russell - K thru 6 Coordinator

arussell@spa.church

Cassie Bertke - 7 thru HS Confirmation Coordinator

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Mary Jo Urquhart - FF Admin (all clerical issues, absentees, service hours, records)

murquhart@spa.church

Tammy Oberstar - FF Admin (all financial issues, Virtus site admin, records, email issues)

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