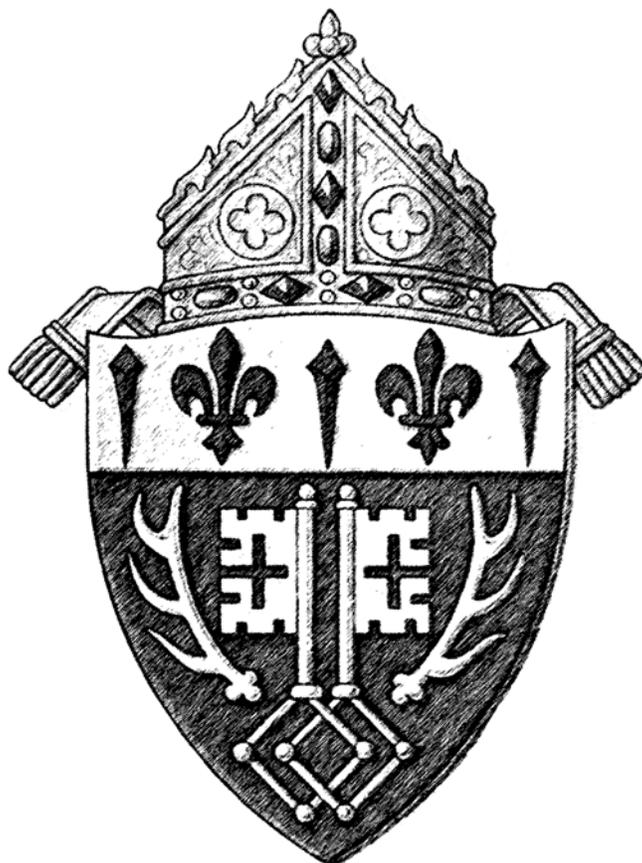


DIOCESE OF MARQUETTE



Guidelines for Confirmation

2012

In March of 2012, the Most Reverend Alexander K. Sample established the 11th grade as the ordinary age for the celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation in the Diocese of Marquette. He is requiring a two year preparation process. This booklet has been developed as a resource to assist priests and catechists as they prepare their youth to celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation. It includes the following items:

Comparison to RCIA

Overview of Preparation Process

Communications

Retreat and Service Suggestions

Rituals of the Confirmation Process

Sample Application Form

Sample Request Letters

List of Catechetical Topics

The catechetical topics listed can be found in the Diocesan High School Curriculum

Any questions regarding the process or the celebration of the sacrament should be directed to:

Denise Foye

Director of Faith Formation

dfoye@dioceseofmarquette.org

800.562.9745 ext. 130

906.227.9130

Greg Gostomski

Director of Youth Ministry

ggostomski@dioceseofmarquette.org

800.562.9745 ext. 125

906.227.9125

Confirmation Process compared to RCIA Process for Candidates

RCIA

Precatechumenate and Evangelization

A time for inquiry and evangelization.

Rite of Welcome

Period of Catechumenate

An extended period of formation and training; a thorough catechesis in the faith, and guidance in the Christian life.

Call to Continuing Conversion

Period of Purification and Enlightenment

Coinciding with Lent, this period consist more of interior reflection than instruction. It is intended to enlighten the mind and put the participants' heart in touch with Christ.

Celebration of the Sacraments of Initiation

Mystagogy

Post-sacramental catechesis aimed at deepening the Catholic faith; a time for spiritual growth and entering more fully into the life of the community.

CONFIRMATION

Call for Inquirers

Those who are seeking to be considered candidates for the Sacrament of Confirmation are presented to the faith community

Period of Invitation and Evangelization

Pastor ensures suitability, parents are made aware of expectations, sponsors are selected, and catechesis begins.

Rite of Admission into Formation

Period of Formation

A fruitful blend of instruction and formation in the faith. In addition to catechesis, active participation in the life of the Church and service is undertaken.

Call to Reflection and Conversion

Period of Reflection and Immediate Preparation

This period coincides with Lent, and is intended to enlighten the mind and heart with a deeper knowledge of Christ Jesus by asking the Holy Spirit to "fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love"

Celebration of Confirmation

Period of Mission

Strengthened by the Holy Spirit we are sent on mission to spread and defend the faith by word and deed. Catechesis aimed at preparing them to live as a disciple in the world after high school, transitioning into Catholic adulthood.

Overview of process for Confirmation preparation

Below is an overview of the process of Confirmation for the Diocese of Marquette. The format is based on the directive “that the baptismal catechumenate is the source of inspiration for all catechesis” (*National Directory for Catechesis, 35D*). It is a two-year process consisting of four periods which mirror those of the RCIA. A ritual, celebrated in the faith community marks the passage from one period to the next.

Period of Invitation and Evangelization September-December

Call for Inquirers (ritual): September 10th grade

“Those who are seeking to be considered candidates for the Sacrament of Confirmation are presented to the faith community”

- Application for admission
- Letter to the Pastor requesting to be allowed to prepare for Confirmation
- Interview w/ FFC or Pastor
- Parent Meeting
 - Baptismal Certificate
 - Outline the preparation process
 - Role of parents
- Selection of Sponsor
 - Monthly communication between Candidate and Sponsor
 - Periodic communication between Parish and Sponsor
- Celebration of Reconciliation
- Catechesis
 - The Trinity
 - Saints
 - Incarnation

Period of Formation January Year 1-February-Year 2

Rite of Admission into Formation (ritual): January 10th grade

“A fruitful blend of instruction and formation in the faith” (NDC, 35D)

- Active participation in the life of the Church
 - Attendance at Mass
 - Attendance at Class
 - Retreat
 - Service to the Church
 - Service to the People of God
- Catechesis
 - Marks of the Church
 - Sacraments 1
 - Sacraments 2
 - The Mass
 - Mary
 - Call to Holiness

Overview of process for Confirmation preparation

Period of Reflection and Immediate Preparation
February - April

Call to Reflection and Conversion (ritual): February 11th grade

This period is intended to enlighten the mind and heart with a deeper knowledge of Christ Jesus by asking the Holy Spirit to “fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love”

- Active participation in the life of the Church
 - Attendance at Mass
 - Attendance at Class
 - Retreat
 - Service to the Church
 - Service to the People of God
- Catechesis
 - Morality
 - Virtues and Vices
 - Catholic Social Teaching
- Meeting with Candidates and Sponsors
- Final interview with pastor
- Letter to Bishop
- Celebration of Reconciliation

Period of Mission
May – Grade 12

Celebration of Confirmation (ritual): May 11th grade

Strengthened by the Holy Spirit we are sent on mission to spread and defend the faith by word and deed.

- Continued service to the Church
- Continued service to the People of God
- Present to those in the Period of Inquiry and Evangelization
- Session on preparing for life after high school
 - Church membership
 - Living a chaste life
 - Living as a disciple in a secular world
- Catechesis
 - Prayer
 - Catholic Approaches to Prayer
 - Church History
 - Church In America
 - Ecumenism-Interreligious Issues
 - The Last Things

Communications

This section offers suggestions for communications. In today's culture, technology makes communication, especially long distance communication easier than ever. It is recommended that you take advantage of email and social media to communicate with all involved in this process. The hope is that this will allow the sponsor to be more deeply involved in the preparation process.

SPONSOR/CANDIDATE MONTHLY COMMUNICATION SUGGESTIONS

It is important that open communication take place between the candidate and sponsor. Through the entire preparation process, the sponsor is an example of faith for the candidate. Below is a list of conversation starters and suggested questions to encourage this communication. This is not an all-inclusive list, both sponsors and candidates can choose other topics or questions as appropriate.

1. Candidate should contact the person they desire to have as their sponsor. They should tell them why they are asking them. Some reasons may be: You are my baptismal god parent; You are a model of faith, etc.
2. Discuss confirmation names. The Baptismal name is the norm, but another Christian name may be chosen.
3. Talk to your sponsor about baptism: Were they present at your baptism?; Who were the sponsor's god parent's; Why do you (the sponsor) think my parents chose you?
4. Share with your sponsor what the requirements for Confirmation are. Ask if they can help in some way.
5. Ask who is their favorite saint and why?
6. Contact your sponsor and provide them with the details of the celebration of Confirmation. Don't wait until the month before; do it as soon as you get those details. Remind them again several times!
7. Share some of your struggles with the concept of the Trinity or other teachings of the Faith.
8. Tell your sponsor about your retreat experience(s).
9. If the candidate lives close to you, invite them to participate in a service project with you.
10. If your sponsor lives far away and comes to visit you, take the time to go to Mass with them, celebrate reconciliation, and just spend some one on one time.
11. Ask your sponsor how many sacraments they have celebrated; ask which one was the most memorable.
12. Pray the rosary together.
13. Ask your sponsor if they have a favorite sacramental.
14. Did your sponsor ever consider another vocation or state of life?
15. Ask your sponsor what memories they have of growing up Catholic. How does that compare to your experience?
16. At what age was your sponsor Confirmed? What do they remember? Who was bishop when they were confirmed?
17. After a little research, share some information about your patron saint (the saint with whom you share a name).
18. What is your favorite prayer and why?
19. Have a discussion on political topics that affect a life of faith.
20. Share the struggles of living a chaste life.

Communications

PERIODIC COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE PARISH AND SPONSOR

To help in the formation as well as practical aspects of this process, periodic communication between the parish and sponsor will be necessary. Below are some suggested items to be covered in these communications.

The parish community and the confirmation sponsor share an awesome responsibility. We are both on a journey, assisting a confirmation candidate to come to a deeper understanding of their faith, and ultimately an encounter with the Risen Christ in the Sacrament of Confirmation. Our hope is that we can assist each other in this endeavor. We ask teens to communicate regularly with their sponsor. Teenagers are busy people! Sometimes they forget.

1. Thank them for agreeing to be a Confirmation sponsor
2. Provide them the guidelines for being a sponsor. Below are those required by the Church
 - a. Of sufficient maturity to fulfill the role of sponsor (at least 16 years of age)
 - b. Membership in the Catholic Church
 - c. A practicing Catholic in good standing (this may require a letter from their pastor to your parish)
 - d. Be a fully initiated Catholic, i.e, have been baptized, confirmed, and received Eucharist
 - e. May not be the father or mother of the candidate
3. Inform them of the details of the celebration
4. Provide them with the “Monthly communication suggestions” for candidate and sponsors
5. Any other parish specific information you feel is necessary

Retreat and Service Suggestions

Retreats

Retreats have become a critical part of ministry with youth in the last 30 years. The concept of a retreat however, is an ancient way of encountering God and refreshing the soul. We read in scripture where Jesus removed himself from his daily routine to pray. (Mk 1:35)

The candidates will need to have two (2) retreat experiences during their preparation; one retreat during the *Period of Formation* and a second during the *Period of Reflection and Immediate Preparation*.

The parish has many options for providing these experiences. Some great retreat resources are:

- P2K – Priest Prophet and King Diocesan Youth Conference
- Steubenville North
- Youth Encounter
- NET – National Evangelization Team
- Other Retreats – focusing on high school curriculum content

For information on these or other retreat options contact Greg Gostomski at:

ggostomski@dioceseofmarquette.org

800.562.9745 ext. 125

227.9125

Service

Service has been a long standing tradition in the Confirmation preparation of adolescents. The Diocese of Marquette preparation process requires two types of service:

- To the Parish Community
 - This is serving the Church. It may take the form of liturgical ministries, helping with children's faith formation, or special tasks as needed at church
- To the People of God
 - This is the evangelizing mission of the Church. Going out into the community and performing service at St. Vincent de Paul, Parks and Recreation, food pantries, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, etc. This component of service encourages our teens to become the hands of Christ in the world

Rituals of the Confirmation Process

Call for Inquirers

This ritual is intended to take place at a weekend Mass. The ritual begins at the doors of the church prior to the processional hymn.

This ritual may not take place during the actual celebration of Mass.

Priest: May those who are seeking to be considered candidates for the Sacrament of Confirmation please come to the back of the church.

Candidates proceed to the doors where the priest is.

Priest: These candidates are beginning their preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation. As members of this community they seek our support and prayers as they begin their process of preparation. Let us pray for their spiritual well-being and bless them as they begin this journey of faith.

Prayer for Deliverance from Evil

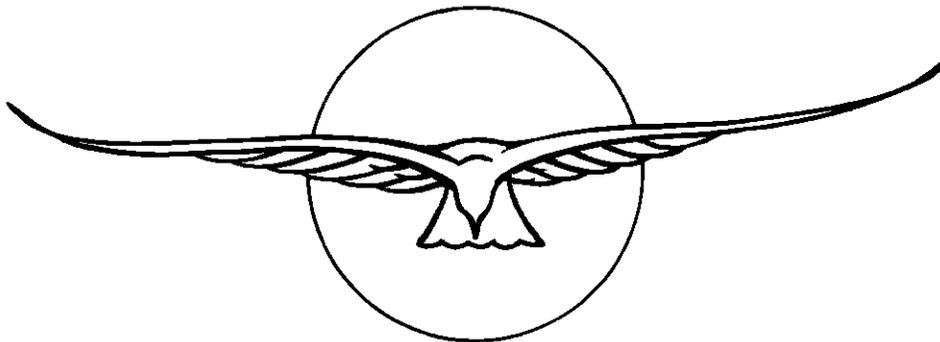
Lord Jesus Christ, loving Redeemer of all, your name alone has the power to save, that name before which every knee should bend in the heavens, on the earth, and under the earth.

We pray for these your servants who worship you as the true God.

Look upon them and enlighten their hearts, free them from the snares and the malice of Satan, heal their weakness and blot out their sins.

Give them discernment to know what pleases you and the courage to live by your Gospel, that they may become the dwelling place of your Spirit, for you live and reign for ever and ever.

Amen.



Rituals of the Confirmation Process

Petitions

God is the source of all wisdom and knowledge. Let us ask him to bless those who seek to learn and grow in him and their teachers.

For students as they begin their sacramental preparation, that the Spirit of God may grant them the gifts of wisdom and understanding, let us pray,

R. Fill us with your wisdom, Lord.

For catechists, that they may share their knowledge with gentleness, patience, and concern for their students, let us pray,

R. Fill us with your wisdom, Lord.

For parents, the first teachers of their children, that their faith and love may be an example to us always, let us pray,

R. Fill us with your wisdom, Lord.

For this community of faith, may our faith be strengthened by these young people and may our prayers support them in their preparation, let us pray,

R. Fill us with your wisdom, Lord.

Prayer of Blessing

With hands extended over the students, the celebrant says immediately:

God of power, look upon these your servants as they deepen their understanding of the Gospel.

Grant that they may come to know and love you and always heed your will with receptive minds and generous hearts.

Teach them through this time of preparation and enfold them within your Church, so that they may share in your holy mysteries both on heaven and earth.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Mass begins. The youth will process in during the song, before the crucifix and be seated.

You may want to include a specific petition for the "inquirers" in the Universal Prayers following the Nicene Creed

Rituals of the Confirmation Process

Rite of Admission into Formation

This ritual is intended to take place at a weekend Mass. The ritual begins at the doors of the church prior to the processional hymn.

This ritual may not take place during the actual celebration of Mass.

Priest: May those who are seeking the Sacrament of Confirmation please come to the back of the church.

Candidates proceed to the rear of the church and join the priest.

(It is preferable that the candidates are called from the community. However, given space considerations for your parish, you may adapt how this is structured; being sure that each is called by name.)

The priest calls out each of the candidates' names.

*The candidate answers: **Present.***

The candidates answer the following question as a group.

Priest: What do you ask of God's Church?

Candidates: To be admitted as a candidate for formation leading to Confirmation.

Candidates' Declaration of Intent

Priest: Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, in his great mercy has given us a new birth unto a living hope, a hope which draws its life from Christ's resurrection from the dead. By baptism into Christ Jesus, this hope of glory became your own. Christ opened for you the way of the Gospel that leads to eternal life. Now, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, you desire to continue that journey of faith. Are you prepared to reflect more deeply on the mystery of your baptism, to listen with us to the apostles' instruction, and to join with us in a life of prayer and service?

Candidates: I am.

Priest: Dear candidates, you have expressed your desire to share fully in the life of the Catholic Church and complete your Christian initiation. I now mark you with the sign of Christ's cross as sign of acceptance into the Period of Formation.

The priest makes the sign of the cross over all together.

Rituals of the Confirmation Process

Priest: Let us pray.

Almighty God, by the cross and resurrection of your Son you have given life to your people. In baptism these your servants accepted the sign of the cross: make them living proof of its saving power and help them to persevere in the footsteps of Christ.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.



Mass begins. The youth will process in during the song, before the crucifix and be seated.

You may want to include a specific petition for the candidates in the Universal Prayers following the Nicene Creed

Rituals of the Confirmation Process

Call to Reflection and Conversion

This ritual is intended to take place at a Liturgy of the Word Service. It could take place the first Saturday of Lent.

Following the homily the Faith Formation Coordinator presents the candidates to the celebrant.

FF Coordinator: Reverend Father,
I am pleased to present to you the candidates who are preparing to be received into the full communion of the Catholic Church. They have found strength in God's grace and support in our community's prayers and example. Now they ask that after this Lenten season, they be admitted to Confirmation.

Priest: Those who desire to participate fully in the sacramental life of the Church please come forward, together with your catechist, as your names are called.

The faith formation coordinator calls the candidates up by name. Each candidate comes forward and stands before the celebrant. When all are assembled, they are joined by their catechist.

Priest: The Christian life and the demands that flow from the sacraments cannot be taken lightly. Therefore, before granting these candidates their request to share fully in the Church's sacraments, it is important that the Church hear the testimony of their catechist about their readiness.
Have they faithfully listened to the apostles' instruction proclaimed by the Church?

Catechist: They have.

Priest: Have they come to a deeper appreciation of their baptism, in which they were joined to Christ and his Church?

Catechist: They have.

Priest: Have they reflected sufficiently on the tradition of the Church, which is their heritage, and joined their brothers and sisters in prayer?

Catechist: They have.

Priest: Have they advanced in a life of love and service of others?

Catechist: They have.

Rituals of the Confirmation Process

Priest: My dear Candidates, the Church recognizes your desire to be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit. Join us this Lent in a spirit of repentance. Hear the Lord's call to conversion and be faithful to your baptismal covenant.

Candidates: Thanks be to God!

Priest: Catechists and parents, continue to support these candidates with your guidance and concern. May they see in you a love for the Church and a sincere desire for doing good.

Candidates and catechists return to their seats.

General Intercessions:

1. That these candidates for Confirmation may come to a deeper appreciation of their baptism into Christ's death and resurrection, let us pray to the Lord...
2. That God may bless those who have nurtured these candidates for Confirmation in faith, let us pray to Lord...
3. That these candidates for Confirmation may embrace the discipline of Lent as a means of reflection and conversion in their final preparations for this sacrament, let us pray to the Lord...
4. That they approach the sacrament of Reconciliation as a means of purification with trust in God's mercy, let us pray to the Lord...
5. That our parish community may grow in charity and be constant in prayer, let pray to the Lord...

The priest, with hands out-stretched over the candidates

Priest: Father of love and power, it is your will to establish everything in Christ and to draw us into his all-embracing love. Guide these chosen ones, strengthen them in their vocation, build them into the kingdom of your Son, and seal them with the Spirit of your promise. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Priest: Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life.

All: Thanks be to God.

Sample Application Form



CONFIRMATION CANDIDATE APPLICATION FORM

_____	_____	_____	_____
FIRST NAME	MIDDLE NAME	LAST NAME	DATE OF BIRTH
_____	_____	_____	_____
STREET ADDRESS	CITY	STATE	ZIP
_____	_____	_____	_____
HOME PHONE	CELL PHONE	EMAIL	
_____	_____	_____	_____
FATHER'S NAME	MOTHER'S NAME		
_____	_____	_____	_____
CURRENT PARISH	ADDRESS OF PARISH		
_____	_____	_____	_____
CHURCH OF BAPTISM*	ADDRESS OF CHURCH		

Candidate's signature: _____ Date: _____

Guardian's signature: _____ Date: _____

**If you were not baptized at your current parish or mission, please provide a copy of your baptismal certificate.*

Sample Letters

Letter to Pastor

- A youth, together with his/her parents, who desires to enter into the formal process of preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation, must make their request in writing to their pastor.
- This letter must be typed neatly!
- The letter should be submitted prior to December 1 of their 10th grade year.
- Below a sample letter of request.

Suggested format for letter to Your Pastor

Date

Rev. Benedetto J. Paris
St. Louis the King
268 Silver Creek Road
Marquette, MI 49855

Dear Fr. Ben,

I, *Your full name*, a member of your parish/mission, am asking to begin formal preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation.

I accept the responsibility to attend Mass every Sunday and Holy Day of Obligation, participate in the classes, rituals, and other requirements set forth by the parish and diocese that will take place over the next two years.

I look forward to meeting with you for my initial interview and learning more about this sacrament and the implications it has for me as a disciple of Christ.

I trust you will grant this request.

Sincerely in Christ,

(Signature here)

YOUR FORMAL NAME

Sample Letters

Letter to the Bishop

- A youth, seeking the Sacrament of Confirmation must write a formal letter of request to the Bishop following the guidelines listed below.
- It must be typed neatly and free of grammatical and spelling errors!
- The letter must be submitted to your pastor/parish catechetical leader prior to the Period of Formation, which begins in February of the 11th grade year. The pastor/parish catechetical leader will then send any requests to the Office of the Bishop, 1004 Harbor Hills Drive, Marquette, MI 49855 no later than March 1 of that same year.

GUIDELINES FOR LETTER TO THE BISHOP

Greeting to be used: Bishop (Name) or Your Excellency,

Body of the letter:

Paragraph 1-State your name and parish. Say something personal about yourself, your family, and or your background.

Paragraph 2-Formally request the sacrament. Provide the Bishop with several reasons why you are seeking to be confirmed.

Paragraph 3-Share some of your experiences during the preparation process. Be specific about: your prayer life, your celebration of the other sacraments, your service to the parish and people of God, and what you learned that touched your heart.

Paragraph 4-Tell the Bishop how you will continue to carry out your life of discipleship through the power of the Holy Spirit. Tell how you plan to draw on your Confirmation and continue the mission of the Church.

Conclusion: Use an appropriate closing salutation such as “Sincerely in Christ” and write your complete signature.

List of Catechetical Topics

Period of Invitation & Evangelization

- POD 7 The Trinity
- POD 8 Saints
- POD 9 Incarnation

Period of Formation

- POD 10 Marks of the Church
- POD 11 Sacraments 1
- POD 12 Sacraments 2
- POD 13 The Mass
- POD 14 Mary
- POD 15 Call to Holiness

Period of Reflection and Immediate Preparation

- POD 16 Morality
- POD 17 Virtues & Vices
- POD 18 Catholic Social Teaching

Period of Mission

- POD 19 Prayer
- POD 20 Catholic Approaches to Prayer
- POD 21 Church History
- POD 22 Church in America
- POD 23 Ecumenism-Interreligious Issues
- POD 24 The Last Things

The catechetical topics listed can be found in the Diocesan High School Curriculum

