

Fatima Confirmation Policy 2018/2019

"Confirmed are made strong and more firmly obliged by word and deed to witness to Christ and to spread and defend the Faith..."
Title II – Sacrament of Confirmation Can. 879 – Canon Law

Confirmation Philosophy – Exploring a Question and a Truth Rev. 05/15/14

The Question = “Who do you say I am?” Mt. 16:15

The Truth = “You are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the powers of hell will not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, whatever you bind...” - Mt 16: 18-19

Confirmation is about becoming part of and building up a Community of Faith. Young adults in Our Lady of Fatima’s Confirmation Program will be given the opportunity and privilege to publicly accept the gift of faith and grace they received in the Sacrament of Baptism and/or affirm or delay their decision to live out a commitment to Jesus and the Catholic Church founded upon the rock of Peter. The Confirmation Formation Process will seek to challenge the Confirmandi (Confirmation Candidates) to answer the question Jesus poses to all disciples - namely, “Who do you say that I am?”

Confirmation Candidate’s Responsibility and Freedom to Choose

What if a Candidate does not want to be Confirmed?: If a Candidate, having performed all provisions of the Fatima Confirmation Policy expresses that they do not want to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation at this time, we will respect that decision, and ask that parents also respect that decision.

We Affirm that Parents can Insist on Candidates Participating in the Formation: We support the right of parents to encourage their young adult to participate in the Confirmation Preparation Program; even if a Candidate expresses that he will probably not want to be confirmed. Exposure to a variety of expressions of faith in our community throughout the Preparation Program expands our understanding and ultimately may lead a Candidate to seek the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Disruption to the Confirmation Program by Less than Enthusiastic Candidates: Although we support a parent’s right to insist their young adult attend Confirmation Sessions, it must be understood that such Candidates cannot disrupt or diminish the process for others through acts of omission or commission.

Prerequisites

1. Age: Candidates must be Baptized Catholics, 16 to 17 years of age, and/or a Junior in High School, and willing to commit to the process outlined in Fatima Confirmation Policy.
2. Registration Forms and Fee Deadline: Candidates must obtain, complete, and submit all Confirmation Registration Forms to the Fatima office by the Registration Deadline.
3. Baptismal Records: Candidates MUST provide a copy of their Baptismal certificate along with their Registration Form.
4. Fees: Candidates will pay a registration fee to cover some of the costs of the Confirmation Program.

Mandatory Formation Expectations for All Confirmation Candidates:

1. All Confirmation candidates will be REQUIRED to attend or complete special Formation Experiences during the Confirmation process. The following is a list of those events/experiences in addition to Sunday Mass/Holy Days of Obligation and the Confirmation Ceremony itself:
 - a. Mandatory Candidate + Parent Meeting
 - b. Catechetical Mass and Sponsor Meeting
 - c. Patron Saint Report
 - d. Confirmation Retreat
 - e. Letter of Intent to Pastor
 - f. Confirmation Rehearsal

Confirmation Name and Patron Saint Report

1. Research of Confirmation Name: All Candidates will research and submit a Patron Saint Report.

2. **Importance of Confirmation Name and Patron Saint:** Candidates will demonstrate a basic grasp of the Church's tradition of either affirming the Baptismal Name or giving new Names to those being confirmed within the Confirmation Liturgy. They will research their Patron Saint, and reflect and report on the virtues and qualities which have caused Catholics to honor and venerate these models of holiness.
3. **Current Church Norms regarding Confirmation Names:**
 - a. **Retain Baptismal Name and Patron Saint:** In the Bible, a person who makes a new and profound commitment to the Lord is often given a new name. Peter, Paul, Abraham, Barnabus, and Sarah are only a small sample. Today, the Catholic norm is to strongly encourage the use of one's own Baptismal name to symbolize the continuity between Baptism and Confirmation. However, in order to retain your Baptismal Name for Confirmation, a Candidate must be able to find and fulfill their research and report obligations on one of their Baptismal Names and that Patron Saint. If a Candidate can't find information on their Baptismal Name and Patron Saint, they should choose a new Confirmation Name and Patron Saint for the purposes of their Confirmation.

Note: Candidates can only choose one Confirmation name. Unless, their Patron Saint had a two-name moniker like Mary Elizabeth or John Paul, one Confirmation name is the norm. If a Candidate goes by a name such as Mary Elizabeth, they must report on either a saint named Mary or Elizabeth for their Confirmation Name or demonstrate from their research how their respective Patron Saint had a two-name moniker.

- b. **Choose a New Confirmation Name and Patron Saint:** For some Candidates, ritually taking on a new name marks the Candidate's choice to live in a new way for Christ. Or, some candidates were given Baptismal Names that are not "officially" recognized with a canonized Patron Saint. Regardless, a Candidate is free to choose to take on one new Confirmation Name and Patron Saint for their Confirmation.

Mass Attendance at Our Lady of Fatima for *All* Confirmation Candidates

1. **Regular Church Attendance:** It is **MANDATORY** for all candidates to **GO TO WEEKEND MASS** (Saturday Vigil or Sunday) and observe **all Holy Day** obligations during the Confirmation Formation process.
2. **Candidates MUST attend weekend Mass (4pm Sat. Vigil or 9am, 11am, or 5pm Sunday) Any Mass is acceptable unless where specifically stated. (Ex. Catechetical Mass, Rehearsal, etc.)**

AT LEAST THREE TIMES A MONTH at Our Lady of Fatima Church: the **purpose** of this is to foster a sense of belonging to Fatima's church community and a sense of awareness and unity with other Confirmation candidates.

3. **Check-In and seating for Mass:** When arriving in Church, **Confirmation students are to sit in rows 2, 3, or 4 ONLY** (on the side of the organ). Friends and guests are to sit elsewhere.

Fatima's Cantor, will take roll before each Mass by marking the time of Mass you have attended. The Cantor will do this for **5 MINUTES** before each Mass begins. Therefore, it is very important to arrive **at least 10 minutes before** Mass begins if you are to be counted present. **If the Cantor is no longer there** when you enter for Mass, it is **YOUR RESPONSIBILITY** to go the choir oratory after Mass to be signed in. Otherwise, you will be marked as **absent**.

4. **Bulletin + Priest's Signature + NAME = Proof of Mass Attendance:** If a Candidate **CAN NOT** attend Mass at Fatima, they are **REQUIRED** to get a **SIGNED PARISH bulletin** from where they did attend Mass.
 - a. Candidate's **FIRST & LAST Name** **MUST** be on the **FRONT** of the bulletin for credit.
 - b. A proof of Mass attendance bulletin must be submitted to the Fatima Office "**BEFORE**" the following Sunday.

- c. Legitimate excuses or requests to alter this requirement in a given month, must be submitted in writing, to the Pastor, prior to missing the Masses. Unless in cases of real and unforeseen emergencies, a written notice is due as soon as possible.
5. **FAILURE TO ATTEND MASS:** Candidates, who fail to attend Mass, OR fail to check-in at Mass, OR give proper written notices, **WILL BE DROPPED** from the Fatima Confirmation program after the second (2nd) lapse.
6. **Dress Code:** Given that Mass is a *holy place*, it is **expected** that **appropriate attire** be worn to Mass. Shorts, provocative, immodest, or dirty attire is not appropriate and will not be tolerated. Chewing gum is also not appropriate at Mass.

Confirmation Sponsor – See Separate Sponsor Form.

Mandatory Confirmation Retreat for *All* Candidates

(See Separate Retreat Outline)

1. Active participation and cooperation is expected in all sessions of the Confirmation Retreat. Candidates are expected to arrive ten (10) minutes before the listed starting times.
 - a. Candidates should expect to work and participate in small groups.
 - b. Candidates should expect quiet time and one-on-one time with leaders.
2. **Electronic Devices are collected & securely stored for duration of Retreat.**
3. **Refusal to Cooperate/Participate at Retreat:** Candidates have a Free Will and can choose not to cooperate by failing to check in all electronic devices. Such a refusal or belligerence will be viewed as a **lack of desire**/immaturity of the Confirmation Candidate to be confirmed and will result in expulsion from the program.
4. **Excused Absences for the Confirmation Retreat:** If, due to a serious illness, unexpected family emergency, injury, or a legitimate conflict outside the control of the Confirmation Candidate, a Candidate is forced to miss the Confirmation Retreat, it is expected that a **written explanation** from the Candidate's parent or guardian will be delivered as soon as possible to the DRE, so that alternative arrangements can be made in a timely manner.
 - a. **Approval to Proceed on an Alternative Confirmation Retreat:** Only after receiving a written explanation of a given legitimate conflict, will the Confirmation Team explore an appropriate alternative Confirmation Retreat plan.
 - b. **Alternative Confirmation Retreats:** If the Confirmation Coordinator and the Pastor grant permission, a Candidate can pursue participating in a Confirmation Retreat at another parish.
 - c. **Letter of Permission:** Once the permission of Fatima's Pastor has been given for a candidate to attend another parish Confirmation retreat, the candidate presents a letter from the alternative Retreat Team **confirming participation** in their retreat.
 - d. **Candidates must follow the Rules at another Confirmation Retreat:** A Confirmation Candidate from Fatima must follow the rules and directions set forth by another parish's retreat.
5. **Attire at the Retreat:** Casual but **modest** clothes are worn at our Retreat.
6. **Bring your Personal Bible to the Retreat**
7. **Letter of Intent:** At the Retreat, each Candidate will work on a Letter of Intent to be Confirmed.

Non-Catholic School Candidate Sessions = Mass + Catechesis + Retreat

1. **Sessions:** Confirmation Sessions are the formal Catechetical part of the Confirmation process. These scheduled sessions begin with Mass and then are followed by formal catechesis. Confirmation Sessions are **mandatory** for every **Non-Catholic School Confirmation candidate**. Material from these sessions will be the foundation for the Confirmation Test.
2. **Sunday Mass + Check-In:** Non-Catholic School Candidates will follow all guidelines listed in this policy regarding Mass, Sign-In, Seating Location, etc. for Catholic School Candidates.
3. **Bring a personal Bible to Sessions and the Retreat:** Each Confirmation Candidate will be expected to have and bring their own personal Bible to Sessions and the Retreat. *The New American Bible for Catholics* is a recommended edition.
4. **Have a Catholic Catechism at Home:** Candidates will need access to a Catechism of the Catholic Church to complete certain Confirmation assignments or go online to:

<http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/what-we-believe/catechism/catechism-of-the-catholic-church/>

5. **Excused Absences for a Confirmation Session:** If, due to a serious illness, injury, unexpected family emergency or a legitimate conflict outside the control of the Candidate, a Candidate is forced to miss a Confirmation Session, it is expected that the following procedures will be followed:
 - a. Candidate or Parent will initiate a timely call to the Fatima Office of the problem and at least leave a message on the answering machine.
 - b. A written, legible, explanation for the absence will be delivered to the Fatima Office to the attention of the Director of Religious Education by 5:00 p.m. on the subsequent Monday. Notes may be faxed to 337-232-0323.
 - c. The note will be signed by both the Candidate and Parent/Guardian.
6. **Make-up Work for Excused Absence:** Student will receive make up material from Catechist.
7. **Unexcused Absences:** Unexcused Absences are not acceptable. Any pattern of Unexcused Absences will be referred to the Pastor for his discernment regarding the candidate's continuation in the program.

Catholic School Candidate Sessions = Mass + Formation Experiences

1. **Participation in all Confirmation Formation Events and Processes:** Catholic School Candidates will participate in all **mandatory** parts of the Confirmation Formation process aside from Sunday night "CCD Prep" sessions.

Confirmation Liturgy Dress Code

1. **Female Confirmation Candidates:** Female Candidates will wear a white garment provided by Our Lady of Fatima over a modest dress or skirt and blouse that dignifies the occasion of the Confirmation Liturgy. Candidates should wear dressy shoes, but wear no pants, no strapless tops, and no décolleté.
2. **Male Confirmation Candidates:** Male Candidates must wear a white, long sleeved, collared shirt, with navy blue pants, and dark dress shoes. Male Candidates will wear a red tie provided by Our Lady of Fatima.
3. **Sponsors:** Sponsors should dress in keeping with the dignity of the Sacrament. Same as that of Confirmation Candidate with the allowance of wearing a pant suit.

