

ST. MATTHEW
CATHOLIC CHURCH
SPOTSYLVANIA, VIRGINIA



CONFIRMATION
FALL 2012

Dear Parents,

November 2011

Welcome to the St. Matthew Sacramental Program for Confirmation. It is extremely important that the student (Confirmation candidate), parents, and the sponsors collectively participate in the Confirmation preparation process. By working together with the Religious Education Office and the catechists, the candidates will be well prepared to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation.

The Sacrament of Confirmation strengthens us to witness to our Faith. With that in mind, an emphasis will be placed on academics and learning the very basic Truths that all Catholics should know.

I am pleased to offer this booklet to assist you in preparing your child for this Sacrament. It is designed to explain all the responsibilities and requirements of the parents, candidate and sponsor.

Your cooperation in accurately completing the forms and returning them to the Religious Education Office in a timely manner is greatly appreciated. You will find a listing of requirements and their due dates on the last page of this booklet. You may deliver the requirements either in person or via mail.

Please do not hesitate to contact me for any reason. My aim is to assist you and your child in whatever way possible to make the Sacrament of Confirmation a spiritually rewarding and memorable event.

Peace of Jesus Christ,

Joanne Warren
Director, Religious Education

PARENTS' RESPONSIBILITIES

“Parents have the first responsibility for the education of their children. Parents have a grave responsibility to give good example to their children. Through the grace of the Sacrament of Matrimony, parents receive the responsibility and privilege of evangelizing their children. Parents have the mission of teaching their children to pray and to discover their vocation as children of God.” (Catechism of the Catholic Church #2223, #2225, and #2226, respectively).

As a parent, you have *the primary role* in the sacramental preparation process for your child. You will help your child grow in the Faith as you prepare him/her for the reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation. ***Your attendance at required events and Sunday Mass is essential.*** Your interest, example, witness, and prayers make a difference in your child’s decision to receive the Sacrament.

If for any reason your child is unable to complete the requirements on time, I will be happy to arrange participation in a Confirmation Mass at another Parish.

PARENTS PLEASE:

- † **Prepare your child for the decision to be confirmed through instruction, example, and prayer.**
- † **Complete the Confirmation Record Form.** (Located on page 13)
(Please attach a copy of your child’s Baptismal Certificate to the Confirmation Record Form)
- † **Assist your child in ensuring all class assignments are completed (including all the material identified in this guideline). Please assist the Candidate as necessary with the materials presented in the classes.**
- † **Ensure your child attends classes and Confirmation Retreat (date to be determined). If any student has a conflict with the Confirmation Retreat scheduled at St. Matthew’s Parish, he/she MUST go to another retreat prior to our Confirmation date. Please contact the Religious Education Office for further instruction.**
Our Confirmation date will be set by the Bishop in the summer of 2012. We will notify you of class and retreat dates upon receipt of our assigned date of Confirmation.

CONFIRMATION CANDIDATE'S RESPONSIBILITIES

“Baptism, the Eucharist, and the Sacrament of Confirmation constitute the sacraments of Christian initiation. The reception of Confirmation is necessary for the completion of baptismal grace. For by the sacrament of Confirmation, the [baptized] are more perfectly bound to the Church and are enriched with a special strength of the Holy Spirit.”

(CCC #1285)

RESPONSIBILITIES:



Attend weekly Mass and frequent Confession.



Attend and participate in weekly scheduled religious education classes.



Demonstrate a basic knowledge of the Truths of our Faith



Commit to continuing your Religious Education after Confirmation



Prepare a typed double-spaced letter to Father Eversole explaining why you would like to be confirmed.

See Guidelines Letter to Father Eversole page 7.



Attend an interview with one of the members of our Clergy.



Select a patron saint's name (of either gender) as a Confirmation name. Candidates are required to write and submit a report on the chosen saint. *See Guidelines for Saint Report page 9.*



Prayerfully consider and select a sponsor.



Perform a minimum of 10 hours of Corporal works of mercy and 5 hours of Spiritual works of mercy as outlined in this handbook.



Attend all events of the Confirmation Retreat.

If for any reason you are unable to complete the requirements on time, I will be happy to arrange participation in a Confirmation Mass at another Parish.

SPONSOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES

The Catechism of the Catholic Church offers this advice: "The Sponsor for Confirmation is one who, fittingly, is a spiritual help to the Candidate."

(CCC # 1311)

There is no regulation specifying that men be sponsors for boys and women be sponsors for girls. Sponsors take on a life-long commitment to help their candidates fulfill the obligation for this sacrament. There is only one sponsor per confirmand.

As the Sponsor for a Candidate wishing to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation, your duties and responsibilities are paramount. Although your role is not the primary role (that is the duty of the parent), you are an important person in the preparation process and for the encouragement of the candidate to persevere in the Faith throughout their life.

REQUIREMENTS:

- † Live a Sacramental life by attending weekly Mass, frequent Confession, and living a moral life consistent with the teachings of the Catholic Church.

- † Must have received all the Sacraments of Initiation; (Baptism, Communion, and Confirmation)

- † If married, the marriage must be valid in the eyes of the Catholic Church.

- † Must be 16 years of age or older.

All Sponsors must be properly disposed to receive Communion at the Solemn Confirmation Mass.

Those sponsors who are from Saint Matthew's should:

Be a registered member of the Parish and attending weekly Mass.

Call the Parish Office to request a Sponsor Letter. These letters should be requested by March 15, 2012

Sponsors who are not from Saint Matthew's should:

Contact their parish and obtain a sponsor eligibility form from their pastor. This letter indicates that the Sponsor is a registered, participating Catholic who is eligible to act as a sponsor.

This letter must be received by March 15, 2012.

SPONSORS WHO CANNOT ATTEND THE CONFIRMATION MASS:

In the event that the Sponsor can not attend the Confirmation Mass a proxy, explicitly designated by the Confirmandi can be selected. The proxy must fulfill the above qualifications. If the Confirmation Candidate has a proxy, the Religious Education Office MUST be notified in advance. The proxy must meet the same requirements as a sponsor and provide an eligibility letter.

A PARENT MAY NOT BE A SPONSOR BUT MAY ACT AS A PROXY SHOULD THE SPONSOR BE UNABLE TO ATTEND.



GUIDELINES FOR LETTER TO FATHER EVERSOLE

Letter is due March 15, 2012

This letter is from you and should contain your thoughts. If you need some help getting started, pray and reflect on the following questions:

Why do I wish to be Confirmed?

How am I preparing for Confirmation?

What will I do to continue to grow in my faith as a Catholic?

What experiences have I had on my journey to being Confirmed?

What are my thoughts about Confirmation?

Will I commit to weekly Mass attendance, frequent Confession, and continuing my Catholic education through the High School Religious Education program?

After prayer and reflection, prepare a one page, double-spaced letter to Father Eversole explaining why you would like to be confirmed. This should be submitted to the Religious Education Office.



INTERVIEW WITH CLERGY

Confirmation Candidates will be contacted in the Spring by the Religious Education Office to schedule an interview with one of the clergy (priests or deacons) of our parish. These interviews will take place in late spring and early summer. One parent should plan on attending this interview.

The purpose of the interview is not to make the candidate nervous, but to foster a conversation about Confirmation between the candidate and the clergy. Candidates are encouraged to ask any questions they may have and be prepared to answer basic questions such as but not limited to:

- What happened to me when I was baptized?
- What will happen to me when I am Confirmed?
- What are the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit?
- How does each gift help me?
- What will the Bishop say when he Confirms me?
- What is the name of the oil used in Confirmation?
- Why did I select a particular saint as my Confirmation name?

GUIDELINES FOR SAINT REPORT

Report is Due March 15, 2012

Each Confirmation Candidate is required to write a Saint Report featuring the saint whose name has been chosen as the Confirmation name. The purpose of this report is for the candidate to learn about their saint and not just put words on paper.

The following information should be included in the report:

- † **Personal influence of the saint on the Candidate including:**
 - **Why did you choose this saint?**
 - **What is it about the saint that you would hope to emulate?**
 - **What was the most interesting thing you learned about the saint?**

- † **Biographical information on the saint**
 - **date and place of birth and death**
 - **description of saint's service to God and others**
 - **Feast Day of the saint**
 - **Symbol, if any, associated with the saint**
 - **Circumstances of death**
 - **If the saint is a patron of any group, discuss the reason and significance**
 - **Discuss any specific devotion(s) that were attributed to this saint**

- † **What was there about this person that moved the Church to name him/her a saint?**

- † **Bibliography**

This report should be typed, double spaced and at least 500 words. Any Report submitted with inadequate content or format will be returned for a re-write. MATERIAL CUT AND PASTED FROM THE INTERNET WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

Please remember that the Saint's Report is to be completed on the name chosen as the Confirmation Name.

GUIDELINES FOR WORKS OF MERCY HOURS DUE MARCH 15, 2012

A minimum of fifteen hours of works of mercy is required. Service is based on the spiritual and corporal works of mercy, and most of all, the example of Christ who came to serve. When providing service, the following points should be considered:

- † Your work of mercy is not just a job to be done, but the beginning of a life-long commitment of witness by serving Christ in others.
- † You should reflect on how your “work” is helping you to take on the mind and heart of Christ, fulfills the needs of others, and builds up the Christian community.
- † Your work of mercy should be done with a spirit of giving and greater glory of God and not for any thanks you may receive.

Below is a list of *suggested* works of mercy. You may wish to do some of these or perhaps you may find some other unique ways to serve. Sports activities and secular after school projects do not fall under the corporal or spiritual works of mercy.

Spiritual Works of Mercy (Five Hours)

- Spend an hour with Jesus during First Friday Adoration
- Attend an additional Mass during the week or Saturday morning
- Read Sacred Scripture or Biographies of the Saints

Corporal Works of Mercy (Ten Hours)

- Many parish groups are in need of additional help during the year. Be sure to contact these groups when they advertise for help in the Parish Bulletin.
- Help the St. Joseph Guild with Gardening
- Saint Matthew Thrift Store
- Giving Tree during Advent
- Help with Religious Education Events
- Offer your service (without pay) to an elderly neighbor to do special projects such as mowing, raking leaves, shoveling snow or weeding.
- Babysit (free of charge) for parents who are providing a service, i.e. scout leader or catechists. Baby sitting for your own parents or for a neighbor who is not giving service to others **DOES NOT COUNT TOWARD** service hours.
- Past service projects have included collection of coats for the poor, working at the food bank, volunteering at a senior citizen home, and helping the Knights of Columbus.

Service hours must be listed on the Works of Mercy Summary Form found on page 12 of this packet.



Saint Vincent dePaul

CONFIRMATION RECORD FORM

Due March 15, 2012

PLEASE PRINT ALL INFORMATION:

Confirmation (Saint) Name Chosen by Candidate: _____
THIS IS THE NAME THE BISHOP WILL BE GIVEN

Name: _____
Last **First** **M.I.**
Print Name as shown on the *Baptismal Certificate*

Address: _____
Number & Street **City** **Zip Code**

() _____ / ____ / ____
Phone Number **Date of Birth** **Place of Birth (City, State)**

Father's Name: _____
First **Middle** **Last**

Mother's Maiden Name: _____
First **Middle** **Maiden Name**

Church of
Baptism: _____
or Profession of Faith(POF) (Please print full name of Church)

Full Street Address of Church of Baptism or POF **City** **State** **Zip Code**

Date of Baptism* **Year and Church of First Holy Communion**

* Please attach a copy of the Candidate's Baptismal Certificate or Profession of Faith (for those not Baptized in the Catholic Church) to this form. Candidates who were Baptized or made a Profession of Faith at St. Matthew's MUST also provide a copy of their certificate.

Name of Confirmation Sponsor: _____

Is the Sponsor a Member of Saint Matthew's Parish? _____

What is the sponsor's relationship to the person being confirmed? _____
(Please indicate only one Sponsor)

