

OUR LADY OF THE LAKE CONFIRMATION GUIDELINES

One of the things we are most proud of at Our Lady of the Lake is our Confirmation program. Key to the success of our program is that those involved work as a team sharing a common goal: we plant the seeds and God in His love graces our life with the gift of faith. Our Confirmation program supports and assists parents—always the primary religious educators of their children—in furthering the spiritual growth of their young teenagers by helping them develop a deeper personal relationship with God and participate more fully in the life of the Church.

Why is it vital that every baptized Catholic receive the sacrament of Confirmation? In Baptism, we begin new lives as disciples of Jesus Christ. Confirmation “seals” or completes the initiation begun at Baptism by conferring the power of the Holy Spirit in a special way. The graces of this sacrament inspire and strengthen the baptized to give effective witness to their faith by living in closer accord with authentic Gospel values. In addition, Confirmation calls the baptized to develop a closer personal union with Jesus and to play a more active and responsible role in building up the church of Christ.

To prepare our young people for Confirmation, we work to the best of our ability to establish a Christian atmosphere in a safe environment where we try to treat one another the way Jesus would want. We then provide a comprehensive two-year program involving regular classes, retreats, service and prayer opportunities, special liturgies and Scripture study.

We also expect that candidates will be worshipping regularly at Sunday Mass. Communication is most important in this team effort, so we encourage an open line among parents, professional and volunteer staff, and students. Beginning this year we will have individual family faith interviews. There will be a sign up sheet at the parent meetings. We are always available for questions, problem solving, and encouragement.

ADMISSION POLICY The Confirmation Program is open to all registered members of Our Lady of the Lake Parish who have completed grades one through eight of religious education. Special need students will be placed into the mainstream when possible.

ATTENDANCE

Candidates are making a full commitment to attend all sessions. Please print a copy of class schedule and other important dates from our Website ourladyofthelake.org, and keep this posted in a visible place for you and your teen. Full attendance is expected on all levels of the program. Attendance records will be kept on a class basis; absences will be noted and reviewed by pastoral staff and catechists. Make-up work will be assigned for those who miss a session. Candidates who miss more than two sessions for trivial reasons will be asked to reflect on their readiness for Confirmation

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

All our classes take place on Sunday afternoon or evening. Students should be dropped off and picked up at the Parish Center. If a child lives within walking distance and will be responsible for him/herself, please advise Laurie DiCianni or the Priest-In-Charge in writing. Classes for 9th grade begin at 4:45pm and dismissal is at 7:30pm, after 6:30pm Mass. Our 10th grade classes will meet in Church at 6:20 pm for 6:30 Mass and then go directly to classroom. We will attend 6:30pm Mass as a group, they will be dismissed from the Parish Center at 9:00pm when confirmation class ends.

BEHAVIOR

It is expected that the atmosphere at Our Lady of the Lake will be at all times a Christian one. Respect for one another and for oneself is paramount in a religious setting. Conduct unbecoming a Christian student and other inappropriate behavior cannot be tolerated in such an environment. If a disciplinary problem arises in the classroom, the teacher will try to handle the situation. If it becomes necessary, the director will take the necessary steps to resolve the situation, including the parents and godparents.

SACRAMENTAL GUIDELINES

Diocesan guidelines on the Sacrament of Confirmation are included in this handbook. In addition, any student who wishes to receive a Sacrament needs to provide us with a copy of his/her baptismal certificate when requested to do so. A parent meeting prior to the beginning of the preparation for the sacrament is required to answer any questions concerning the theology or celebration of the sacrament. In addition, a retreat is required for ninth and tenth graders who will be receiving Confirmation.

DIOCESAN POLICY ON CONFIRMATION

1. A well-disposed baptized Catholic, who is appropriately prepared according to age and condition, has the right to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation.
2. At the present time it is recommended that the celebration of Confirmation be in the years of high school, preferably junior or sophomore year, unless pastoral reasons and individual cases indicate otherwise. The time of the actual celebration of the sacrament should be determined by the readiness of the candidates and the parish community.
3. The right of the candidate to postpone Confirmation is to be respected by parents and pastor. The parish has the responsibility to maintain contact with the candidate.
4. The adult(s) responsible for the young person shall be involved in the preparation of the young person for this sacrament and participate in a significant manner at its actual celebration.
5. Parishes must provide programs geared to the needs, cultures and lifestyles of the candidates and of the adults responsible for the young persons.
6. Remote catechesis concerning the Sacrament of Confirmation should begin as soon as a child enters into the formal process of catechesis. It should continue throughout the school years and throughout life.
7. Each person to be confirmed should have a sponsor and a catechist. The catechist is to be a person chosen by the parish and is responsible for no more than twelve (15) candidates. The sponsor is a person chosen by the candidate and is to be responsible for the individual candidate before and after the celebration of the sacrament.

CANDIDATES FOR CONFIRMATION AT OUR LADY OF THE LAKE

Students in grade ten are to be considered candidates for Confirmation provided that they have completed their 2st year of Confirmation preparation.

Readiness:

1. A student who desires Confirmation is eligible to become a candidate if he/she is baptized, practicing Catholic who has received the Sacraments of Penance and Eucharist.
2. A student must successfully complete a religious education program for grades one through eight.
3. Evidence of readiness would include:
 - An expression on the part of the candidate of the desire to receive the Sacrament.
 - An interview with a parish staff member or catechist to help identify where the young person is at in their faith journey.

Participation:

After acceptance as a candidate, the candidate will commit himself/herself to be involved in a comprehensive program, which will include:

- Liturgical celebrations especially weekly Saturday/Sunday Mass.
- Full participation in religious instruction.
- Participation in the Confirmation Retreat prepared by Our Lady of the Lake.
- Final Interview and Service Records completed.

Service projects:

The confirmed Christian is a person who recognizes the need to follow the call of Jesus, to love one another as He does. To be a person of service is essential in being a Christian. All Confirmation Candidates will be expected to participate in one group project per year. This will give the candidates an opportunity to come together and serve the larger community. Also each candidate will be responsible for 15 hours of individual community service. They can obtain service hour slips from their catechist.

RETREATS

The 9th grade confirmation class will have a retreat day in February or March. This retreat is a time to step away from our busy lives to reflect and celebrate our relationship with Jesus Christ. This day will include talks, discussions, prayer, activities, food & fellowship. It will be held on a Saturday and will conclude with 5:30pm Mass.

The 10th grade confirmation class will have a weekend retreat; specific details on time, dates, and place will be available later in the year. This gives the candidates an opportunity to share their faith with older teens from our parish. We are blessed with a dedicated youth team that facilitates the weekend, and assures an enriching experience for all. Through talks, small group discussions, scripture, prayer, music and many activities we explore our faith as Catholics.

THE ROLE OF PARENTS IN THE PROGRAM

Parents are expected to support the decision of their son/daughter and to take an active role in their preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation. This can be best achieved in the following ways.

1. Participation in all meetings specifically for parents.
Participate regularly in the celebration of Sunday Mass.
2. Participation in all liturgical celebrations connected with the program especially Saturday/Sunday Mass.
3. Providing concrete faith examples for your son/daughter.
4. Faith Interviews
5. Sponsor
The sponsor for Confirmation must be a Confirmed Roman Catholic, active in his/her faith life.

YOUTH MINISTRY PROGRAMS

All members of our parish community in high school are invited to participate in our regular youth gathering. We meet every Monday evening from 6:30 to 8:00pm in the Youth Room at Parish Center. The aim of youth gatherings is to allow our youth to feel that they are important in the life of the Church, to meet other young people who share their faith and to develop relationships in a healthy atmosphere. Youth gatherings are safe, non-threatening opportunities for young people to be together and have fun. Up to date details can be found in the bulletin or by calling the rectory.

RIGHT TO AMEND

If for any reason we feel these guidelines need to be amended we will do so in writing promptly to all parents/guardians.