

## **Saint John Neumann Catholic Church**

### **CONFIRMATION PREPARATION REQUIREMENTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

*Under the guidance of the pastor, the candidate's "home parish" is responsible for the preparation and celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation.*

#### **WHO MAY BE CONFIRMED?**

To be confirmed, one must:

- Be a baptized person who has not been confirmed
- Have celebrated his/her twelfth birthday, and be in the eighth grade or above.
- Have received Roman Catholic education from grade 1, and have received religious education during the year of reception of the sacrament, with an adequate attendance record.
- Give evidence of knowledge and understanding of the responsibilities of being a member of the Catholic Church, as well as some appreciation of sacramental life with a sincere desire for the sacrament.

#### **CONFIRMATION SPONSOR**

Candidates choose a Sponsor that will be a faith mentor for them as they prepare to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. Candidates and Sponsors should meet/talk several times during the preparation process. Also required is a **Sponsor Eligibility Form**, which must be filled out and returned to the Religious Formation Office by **September 27-28, 2011**. It is recommended that godparent be chosen as a sponsor.

#### **PARTICIPATION IN THE PREPARATION PROCESS**

*"The Sunday celebration of the Lord's Day and His Eucharist is at the heart of the Church's life. Sunday is the day on which the Paschal Mystery is celebrated in light of the apostolic tradition and is to be observed as the foremost holy day of obligation in the Universal Church." (CCC#2176)*

During this preparatory year for Confirmation, candidates should embrace their commitment to the Church, which is the People of God, as a whole. Included in that commitment is the obligation to participate in the **Sunday Eucharistic Celebration**. Faithfulness to this obligation will serve as an indication of each candidate's desire and commitment to embrace the life and obligations that accompany full membership in the Catholic Church. Failure to attend Mass (or other aspects of the Confirmation Preparation Program) may necessitate deferring the candidate's reception of Confirmation until full participation in the program can be assured.

Additionally, two **Parent/Candidate Workshops** are scheduled in which the various facets of

the Confirmation Candidate Body (SJN Religious Formation Students, Mother of God students, Mary of Nazareth Students, and the Homeschooling Students) come together as one SJN community to learn about the life of Faith and the Holy Spirit in preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation. Attendance is mandatory for both Workshops which are scheduled for **Saturday, October 15<sup>th</sup>** and **Saturday, February 4<sup>th</sup>**. Workshops begin at 10:30AM and conclude at 12:45PM.

## **RITE OF ENROLLMENT OF CANDIDATES**

At the parish **5pm Mass** on **September 24, 2011** the candidates will be formally enrolled into the Confirmation program. During this induction service, the candidates make a covenant to enter into a program of preparation, with the parish community as witness. This is a *mandatory event* which all candidates and parents must attend. Sponsors are strongly encouraged to attend to fully participate in their candidate's preparation process.

## **CONFIRMATION NAME**

Baptism is the first of the three Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist). Any initiation entails entry into a community of people who share a common set of ideas, values, goals, and mission. It stands to reason then, that initiation (a ritualized form of entry) into a group involves learning about that group's shared identity and value system. To be initiated into the group means to take on the group's shared identity as part of one's own personal identity. Initiation into the Catholic Church is to take on the identity of Catholic Church as part of one's own personal identity. In fact, it means to take on a life of discipleship in Christ, that is, to live as Jesus lived. In other words, it means to live a life in imitation of Christ in conjunction with the whole of the Catholic Christian Community which constitutes the Body of Christ.

What is the significance of names in this scheme? Almost everyone has two names: a first name and a last name. A person's first name indicates their individual identity while the last indicates family of origin. Additionally, names are a sign of power. At baptism, all sin is forgiven in the *name* of the Father, of the Son, and the Holy Spirit. A "Christian" name- the name of one of the saints or heroes of the Bible, for example, is given as one's "patron." Likewise, many examples can be found in the New Testament of the Apostles' curing and forgiving in the *name* of Jesus as well as stories in Old Testament Scriptures in which a person's name was changed to emphasize a new dimension in a person's relationship with God.

The Sacrament of Confirmation - a once in a life-time sacrament - involves entry into a new phase in one's faith journey in which one enters more deeply in relationship with God and with His Church. The selection of a new name is a customary way of signifying this new phase in one's relationship with God and the Catholic Christian Community. Because of the close connection between baptism and confirmation, it is acceptable to simply choose one's baptismal name. In any case, serious consideration should be given to the selection, baptismal or otherwise, to the choice of a name. A saint's name is generally selected on the basis of that saint's exemplary characteristics and service to God which the candidate also wishes to emulate in his/her new phase of their faith journey. This "Confirmation name" is used in the ceremony when the candidate is sealed in the Holy Spirit with oil.

A Four Part Outline/Worksheet is included in this packet to assist the candidate in the selection, study, reflection, and writing process for his/her Saints Report and Project. The **Saints Report and Project** is due by **January 24-25, 2012.**

A **Confirmation Name Selection Form** is included in this packet which must be filled out and returned to the Office of Religious Formation by **January 17-18, 2012.**

## SERVICE PROJECT

An essential element to the preparation process is the Service Project component. Because the Sacrament of Confirmation is, for many candidates, the last of the Initiation Sacraments, it carries with it serious connotations of commitment to the life and mission of the Church. Praxis-oriented catechesis on the life of discipleship brings the meaning of the candidates' identity as Catholic Christians into sharp focus. Because membership in the parish community gives fundamental shape to this identity, the Service Project component will be fulfilled within this context. For this reason as well, only projects approved by the Office of Religious Formation will be accepted.

While some projects may be completed, with approval, during the summer, a complete list of parish projects will be available in September. The projects will be divided into categories that emphasize four aspects of the life of Discipleship:

- a) **Parish Service** (*Projects such as helping with the Parish Activities like the Spaghetti Dinner, VBS, Coffee and Donuts, the Religious Education Program, etc.*)
- b) **Serving Others As a Community:** Serving the surrounding community with the SJN parish community. (*Projects such as participating in the March For Life, assisting with the Angel Tree and/or the Thanksgiving Baskets, gathering items for the Gabriel Project or the Saint Vincent De Paul Society, etc.*)
- c) **Praying and Worshipping As a Community:** (*Projects such as service as an altar server, an usher, a choir member, attending Adoration or Exalt Prayer Services, etc.*)
- d) **Service At Home**

Candidates must select and participate in four projects, one from each category. A Service Project Journal will be provided to each candidate that will contain catechetical exercises and material to help elucidate the significance of their service project activities. The Confirmation Service Projects must be fulfilled and completed **Service Project Journals** turned in to the Office of Religious Formation by **March 20-21, 2012.**

## PERSONAL PRAYER JOURNALS

In order to enter more deeply into your preparation for Confirmation, candidates are expected to keep a Prayer Journal. Throughout the preparation months, time each day should be taken to thank God for His blessings, praise Him for His goodness, examine one's conscience, and to offer petitions for oneself and others. This practice is intended to help candidates form the habit of prayer as a source of strength for his/her faith life. Personal Prayer Journals will not be turned in.

## LETTER TO THE BISHOP

Before the celebration of Confirmation, the Bishop is required by Canon Law to know that the candidates have been properly prepared. He should also know that the candidates have a desire for and knowledge of the sacrament. An outline and specifications are included in this packet to assist the candidate with the composition of his/her Letter to the Bishop. **Bishop's Letters** are due on or before **February 14-15, 2012**.

## CANDIDATE INTERVIEW

Interviews will take place through-out the months of March and April. The purpose of the interview with the Pastor, parish priest, deacons, and Director of Religious Formation is to ascertain the willingness and the readiness of the candidate to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. A review list of questions and answers will be provided to each candidate for study and preparation in advance of the interview. The interviews are scheduled through the Office of Religious Formation.

## CONFIRMATION RETREAT

The **Confirmation Retreat**, which is scheduled for **Monday, January 16, 2011** (Martin Luther King Holiday) is a **mandatory event**. As a vital part of the preparation process, the retreat provides an opportunity in a formatted space and time for the candidates to reflect on the spiritual significance of their physical (service projects) and intellectual (classroom and home studies) activities as they prepare for the Sacrament of Confirmation. The Confirmation retreat is structured to enable the candidates to listen to the testimony of young Christian adults, to engage in group discussion with other candidates, and to participate in group activities and prayerful exercises. This will help them to realize their identity as Catholic Christians with greater clarity and to discern God's call to them to enter more fully into relationship with Him and others through the life of the Christian community, the Church. **Retreat Forms and Fees** (*Parental Permission, Medical Release, and Student Code of Behavior*) are due at the Religious Formation Office on **October 25-26, 2011**.

## RITE OF CONFIRMATION

The parish requests three choices to the Archdiocesan Office of Worship for Candidates to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation in April or May. As soon as the Archdiocesan Office informs the parish Office of Religious Education of the date, parents and candidates are informed. There is a **mandatory** rehearsal for the candidate and candidate's sponsor the day or evening before the Confirmation.