

Mary, Mother of the Church Parish Religious Education Program

Confirmation Handbook 2023 - 2024



**Fr. Martin O'Reilly, Pastor
Fr. Cesar Anson, Parochial Vicar
Margaret Zola, Business Manager and CRE/SEC
Carol Schulz, Bulletin Coordinator and CRE Assistant**

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May the God of
HOPE
fill you with all
JOY and **PEACE**
in believing,
so that you may
abound in hope
by the power of the
HOLY SPIRIT.



Romans 15:13

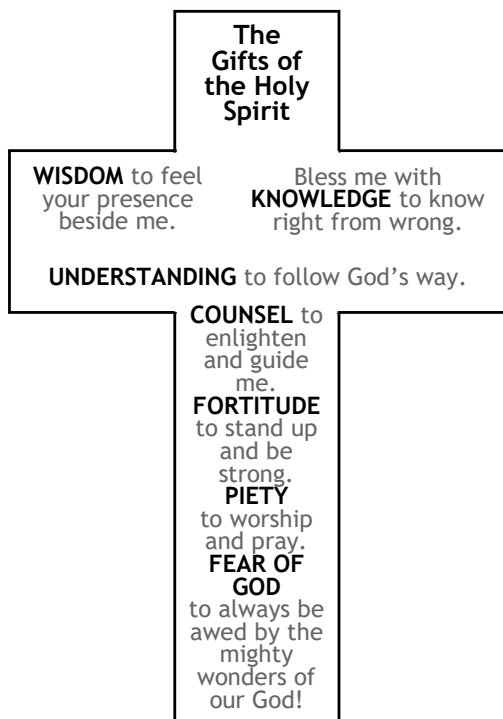
Dear Parents and Confirmation Candidates,

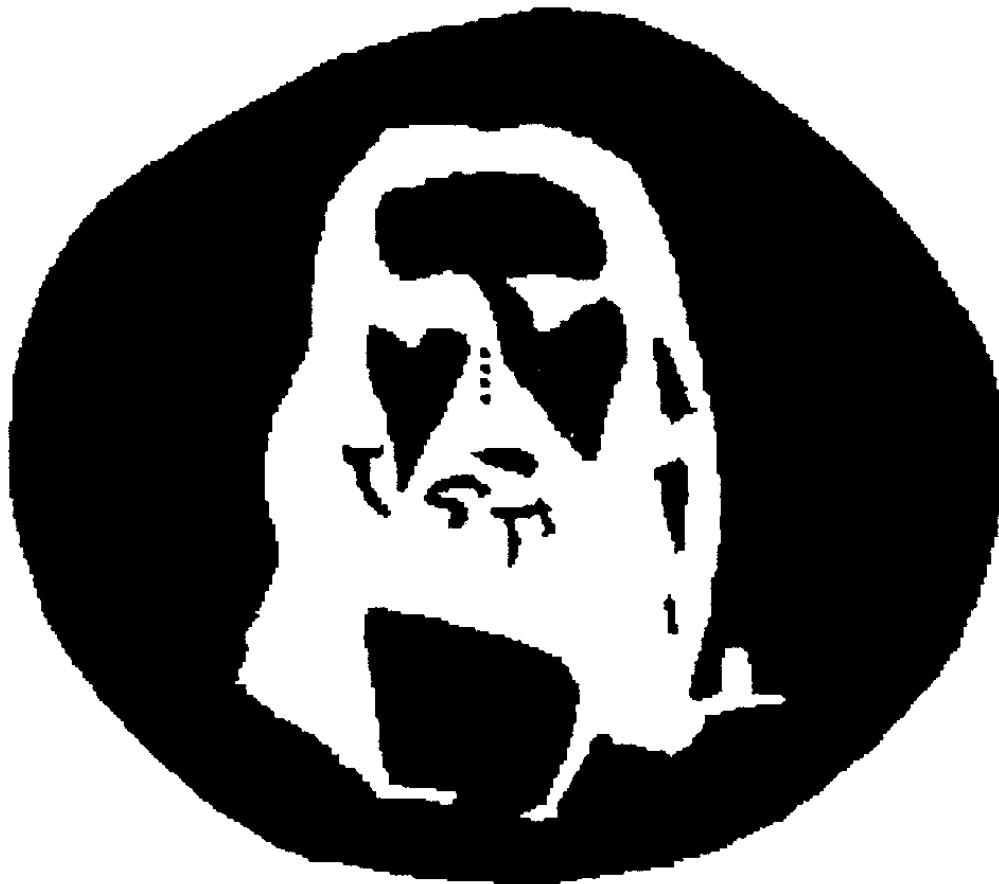
The Sacrament of Confirmation Program allows the Confirmation candidate to grow closer to Christ and His Church through regular classes. In class they will be drawn into a deeper faith that will transform their hearts and change their lives not only during their Confirmation preparation phase, but into the rest of their high school and young adult years. Confirmation is not the end of the road. Confirmation is not the final step in their faith. Confirmation is the stepping stone into a mature religious life.

The best preparation is to practice and live your Catholic faith through word and deed. As you continue ministering to your family, your parish and your community, we ask you to be especially faithful in attending Sunday Mass. It has the greatest impact on the faith formation for Catholics. Each of us has been called to witness Christ's love for each other.

During our time together, we will examine what it takes to live your faith day by day and practice those lifelong skills that lead to a richer spiritual life. May these blessings be a continuous faith journey guided by the Holy Spirit to follow Jesus Christ.

Margaret Zola
Carol Schulz
Liz Evans, 8th Grade Catechist
Regina Wachenheim, 8th Grade Catechist





WHO IS IT YOU SEE IN THE GREAT LIGHT?

CONCENTRATE ON THE FOUR DOTS IN THE MIDDLE
OF THE PICTURE FOR ABOUT 30 SECONDS.

THEN CLOSE YOUR EYES AND TILT YOUR HEAD BACK.

**HE IS ALWAYS WITH YOU,
EVEN WHEN YOU CAN'T SEE HIM!**

What is the Sacrament of Confirmation?

The Sacrament of Confirmation is the strengthening and fullness of the Holy Spirit already received in Baptism. When we were baptized we became children of God. As children of God we share the life of God; the life of three persons in one love. The Spirit is the love between Father and Son. The Spirit acts in us urging us to move beyond our individual selves into making the community on Earth like the community of love that is God. Confirmation calls us to a greater participation in the mission of Jesus and the Church. Through Confirmation our relationship with God is deepened and we are incorporated more completely into the body of Christ. Confirmation obliges us, as true witnesses of Christ, to spread and defend the faith by word and deed.

Confirmation Candidate Required Responsibilities

Based on the guidelines published by the Diocese of Trenton, the following requirements must be met by all candidates before receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation at Mary, Mother of the Church Parish.

All Candidates must assume the responsibility of completion of all parts of preparation and program obligations listed below.

- Attend Sunday Mass, Holy Days of Obligation and pray daily.
- Attend ALL classes and fully participate in open discussions.
- Attend all required meetings, retreats and Catholicism 101.
- Know the teachings of the Catholic faith, the Church precepts and formal prayers.
- Complete at least 30 hours of Community Service, including at least 10 in parish.
- Attend the Diocesan Youth Conference (DYC) February 3, 2024.
- Complete all paperwork on time:
 - Agreement of Parent/Guardian and Sponsor
 - Rite of Enrollment
 - Choosing of a Christian Name (Saint's Name)
 - Draft and Final Letter to Fr. Martin O'Reilly, Pastor
 - Report on Service Activity once 30 hours have been completed
 - Confirmation Application and preparation fee (handed out in spring)
- Participate in parish community life by participating at Mass, attending functions offered throughout the year and as listed on the RE Calendar.
- Exhibit appropriate Christian behavior at all times.

CHOOSING A SPONSOR

- A sponsor is a person who knows the candidate and can help them on their spiritual journey.
- Ideally a sponsor is someone who already has been involved in the spiritual formation of the candidate, such as a godparent, relative or member of the local parish.
- When possible a Baptismal godparent should be chosen in order to continue to guide the relationship between Baptism and Confirmation.
- A sponsor needs to be acquainted with their responsibilities and given opportunities for inclusion in the candidate's immediate preparation program.
- The sponsor is one who is willing to share their with the candidate.
- The sponsor is to be a person of strong and committed personal faith.
- The sponsor needs to be a honest, caring, committed and encouraging person who will help the candidate grow in their understanding of the faith as the young person comes to a deeper appreciation of God in their life.

I have chosen you to guide me on my path to Confirmation.

ELIGIBILITY TO BE A SPONSOR

(According to Church Canon Law and Diocesan mandates.)

For a person to be eligible to be a sponsor:

- Must be 16 years of age and fully initiated in the Catholic Church.
- Must belong to the Catholic Church and have received Baptism, First Holy Communion and Confirmation.
- May be a godparent from Baptism.
- May not be the child's parent or stepparent.
- If married, must be in a valid Catholic marriage.
- An active and practicing member of the Church.
- Must not be prohibited by law from exercising the role of a sponsor.

If your sponsor is not a member of Mary, Mother of the Church Parish please ask them to contact their Parish for a Sponsor Certificate or Letter of Eligibility from their Pastor with the Church seal. Please attach the Certificate/Letter to this agreement or have their Church mail directly to our RE Office. If they are mailing it directly to us, please be sure that they include the word Confirmation and your name for reference. (see below)

Confirmation - *your name*

Mary, Mother of the Church Parish RE

45 Crosswicks Street

Bordentown, NJ 08505

SUGGESTIONS FOR SERVICE PROJECTS

Corporal Works of Mercy

WHAT ARE SERVICE HOURS? They are hours spent sharing your love of Jesus Christ with others who may or may not be as fortunate as you are. It is your opportunity to show that you believe in Jesus and what He taught us by your actions and deeds. It is your responsibility to preform 30 hours of community service, 10 within our parish. What gifts or talents do you already have? What would you like to do to help others? **Below is just a list of suggestions, think outside the box.**

Is a service not listed below that you'd like to preform? Email Mrs. Schulz cschulz@mmtcp.org for approval. We'd hate for you to do a service that doesn't fall under our Confirmation guidelines.

- | | |
|---|---|
| Altar Server (maximum 10 hours) | Organize or help with a recycling project |
| Assist a needy family | Parish events |
| Assist neighbors with chores or lawn care | Perform special services for the handicapped |
| Babysit for a neighbor - nonpaying | Prepare a meal or dessert for a family whose suffered a death |
| Bake for a cake sale | Prepare entertainment or holiday parties for nursing homes |
| Check your own Public School for areas you may serve | Raise money for retirement funds for elderly religious |
| Parish Choir or individual choir dates (maximum 10 hours) | Read to or make audio tapes for the blind or elderly |
| Coach or assist with young children's sports Activities (nonprofit) | Serve as an aide in RE classes (not during your class time) |
| Collect food for the poor | Shop for an elderly neighbor (nonrelative) |
| Collect toys for poor children | TASK – Trenton Area Soup Kitchen |
| Do volunteer work in a hospice | Tutor after school |
| Help at CER Summer Program (call CER 298-9123 x1200 or x1202) | Visit the elderly at home or nursing home |
| Help with a fund raising project for charitable organization | Volunteer to read at a Book Store or Public Library |
| Help neighbor in need | Volunteer to work in a hospital |
| Initiate a "cleanup" campaign (parish, school or park) | Volunteer in our Food Pantry |
| Knights of Columbus events | Work in a special education program |
| Lector for Mass | Write cards or letters to hospitalized children or teens |
| Make gifts or favors for hospitals or nursing homes | Write letters to government officials about justice issues |
| Make rosaries (contact RE Office) | Vacation Bible School decorate or volunteer for the week |

Parents/sponsor consider staying with our child for safety purposes if you don't know the people involved. Ask if the service project has a VIRTUS, NJ CAP, or other Child Abuse Awareness Program affiliated with it, as this will help you decide if it is safe to leave your child.

WHAT DO I DO AFTER I'VE COMPLETED MY SERVICE?

After your service has been completed, you must email Mrs. Schulz with follow up including date, hours, contact name and email, what service you performed, how you felt about it, and would you want to do this service again?

Confirmation - 8th Graders

Additional Required Dates

Confirmation Fall Retreat	Saturday, October 14, 2023	9am-1pm @ Notre Dame High School
Catholic 101	December	During class time
Diocesan Youth Conference (DYC)	Saturday, February 3, 2024	8:00-4:30pm @ Red Bank Catholic High School
Confirmation Spring Retreat	Saturday, March 16, 2024	TBD
Confirmation	Friday, May 17, 2024	4:00pm
Confirmandi return wearing robes	Sunday, May 19, 2024	11:30am

ADDITIONAL PAPERWORK TO BE HANDED OUT IN CLASS

FORM

Rite of Enrollment

Agreement of Parent/Sponsor

Choosing of a Christian Name

Draft Letter to Fr. Martin

Report on Service Activity

DUE DATE

completed in class

11/7/2023

1/31/2024

2/27/2024

4/14/2024

Mary, Mother of the Church Confirmation Program



Rite of Enrollment

I recognize my preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation is a special commitment and requires my involvement. As such, I pledge to make my best effort to:

- Attend Mass every weekend and on Holy Days of Obligation;
- Attend All Confirmation sessions and rites;
- Offer my talents and services;
- Attend all retreats and meetings;
- Celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation before receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation;
- Continue to live my life as a witness to Jesus Christ through prayer, service and worship long after my Confirmation.

I also recognize that prayer is the beginning of stewardship in the Lord's work. When we spend time with God in prayer we become spiritually prepared to offer ourselves in service to others. As such, I pledge to make my best effort to:

- Make a real commitment to nurture my relationship with God through prayer
- Try to become a more active and involved member of the Parish
- Spend 15 minutes daily in personal prayer
- Pray together with my loved ones often
- Read the Bible 1 hour a week

By signing this form, I am taking my first step in my public commitment to be an adult in this faith community. I ask that the entire community pray for me during my faith journey.

Candidates Name Printed

Candidates Signature

To be returned to Mary, Mother of the Church RE Office
no later than November 7, 2023.

*No CANDIDATE will be allowed to participate in the Confirmation Program
without a signed Agreement.*

Agreement of Parent/Guardian

I, _____, parent/guardian of _____,
Print Parent/Guardian's Name Print Candidates Name

have read with my child the Confirmation Candidate Required Responsibilities and will do my best to cooperate fully with Mary, Mother of the Church Religious Education in the preparation of my child for the Sacrament of Confirmation. I acknowledge that by not fully participating in the Confirmation Requirements the Sacrament of Confirmation may be delayed for my child until such requirements are fulfilled.

Signature of Parent/Guardian: _____

Date: _____

Agreement of Sponsor

I, _____, sponsor for _____,
Print Sponsor's Name Print Candidates Name

have read Choosing A Sponsor and Eligibility To Be A Sponsor with the candidate. I, here on out known as the Sponsor, will promise to help my candidate on his/her spiritual journey and share my faith with him/her. I realize that Mary, Mother of the Church Parish is asking me to be active in the immediate preparation of my candidate in order to enhance my role in the final rite and I will cooperate to the best of my ability.

Signature of Sponsor: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Date: _____ Sponsor's Parish: _____
Parish, City and State

If your sponsor is not a member of Mary, Mother of the Church Parish please ask them to contact their Parish for a Sponsor Certificate or Letter of Eligibility from their Pastor with the Church seal. Please attach the Certificate/Letter to this agreement or have their Church mail directly to our RE Office. If they are mailing it directly to us, please be sure that they include the word Confirmation and your name for reference. Many times the front office has received a Certificate/Letter and not known what it is for, thereby delaying your paperwork.

TO BE TURNED IN NO LATER THAN ... JANUARY 31, 2024

Choosing of a Christian Name

Many people choose an additional Saint's name at Confirmation. The preferred name, however, is the baptismal name because it expresses the relationship that exists between Baptism and Confirmation.

If the Baptismal name is not of a recognized Saint, a new name should be chosen for Confirmation. If a new name is taken, however, it should be the name of a recognized Saint of the Catholic Church.

Names of Saints are chosen to serve as PATRONS and MODELS for those being confirmed. When choosing a patron's name, Candidates should choose a name not because of the attractiveness of the name, but because of the attractiveness of the Christian life that person led.

Research your patron saint's life using google, www.newadvent.com, or www.catholic.org.

YOUR NAME: _____

Saint's Full Name: _____

(Example: Gabriel the Archangel)

Feast Day Celebrated: _____

What part of the saint's name (male or female version) have you selected to use to honor this special patron? This will also be your Confirmation name: _____

(Example: Gabriel)

If known, Saint's Place of Birth: _____

ABOUT THE SAINT -

Family: _____

Occupation: _____

Life and/or death: _____

What virtues did this Saint practice in his/her life? _____

Draft Letter to Fr. Martin O'Reilly, Pastor
TO BE TURNED IN NO LATER THAN.....FEBRUARY 27, 2024

Using the format below, please type the draft letter about why you feel you are ready to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. Include information about your sacramental life, your connection with your sponsor, and how you have grown spiritually this past year. You may also include information about your Community Service, what you did, and how it affected you. The most important fact to share with Fr. Martin is how you feel your service helped you grow as a Christian, a follower of Jesus Christ. **HOWEVER, THIS SHOULD NOT BE THE PRIMARY FOCUS OF YOUR LETTER.**

SAVE YOUR DRAFT AND PRINT OR EMAIL TO CSCHULZ@MMOTCP.ORG. BE SURE IT IS IN A SHARED DOCUMENT. YOUR DRAFT WILL BE RETURNED TO YOU WITH ANY CORRECTIONS THAT NEED TO BE MADE.

(Leave this area blank for letterhead. Approximately 2 inches from top of page.)

Date

Dear Fr. Martin O'Reilly,

Sincerely, (or Respectfully, or Graciously,)

Your full name

This is a sample of how the Final Letter will look on letterhead. Once you receive your draft back, please make the necessary corrections and email the Final Letter to cschulz@mmtcp.org .



Mary, Mother of the Church Parish Sacramental Program

July 1, 2015

Dear Fr. Martin O'Reilly,

I am without a doubt ready to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. I have been blessed with parents that have not only given me birth but have shown me the virtues of being a Catholic. I'm so very, very fortunate that my 9 siblings and I grew up in a household where we wanted to attend Mass and not just that we had to attend Mass. I hope that I will continue to follow in my parents path well into adulthood.



Over the course of my Confirmation preparation, I had been asked to do at least 20 hours of community service. Initially I was overwhelmed with the thought of 20 hours. Where were these hours going to be taken from in my already busy schedule? In actuality, I have gone above and beyond the required number of hours and will continue to serve others however I am able. A few of my favorite services were making PB&J sandwiches for TASK, being an assistant at the local Library and helping out at the Parish's Vacation Bible School. I realized I had so much more of myself to give, than I'd ever given myself credit. I just loved working with others and being able to give and not always get something back in return.

I have been blessed with a wonderful Aunt Edie who not only has been my sponsor, but is also my God-mother. Aunt Edie has kept my faith strong with weekly calls or texts. She re-minds me that Jesus is always by my side through the tough times. There have been many times my strength has wavered this year. I tore my ACL and have been unable to play soccer. I know that doesn't seem like a fail but I've played my whole life. Now I know I'm being tested but with my Aunt's strength and encouragement to continue in PT, I know I will be back on the field and scoring again.

During the year, I have also been attending religious classes. We have been strengthening our bond with God through his words and actions. I feel that making Confirmation will bring me even closer to my faith. Where my parents chose me to become a Catholic at Baptism, I am now ready to make that choice in Confirmation. I have spiritually grown over the years and want to continue as a child of God now as a teen. I have learned so much more than just praying. His guidance has helped me grow as a person.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Zola

EXAMPLE...PLEASE DO NOT USE MY LETTER

TO BE TURNED IN NO LATER THAN ... April 14, 2024

REPORT ON SERVICE ACTIVITY TO BE FILLED OUT AFTER YOU HAVE FINISHED ALL 30 HOURS OR SERVICE.

Candidate's Name: _____

Parent/Guardian's Name: _____

Directions: Regarding the services that you made as part of your preparation for Confirmation, please answer the following.

1. The types of services I did were: _____

2. By my service, I learned that: _____

3. By my service, I realized that other people: _____

4. I also learned that Christ: _____

5. I was surprised that I: _____

6. I do not want to forget that: _____

7. The hardest service I did was: _____

8. The service I liked the most doing was: _____

9. From what you know about Confirmation, do you feel that a person should be confirmed without doing some minimum service? YES or NO
10. Based on your answer to #9, why do you feel this way? Use the back of this page to answer.

