



**St. Pius X Parish  
CONFIRMATION HANDBOOK 2024**

**A Year of Deliberate Discipleship**

**DATE OF CONFIRMATION - (Tentative) Sunday, December 8, 2024**  
**11:00 Practice (with sponsors) and photo**  
**11:30 Mass**

## CONFIRMATION CATECHESIS & FORMATION

Candidates for Confirmation at St. Pius X will receive developmentally appropriate catechesis in accordance with the Archdiocese of Omaha's Confirmation guidelines. Their catechesis and formation prior to receiving the sacrament includes the following:

- † Confirmation increases and deepens the grace of Baptism, imprinting an indelible character on the soul.
- † Confirmation strengthens the baptismal conferral of the Holy Spirit on those confirmed in order to incorporate them more firmly in Christ, strengthen their bond with the Church, associate them more closely with the Church's mission, increase in them the gifts of the Holy Spirit and help them bear witness to the Christian faith in words and deeds.
- † The sacrament of Confirmation confers the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit: wisdom, understanding, right judgment, courage, knowledge, reverence, and wonder and awe (Is 11:2). These gifts are to be put to use so they will bear much fruit. St. Paul lists the nine fruits of the Holy Spirit as: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (Gal 5:22-23).
- † The Rite of Confirmation includes these basic symbols: the imposition of hands, the anointing with Sacred Chrism and the words, "Be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit".
- † The bishop is the ordinary minister of Confirmation, but he can delegate pastors to confirm.
- † Retreat experiences provide an opportunity to encounter Jesus in a special way. A retreat hopes to make possible a connection between "the what" of our faith and "the One" with whom we are being called into relationship, Jesus Christ.
- † Candidates choose sponsors to be a companion and a guide on their spiritual journey. Sponsors speak in the name of the whole believing community when they present the candidates to the bishop for Confirmation.

For any questions you may have regarding Confirmation catechesis,  
please contact Colleen Ciciulla.  
402-558-1898 or [colleenc@stpiusxomaha.org](mailto:colleenc@stpiusxomaha.org)

## EXPECTATIONS & RESPONSIBILITIES

**Parents:** The next several months will offer many opportunities for you to become involved and support your daughters and sons as they prepare for Confirmation. You are invited to share your faith and participate with your daughters and sons as they do service projects, study and pray. Review the materials in the red Confirmation packet and in monthly emails for ideas on how you can help your child prepare.

You can **encourage full participation in the liturgy** by previewing the gospel and readings before mass or by discussing the readings and homily and other parts of the mass on your way home and throughout the week. As parents, you are also responsible for transporting your candidate to and from service projects with their Discipleship Groups. If you treat participation in the liturgy and in formal projects seriously, that tells your child that these things are important enough to prepare for, plan for, and participate in fully themselves.

**Candidates:** To be a fully contributing member of a community demands *presence and participation*. You are preparing for life-long discipleship as a follower of Jesus Christ. Your discipleship is as a member of the Catholic Church in the faith community of St. Pius X, so **you are both invited and expected to participate fully in the parish liturgies in whatever capacity you can**. Many serve in the ministries of hospitality, music, altar service, lectors, etc., but most of us participate in the role of the assembly. Whatever you do, do it with your whole heart!

**Prayer, reflection and scripture reading:** To encourage your love of reading scripture, the parish will give you a Bible. We have also planned two retreats – one formal retreat with candidates only and one informal retreat with just candidates and their sponsors (to be scheduled at a mutually convenient time with the sponsor). **Participation in both retreats is expected**. Parents and sponsors will be invited to help at the Candidate-only retreat.

**Coordinator:** The parish Sacrament Coordinator will create opportunities to prepare candidates to live out their faith fully and intentionally as disciples of Christ and will share resources to help families and sponsors grow in their own faith during this year of formal sacramental preparation.

**Communication:** Watch for monthly emails with a suggested work of mercy to practice.

**I have given you a  
model to follow, so  
that as I have done for  
you, you should also  
do. John 13:15**

## DISCIPLESHIP – INDIVIDUAL AND FAMILY (JAN. – DEC.)

*“When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.*

*“Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.’*

*“Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?’*

*“The King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’”*

MT 25:31-40

All who want to follow Jesus are invited to love and serve others with mercy. With this in mind, between now and **November 1**, all Confirmation candidates and their families are encouraged to think in terms of deliberately living as disciples, looking at their everyday lives as precisely where Jesus calls them to serve.

Using the Year of Discipleship Journal, reflect and report on your deliberate practice of discipleship through the works of mercy. The journal is due **the week of November 4**. The journal will be used in the Confirmation interview but will be returned to the candidate.

While this is primarily the candidate’s responsibility, discipleship and mercy are modeled and nurtured in the family, so parents are expected to encourage and participate in meaningful service and reflection on the acts of discipleship as well.

The Year of Discipleship is organized by the spiritual and corporal works of mercy. Monthly reminder emails will give you some ideas for putting the different works of mercy into practice. Regardless of what you choose to do, **do it with love!**

Discipleship and mercy start where you are; when you learn to be attentive to other’s needs, you will see opportunities to serve everywhere. You don’t need to cross an ocean to serve as a disciple! Just listen to the Lord’s nudges!

## **DISCIPLESHIP – GROUP SERVICE PROJECTS (SPRING-FALL)**

Doing service as a faith community builds the sense of us being the face, hands and feet of Christ on earth. Discipleship Groups are facilitated by pairs of parents who volunteer to plan the events and lead the reflections. These projects are scheduled between May-November. Discipleship Group service projects often take the candidates out of their comfort zone and help them to encounter Christ in places where they've never looked before!

**On May 6,** Candidates will get information about the Discipleship Group to which they have been assigned and the service projects that group will perform. Watch for more information in April.

### **Ten adults are needed to serve as facilitators for 5 Discipleship Groups!**

Sponsors are welcome to serve as facilitators.

Please talk with some past facilitators to hear about their experiences:

Kris Bailey	Julie Gallegos	Kathy Martin	Kim Ramsey
Jacque Banker	Tiziana Green	Colette Martin	Molly Sall
Mary Bender	Natasha Hartley	Nicole Martinez	Michaela Smith
Kris Bope	Colleen Hoarty	Kathie McGill	Tracey Strehle
Kersten Borer	Kathy Johnson	Beth Metcalf	Jeanna Sullivan
Kathleen Burns	Cheslee Klinger	Sarah Monzu	Katie Swanson
Katy Chattin	Kris Knudsen	Norah Morris	Joe Urbanski
Kaylea Dunn	Angelica Kocmich	Eric Nelson	Martha Wharton
Beth Engel	Maureen Kubat	Anna Nubel	
Jill Ferguson	Becky Kucera App	Molly Raabe	
	Jennifer Mangan		

Identify a partner with whom you would like to work, then notify Colleen. You must attend a Facilitator meeting on Monday, April 1 and be Safe Environment Certified.

Please consider being involved with this part of your child's preparation!

“Preparation for Confirmation should aim at leading the Christian toward a more intimate union with Christ and a more lively familiarity with the Holy Spirit ...

To this end catechesis for Confirmation should strive to awaken a sense of belonging to the Church of Jesus Christ, the universal Church as well as the parish community.” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church, #1309*)

## CONFIRMATION NAME

Baptism and Confirmation are closely related sacraments, so closely related, that in the first centuries of the Church, Baptism, Confirmation, and First Eucharist were celebrated in one ceremony known as the Rite of Initiation. We will spend a great deal of time emphasizing the link between Baptism and Confirmation. In Confirmation, we proclaim publicly that we have chosen to live in such a way that our whole life will be a reflection of the love that God first gave at Baptism. For these reasons it is appropriate for you to keep your Baptismal name if it is a saint's name.

If you wish to take another name, you should choose a saint's name. **PRAY!** Just as you should pray about any decision you have to make, ask the Holy Spirit to guide you as you choose a saint as your patron.

Check out books on the lives of the saints to find a saint whose name and charism you would like to have as your own. If you use the internet, be sure to go to a Catholic site, such as <http://catholicsaints.info> or, for a more modern look, go to <https://www.themodernsaints.com/>

## SPONSORS

The sponsor is a representative of the Church who not only stands with the candidate at the time of Confirmation but also serves as an example and guide. Sponsors should be a witness to what it means to be led by the Holy Spirit. More than anything else, the sponsor's very example should commend him or her for this role.

To serve as a representative of the Church, the sponsor must be:

- At least 16 years of age and confirmed in the Church (sponsors must complete and return the Sponsor Information form which includes approval from their parish pastor verifying that they are eligible to serve).
- A practicing Catholic who attends Mass regularly and is in good standing with the Church.
- If married, the sponsor must be in a marriage recognized as valid by the Church.

Parents **may not** be sponsors. Non-Catholics **may not** be sponsors. There is no requirement that the sponsor be of the same sex as the confirmed.

### Materials to give to sponsors:

- 1. Invitation to serve.** Rewrite and revise the invitation in the packet, or sign it as it is and give/send it to the sponsor with the
- 2. sponsor information form** which must be signed and returned to Colleen, and the
- 3. sponsor guidebook** which explains the responsibilities of the sponsor and offers important information on how they can help candidates grow in faith.

Being invited to serve as a sponsor is both a great honor and a great responsibility. It is asking them to make a commitment to pray for and walk with the candidate for the next 12 months (and hopefully beyond). Please give sponsors the benefit of these materials for their own faith formation.

**Sponsor Zoom Meeting.** Sponsors are expected to attend a session via Zoom on either **May 16<sup>th</sup> or 19th.**

## **HOW CAN PARENTS PREPARE THEIR CHILD FOR CONFIRMATION?**

The pastor, catechists and parents have the responsibility to ensure and affirm that a candidate for Confirmation is suitably instructed and properly disposed for the renewal of the candidate's baptismal promises and reception of Confirmation.

Specifically to the parents' responsibility, the following suggestions are offered as ways to prepare their candidates:

- Take your child to Mass each weekend. After Mass, over breakfast or lunch (or dinner if Saturday evening!), talk about the Scripture reading and/or the homily.
- Make the Discipleship Group service project dates a priority on your family calendar and take your child to each one. Talk about the project before and after its completion.
- Help your child memorize The Apostles' Creed by praying it together. Talk about what the faith statements contained in the prayer mean to you. Give your child the opportunity to hear you talk about the meaning of faith in your life.
- Take your child to the church where you were baptized and confirmed, if possible. Talk about your own Confirmation, saint and preparation.
- Ask your child about the saint that he/she has chosen for Confirmation. Ask what qualities drew your child to choose that saint, and what qualities of the saint the child wants to emulate.
- Attend the sacrament of Reconciliation with your child before Confirmation.
- Does your family pray together? Now is perfect time to incorporate daily prayer into your family's daily routine.
- If your child is struggling with a faith issue or has a question about Confirmation, talk about it. Acknowledge their honesty and assist them to find answers.

## DETAILS THAT EVERYONE WANTS AT THE LAST MINUTE...

- **Receive the sacrament of Reconciliation** in the days before, so that your heart is fully open to receiving the gifts of the Spirit.
- **Confirmation date** – Sunday, December 8, 2024
- **Mass Time** – at 11:30 Mass
- **Location** – in the Church, 6905 Blondo, Omaha, NE
- **Practice with sponsors** – 30 minutes prior to Mass in the Church
- **Dress - respectful and modest as befitting a reverent sacramental celebration** – For such a significant spiritual milestone, Candidates and sponsors should dress in their Sunday best, including footwear. This demonstrates respect for the Archbishop and recognizes the importance of the occasion itself. Suits are not required, but a shirt and tie with a sweater or sport jacket are recommended for the young men. The young women may wear dress slacks, or a skirt or dress of a length appropriate for the occasion. A sweater or jacket must be worn over any tops with bare shoulders.
- **Reserved Seating** – Each family will have the equivalent of one long pew (about 9 seats) in the center section of the church. Candidates will sit closest to the center aisle with sponsors beside them.
- **Special needs seating** – if one of your family members/guests needs wheelchair access or other special seating arrangements, please let me know so I can assign an appropriate pew.
- **Additional Seating** will be in the side pews not reserved for Candidate families. If you expect more than 9 people to attend, please let me know so I can plan if additional seating in the narthex is needed.
- **EMHCs & Lectors** - If family members who will be attending the Mass would like to assist in either ministry, please let me know.
- **Servers** – Confirmation Mass requires 5 altar servers, including 2 who carry the archbishop's mitre and crozier.
- **Pictures** – Please do not take pictures or videos during the Confirmation liturgy. Parents are welcome to take pictures of your candidate with the Archbishop after the liturgy.
- **Group photo** – taken before the Confirmation Mass