

DIOCESE OF HOUMA-THIBODAU

GUIDELINES FOR THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION

Confirmation, one of the three Sacraments of Initiation into the Church, together with Baptism and Eucharist, completes the grace of Baptism by a special outpouring of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which seal or “confirm” the baptized in union with Christ and equip them for active participation in the worship and apostolic life of the Church.

REQUIREMENTS

1. The parish is the faith community into which the candidate is seeking to be more fully initiated. Therefore, Confirmation preparation and reception should take place in the candidate’s own parish.
2. To be considered, students should have participated in on-going catechesis, prior to beginning the two years of immediate preparation for Confirmation in the tenth grade. Sacramental catechesis will be separate from catechesis in the Catholic school or parish school of religion.
3. There must be evidence that those who celebrate the sacrament are practicing their faith by regularly participating in the Eucharist and by striving to live a life of Christian service and witness.
4. Candidates will normally be in their junior year of high school at the time they are confirmed. They may, however, receive the sacrament in the senior year if circumstances make this desirable.
5. The decision to be confirmed should be a free choice on the part of each candidate, on the basis of mature commitment to live as a Catholic Christian having completed the preparation process.

PARISH POLICY

1. Each parish should have its own written policy and requirements in accordance with diocesan policy and Canon Law.
2. Parish preparation should be based on *post-baptismal* catechesis. “The basis of conversion is the Baptism which they have already received and whose power they must develop.” General Directory For Catechesis, 1997, #90.
3. The fundamental tasks of Confirmation catechesis: helping to know, to celebrate, and to contemplate the mystery of Christ.
 - (a) The relationship between Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist as sacraments of initiation.

- (b) Promoting knowledge of the faith
- (c) Liturgical education
- (d) Moral formation
- (e) Teaching to pray
- (f) Education for community life
- (g) Missionary initiation General Directory For Catechesis, 1997, #85

ELEMENTS OF THE PROCESS

Preparation should include:

1.
 - (a) Celebration of the Sunday Eucharist on a regular basis
 - (b) A deeper understanding of the Sacraments of Initiation
 - (c) Spirituality through prayer and reflection
 - (d) Service through ministry involvement
 - (e) Opportunity to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation

2. Candidates are required to participate in three retreats during the two-year preparation period
 - (a) At the beginning of the process, a retreat will be provided by the parish in the tenth grade.
 - (b) An overnight retreat at the end of the 10th grade or in the 11th grade, sponsored by the parish which leads participants to a deeper communion with Jesus Christ.
 - (c) A pre-Confirmation retreat, presented each Lent by Bishop Sam Jacobs in each of the three deaneries.

Each candidate should write to Bishop Jacobs stating his/her reasons for requesting the Sacrament of Confirmation in the spring of the year he/she wishes to receive the sacrament. The parish Confirmation Director is to deliver in person these letters to Bishop Jacobs at the Diocesan Pastoral Center, 2779 Highway 311, Schriever, LA 70395 or is to mail these letters to Bishop Jacobs, P. O. Box 505, Schriever, LA 70395-0505, so they reach Bishop Jacobs a week prior to Confirmation.

4. Having participated in the preparation process, the candidate should be able to:
 - (a) Articulate an understanding of the role of the Holy Spirit in his/her life
 - (b) Demonstrate an understanding of the Sacraments of Initiation: Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist
 - (c) Demonstrate involvement in the Catholic Christian community and its mission to live a full Catholic Christian life and to communicate the faith by word and example.

PARENTS

1. Parents are invited to participate in the preparation process, to talk with their teenagers about Christian living, to attend the various ritual celebrations, and to encourage their teen's full participation.
2. Parents should also be offered an opportunity to enter more fully into the ongoing conversion journey by means of prayer, reflection, and group sharing.

SPONSORS

1. In order to express more clearly the close relationship between Baptism and Confirmation, the godparent at baptism should if possible, be the sponsor at Confirmation.
2. A sponsor must be a fully-initiated Catholic who is practicing his/her faith, and may be of either sex. A parent cannot be a sponsor.
3. Sponsors are encouraged to participate actively in the preparation process, and will later help the candidate to fulfill their baptismal promises faithfully.

CONFIRMATION NAME

Name to be used at Confirmation is the baptismal name. If the baptismal name is not that of a Christian saint, a new name should be chosen.

March 2004