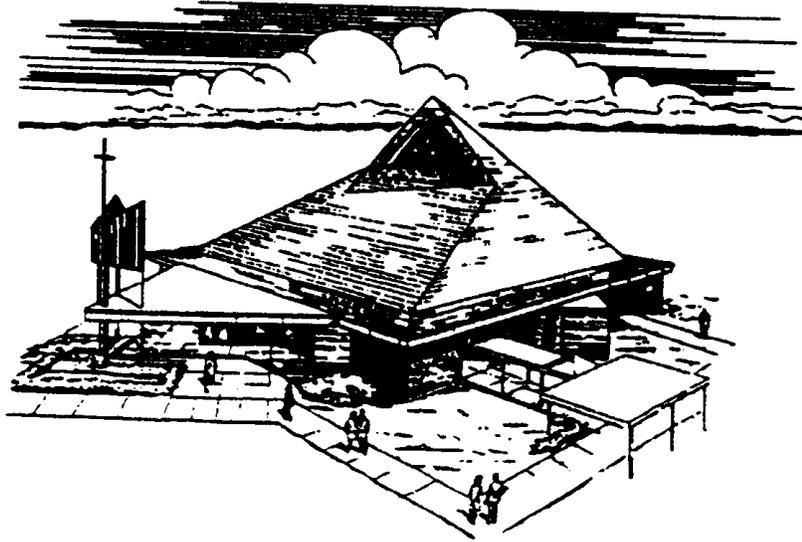


# Confirmation Handbook



*Confirmation:  
A Call to Community and Service*

**Sacred Heart of Jesus Church  
Norco, Louisiana**

**SACRED HEART CHURCH**  
**CONFIRMATION CLASS**  
**REQUIREMENTS FOR 9<sup>TH</sup>, 10<sup>TH</sup>, 11<sup>TH</sup> GRADES**

**9<sup>TH</sup> GRADE:**

1. Attend CCD class weekly. Catholic school students do not attend CCD classes.
2. Attend church weekly. Must sign sheet in back of church. If going to another church must bring bulletin signed by priest or deacon. Turn in bulletins to teacher, rectory or Caroline Bleakley (can put on organ bench in back of church).  
**You and your family must be consistent in attending Sacred Heart of Jesus Church on a regular basis.**
3. Service Hours – 10 hrs.

**10<sup>th</sup> GRADE:**

1. Attend CCD class weekly. Catholic school students do not attend CCD classes.
2. Attend church weekly. Must sign sheet in back of church. If going to another church must bring bulletin signed by priest or deacon. Turn in bulletins to teacher, the rectory or Caroline Bleakley (can put on organ bench in back of church)
3. Service Hours – 10 hrs. (ideas in handbook)
4. Turn in one page paper addressed to Fr. Edmund Akordor - “Why Do I Want To Be Confirmed”. Must be turned in two weeks into the 11<sup>th</sup> grade.

**11<sup>th</sup> GRADE:**

1. Attend CCD class weekly. Cannot miss any classes. All classes are mandatory. Catholic school students **MUST** attend CCD confirmation classes.
2. Attend church weekly. Cannot miss mass. Must sign sheet in back of church. If going to another church must bring bulletin signed by priest or deacon. Turn in bulletins to teacher before class begins.
3. Service Hours – 5 hrs.
4. Choose Saint Name for Confirmation and write one page paper on the saint chosen. Include why you chose this saint, patron saint of \_\_\_\_\_, and general information about the saint. This should be given to Confirmation Teacher no later than 3rd class.
5. Attend mandatory overnight retreat. More information will be given 1<sup>st</sup> week of class.
6. Choose Confirmation Sponsor (form attached). Confirmation sponsor must be a Catholic in good standing and attend church each week. This form must be turned in 3rd week of class.
7. All Candidates must attend Sunday 10:00 Mass (date to be given 1<sup>st</sup> week of class) Confirmation Commissioning Mass.
8. There will be a mandatory parent meeting (date to be given 1<sup>st</sup> week of class). At least one parent must attend.

# Archdiocesan Guidelines for the Preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation<sup>1</sup>

1. Confirmation is to be administered only to those who have been properly instructed, actively involved in the parish program, and who freely chooses to be Confirmed. Parishes have the responsibility to provide adequate opportunities to prepare their people for celebrating this sacrament. Local requirements for the Confirmation Program should be clearly communicated.
2. It is the policy of the archdiocese that each deanery is to decide upon either the eighth or the eleventh grade in school when Confirmation is to be celebrated. All parishes within the deanery are to adhere to this grade establishing preparation programs for Confirmation.
3. Scheduling: It is the responsibility of the Office of Worship to schedule dates for Confirmation based on the available dates provided to that office by the bishops. Each parish is sent a form to indicate a preferred day of the week and time for the celebration for the sacrament. Dates are assigned according to the bishops' schedules and the order in which the forms are received in the Office of Worship.
4. Preparation: Since the date for Confirmation may be any time in the Fall or Spring of a school year, it is recommended that most of the formal instruction (which includes the retreat experience) be concluded by the semester preceding the celebration.
5. Parents are to be intimately involved in the catechesis for Confirmation. This will help renew and strengthen their own faith, besides enabling them to set a better example for their children.
6. "To be a sponsor for Confirmation, a person must:
  - a. be designated by the person to be Confirmed;
  - b. be at least sixteen years old;
  - c. be a Catholic who has been Confirmed and who leads a life in harmony with the faith and the role of the sponsor;
  - d. not be bound by any canonical penalty;
  - e. not be the parent, natural or adoptive, of the person being Confirmed."<sup>2</sup>
7. The ordinary Minister of Confirmation in the Catholic Church is a bishop.
8. The Confirmation retreat is an important part of the candidate's preparation and is not to be omitted.
9. Equally important are service opportunities. Parishes should develop a program that includes service opportunities on the needs of the local community.

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<sup>1</sup> Taken from the The Resource Manual for the Director of Religious Education of the Archdiocese of New Orleans.

<sup>2</sup> Archdiocesan Policies, p. H-1

# Guidelines from Canon Law<sup>3</sup>

## Chapter III – Those to Be Confirmed

- Canon 889 #1 All baptized persons who have not been Confirmed and only they are capable of receiving Confirmation.
- #2 Outside the danger of death, to be licitly Confirmed it is required, if the person has the use of reason, that one be suitably instructed, properly disposed<sup>4</sup> and able to renew one's baptismal promises.
- Canon 890 The faithful are obliged to receive this sacrament at the appropriate time; their parents and shepherds of souls, especially pastors, are to see to it that the faithful are properly instructed to receive it and approach the sacrament at the appropriate time.
- Canon 891 The Sacrament of Confirmation is to be conferred on the faithful about the age of discretion unless the conference of bishops determines another age or there is danger of death or in the judgment of the minister a grave cause urges otherwise.

## Chapter IV – Sponsors

- Canon 892 As far as possible a sponsor for the one to be Confirmed should be present; it is for the sponsor to see the Confirmed person acts as a true witness to Christ and faithfully fulfills the obligations connected with this Sacrament.
- Canon 893 #1 To perform the role of sponsor, it is necessary that a person fulfill the conditions mentioned in canon 874.
- #2 It is desirable that one who undertook the role of sponsor at baptism be sponsor for Confirmation.
- Canon 873 #1 To be admitted to the role of sponsor, a person must:
- 1 ° be designated by the person to be baptized, by the parents of the one who takes their place or, in the absence, by the pastor or minister and is to have the qualifications and intention of performing this role;
  - 2 ° have completed the sixteenth year, unless a different age has been established by the diocesan bishop, or it seems to the pastor or minister that an exception is to be made for a just cause;
  - 3 ° be a Catholic who has been Confirmed and has already received the Sacrament of the Most Holy Eucharist and leads a life in harmony with the faith and role to be undertaken;
  - 4 ° not be bound by any canonical penalty legitimately imposed or declared;
  - 5 ° not be the father or mother of the one being confirmed.

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<sup>3</sup> Taken from the Code of Canon Law, the official law of the Church promulgated in 1983 by Pope John Paul II.

<sup>4</sup> The Church defines “properly disposed” as one who is in a state of grace. This would mean that one must have been attending Mass on a regular basis since the Church defines failure to attend Mass a sin. It also implies that one is a practicing Catholic (active participant in one's faith and Church.)

# Purpose of Confirmation Preparation

It is the hope that candidates enrolled in the Confirmation process at Sacred Heart will:

1. Have a fundamental understanding, knowledge and appreciation of our Catholic Christian faith rooted in Jesus Christ.
2. Have an understanding of the Sacrament of Confirmation in relation to the other sacraments of initiation – Baptism and Eucharist.
3. Participate regularly in the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist.
4. Have an appreciation of the Sacrament of Confirmation itself, that it is not a sacrament you get, but one that live out.
5. Have an understanding of the mission of the Church and the call to ministry and social action.
6. Experience and appreciate the need for personal prayer.
7. Recognize individual gifts and talents and the gifts of the Holy Spirit.
8. Have a basic understanding of one's faith in relation to one's life. That would include developing an interiorized Catholic Christian moral system and also discovering how one's spirituality can be lived out in a variety of adult lifestyles.
9. Realize the communal aspect of Baptism.
10. Develop an appreciation for the importance of the Scriptures.
11. Recognize that faith is an ongoing process that continues throughout life.

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## Religious Instruction

Confirmation candidates who wish to be Confirmed at Sacred Heart of Jesus Church must be enrolled in the Confirmation Preparation Program and attend religious education classes. Public and private school students attend CCD class in Year I, II, and III. High school students who attend a Catholic School must be registered for the Confirmation Preparation Program; however, the student does not attend Confirmation classes until their Year III. Excessive absences from class and/or mass will jeopardize passage from one year to the next.

High school students who attend a Catholic high school must be registered in the Confirmation process at Sacred Heart of Jesus Church. They do not attend CCD class in Year I or II but are required to sign the sheet in back of the church each week when they attend mass. However, in Year III, all candidates must attend special sessions to prepare for the Sacrament of Confirmation.

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## Mass Attendance Policy

The Mass is the center of our Catholic life because it recalls the greatest event of history and of Christian faith: the Paschal Mystery – the passion, death, resurrection and ascension of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The Mass makes present again in the midst of God's people, the one eternal sacrifice of Jesus Christ, who gave up his life on the cross that all might be saved from sin and eternal death. The Mass also brings the community together so that together we may offer praise and thanksgiving to a God who loves us beyond our wildest imagining.

As part of the preparation for the reception of the sacraments, it is imperative that one be fed by the Word of God so that both our minds and bodies will be ready to receive the sacraments. Thus, those receiving the Sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist and Confirmation are required to attend Mass on a regular basis. At Sacred Heart of Jesus Church there is a sign up sheet at the back of Church which each student must sign beginning with the day of registration. If by chance the student attends another Church, he/she must get a copy of that Church's bulletin and have the priest, deacon, or another minister sign it. The student is then required to bring that bulletin to the next scheduled religion class. Failure to attend Mass may jeopardize the reception of a sacrament.

# Participation Policy

All candidates must be enrolled in the Confirmation three (3) year process. In each year of the process, the Confirmation candidate will have certain requirements to fulfill before being allowed to move to the next year (i.e., in order to advance from Year I to Year II all requirements of Year I must be completed).

Attendance and participation at Sunday Mass, religious education sessions and special Confirmation preparation sessions weighs very heavy in evaluation of whether or a not a participant can advance to the next year. Absences may result in being required to repeat a year and therefore delay the participant's date of Confirmation. Exceptions to this rule will be rare and only for the direst reasons.

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## Documented Guidelines<sup>5</sup>

1. As with Baptism, catechesis for this sacrament (Confirmation) takes place within the parish community, which has an obligation to participate in the catechetical preparation of those to be confirmed. The parish is the faith community into whose life of prayer and worship they will be more fully initiated. It also embodies the message to which they are to respond and give witness, in service, to the faith they profess. The parish should strive to catechize on behalf of "obedience to Christ" and "loyal testimony to Him" through the power of the Spirit.<sup>6</sup>
2. As the primary educators of their children, parents, along with sponsors, are to be intimately involved in catecheses for Confirmation.<sup>7</sup>
3. The gradual manner of God's self-revelation, manifested in Scripture, provided a model for catechetical efforts directed to young people, as does the catechesis recommended in the revised Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults. Program content included psychological and sociological matters considered in the light of faith and moral issues, and similar matters pertaining to human
4. The need for a variety of approaches should be taken into consideration in preparing social, recreational, and apostolic programs, as well as retreats and other spiritual development activities.<sup>8</sup>
5. Catechesis of youth consistently speaks of the Church's missionary nature and the obligation of all its members to share in some way in its missionary activity.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> These guidelines may be helpful in understanding the preparation process for the reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation.

<sup>6</sup> Universal Catechism of the Catholic Church, #1309.

<sup>7</sup> National Catechetical Directory, #119.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., #228.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

## Letter Requesting the Sacrament of Confirmation

You are free to respond to God’s call to live your faith more deeply – to worship, to witness, and to serve as a Confirmed Catholic Christian. If you wish to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation, write a letter of request to your pastor, stating your desire to be confirmed. This letter should be written at the beginning of the Year III preparation period. Please follow the guidelines below:

	Your name Your address Date
Dear Fr. Ed:	
In paragraph 1:	Introduce yourself. Tell something about your family, your background.
In paragraph 2:	Request the sacrament. Give several reasons why you would like to be confirmed.
In paragraph 3:	Explain how you have prepared for the sacrament. It is important that you mention specific parts of your preparation: your prayer life, your celebration of the other sacraments, your service to others, etc.
In paragraph 4:	Tell how you will continue to carry out a life of service to God and others through the power of the Holy Spirit. Tell how you plan to make your “Confirmation in the Faith” alive in the future.
In paragraph 5:	Conclude the letter
(Don’t forget to sign it with your complete signature)	

You may type the letter if your desire.

## Saint Names

Choosing a Confirmation name has become part of our Catholic tradition. The name you pick should be a saint that you know something about. This saint should be one that you find some connection with either in prayer or in example. You may choose to use your first or middle name if that name is a saint name otherwise it will be necessary for you to pick another name. Listed below are some popular saint names that others have chosen in the past. I would recommend going to one of the following websites and researching a Patron Saint.

Suggested Websites:

<http://www.catholic.org/saints/patron.php>

<http://catholicism.about.com/od/thesaints>

<u>Adelaide</u>	Colette	Jerome	Nino
<u>Agatha</u>	Cosmos	Joan of Arc	Odilia
<u>Agnes</u>	Damian	John	Patrick
Alexius	Diana	Joseph	Paul
Aloysius	Dominic	Jude	Peter
Alphonsus	Dorothy	Julia	Philip
Angela Merici	Dymphna	Julian	Philomena
Anne	Elizabeth	Justin	Raphael
Anthony of Padua	Euphemia	Katherine Dexell	Raymond
Augustine	Felicity	Lawrence	René
Barbara	Florian	Louis	Rita
Barnabus	Francis Cabrini	Lucy	Robert
Bartholomew	Francis de Sales	Luke	Rose of Lima
Benedict	Francis of Assisi	Margaret	Roseline
Bernadette	Gabriel	Martha	Scholastica
Bernadine	Galla	Martin	Sebastian
Bernard	Genevieve	Mary	Seraphina
Blaise	George	Matilda	Stephen
Bonaventue	Gerard	Matthew	Teresa of Avila
Bridget	Gregory	Maura	Therese of
Catherine	Helena	Maurice	Lisieux
Cecilia	Hilary	Michael	Thomas Aquinas
Charles	Hildegard	Mildred	Vincent de Paul
Christina	Isabel	Monica	
Clare	Isidore	Mydia	
Claudia	James	Nicholas	

Candidate's Name	
Sponsor's Name	

please print

# Confirmation Sponsor Certificate of Eligibility

(Please read the requirements for sponsorship before signing)

Canon 872,873 and 874 of the Code of Canon Law lists those requirements for the valid and lawful sponsorship in Confirmation.

- The sponsor's role is to assist the person in Christian Initiation.
- The sponsor's role is, together with the parent, to present the child for the sacraments and help him/her to live a life befitting a baptized Catholic Christian.
- Only one male or one female sponsor is to be employed.

A Sponsor:

- Must be mature enough to undertake this responsibility.
- Must have received the sacraments of Baptism, Eucharist and Confirmation.
- Must be at least 16 years of age.
- Must know the fundamental truths of the Faith and be a practicing Catholic who goes to Mass on Sunday, receives the sacraments regularly, and sees to the religious instruction of his/her family.
- Must be a member of the Catholic Church, canonically free to carry out this office. [This would indicate that Catholics publicly living in an invalid marriage (not according to the Church regulations) and those who are cohabitating (living together without marriage) are ineligible.]

Being a sponsor is not just an honor given to a good friend or relative. Sponsorship implies a real appreciation of the Faith, a practice of the same, and a sense of responsibility toward the person being confirmed.

I declare that I am a registered member of the parish listed below and I fulfill the requirements of Canon Law) listed above to be a sponsor.

Sponsor's signature	
Church Parish	
Church phone number	

This section must be filled out by the sponsor's pastor or his staff.

I certify that the above name person is a member of this parish, is a practicing Catholic and is eligible to act as a sponsor for Confirmation.

Pastor's Signature	
Date	

# Service Projects

Service projects are a way for you to use your gifts, talents and abilities to help others. To be a true service project neither you nor anyone in your immediate family can benefit, either directly or indirectly, from your service. The goal is to look beyond yourself and beyond those nearest to you and give of yourself to help someone else.

## Before making your decision and commitment to a service project

- ❖ Pray to the Holy Spirit for guidance
- ❖ Talk to your parents and sponsor
- ❖ Find out the needs of people in your Church, school, neighborhood or community

## Suggestions for Service Projects

These suggestions are some of the ways a candidate may chose to serve. Perhaps something on this list will give you other ideas on how to use your special gifts.

- Visit the elderly of the parish at home or in a nursing home
- Assist the elderly or a needy family with their chores (Cut grass, yard work, cooking, cleaning, shopping, etc.)
- Baby-sit for someone who needs help
- Organize or help with a recycling project
- Initiate a clean up campaign in the parish school or local park
- Do volunteer work in a hospital or in a hospice
- Write cards or letters to hospitalized children, teens or Military personnel
- Collect food for the poor or work in a food bank
- Collect, clean, and repair clothing for the poor
- Earn money for missions by washing cars, babysitting etc.
- Perform special services for the handicapped (read to the blind)
- Prepare meal or desert for a family dealing with a death
- Collect toys for poor children
- Make gifts or favors for those in hospital/nursing homes
- Collect and deliver magazines to the hospital ER waiting rooms
- Bake for a bake sale
- Work in a special Education program or tutor after school
- Coach or assist with young children's sports activities
- Help with Sacred Heart of Jesus Fall Fest
- Help in the CCD Program (teacher's aide)