

FIND YOUR

PURPOSE

ST. ISAAC JOGUES
CONFIRMATION

Confirmation Requirements

Attendance:

Confirmation Prep is a period of discernment. In order to discern, you need to make it a priority. While we understand that illnesses and family emergencies both happen and are unplanned, we also know that dance practice/recitals, and sports games/practices are a big deal. Here is the thing; Confirmation is a serious sacrament. Your teen is preparing to be sealed with the Holy Spirit, to receive the gifts and fruits of the Spirit, and to begin their journey of faith as adults in the Church. Confirmation is not a graduation or finish line that you need to just get through and then your job is done. The Catechism states that “The sacraments are efficacious signs of grace, instituted by Christ and entrusted to the Church, by which divine life is dispensed to us.” (CCC 1131) Yes, it is that serious. As such, the items listed below are required parts of Confirmation. Each aspect of the preparation is designed to help form the teens and enable them to make the decision to be confirmed. If there is an illness or family emergency, please communicate with the Youth Ministry office ASAP. If attendance becomes an issue, the ability to continue in the preparation program is contingent on a conversation with the family (teen included), Fr. Brian, and the Youth Minister.

“Actions speak louder than words; let your words teach and your actions speak.” – St. Anthony of Padua

The Program:

We will be using *Purpose* from LifeTeen for our Confirmation Prep program. This program comes from a nationally recognized leader in Catholic programming for teens and young adults. The best part about this program, besides the content, is that it comes with an app! As you register for the program, you will receive an email from purpose@lifeteen.com with your login information. Within the app, you will be able to view the entire calendar for the Confirmation program, ACTS 29, and due dates for program requirements. For parents, you will be have a pdf for each session with information about that session's topic to help you answer any questions that your teen may have.

Critical Conversations

Due October 10

1. Parent/Guardian
2. Neighbor/Family Friend/Godparent
3. A peer / someone in your class

For the Critical Conversations, you are going to interview someone from each group above. Ask them the questions, take notes, have an open discussion. Once you have completed your three interviews, go to the Confirmation page of the SIJ website and enter your findings. In order to facilitate an open discussion, the answers you are going to enter will not include the interviewee's name. You are just giving a synopsis of what you discovered/learned from your three interviews.

Questions:

Talk to each person about their faith. What are their struggles? How does their faith guide them? Why is their faith important to them? Why is it important to them to pass down their faith to you?

Choose a Sponsor

Due November 14

You need to find a sponsor for the sacrament. The sponsor is literally doing just that, sponsoring you. They are the official witness of your reception of the sacrament, and they will be the one to present you, by name, just prior to the Confirmation. As such, there are some requirements, from the Catholic Church, for someone to qualify to be a sponsor.

1. They must be a Baptized and Confirmed Catholic that is active in their faith.
2. They must be at least 16 years old (if they are between 16-18 y/o, Fr. Brian will need to approve).
3. They must be a registered member of a Catholic church
4. They cannot be your parent/guardian (godparents are ok)

(continued)

This is a person that is going to help you prepare for Confirmation. Someone you trust, that is a good example of a faithful person, and someone with whom you are comfortable. The Sponsor will need to fill out a form and have it signed by their pastor and sealed by their parish. Once we receive the sponsor's information, we will send them the form directly.

Join ACTS 29

Due February 27

ACTS 29 is the new name for our High School Youth Ministry program. From September to May, we meet on Monday evenings from 7:00 PM – 8:30 PM in the Kateri Room for discussions, topics, fun and games, prayer, and the occasional slice of pizza. On these Monday's our format will vary from service nights, topic nights, movie nights, fun and games nights, and holy hours with opportunities for confession. Youth Group is not scary, but the only way to know that is to give it a try. So, for Confirmation, there is a requirement to try it two times by the end of February.

Confirmation Sessions

Throughout the year, there will be twelve sessions that will take place from September through April. The sessions will meet on a Sunday afternoon beginning at 3:00 PM and ending at 5:15 PM. Each session will cover different topics under the same theme to help our teens discover their Purpose. The Right of Welcoming (September 12) and the Right of Enrollment (March 13) will take place at the 5:30 PM Mass after the scheduled sessions. Families are strongly encouraged to attend the Rite of Welcoming, and sponsors (or their proxy) are required to attend the Right of Enrollment.

Mass attendance

Regular Mass attendance is a must for preparation for any sacrament, and an obligation for every Catholic. There is a grace that comes from attendance at Sunday Masses. You can't pick a friend at random. You don't find a spouse by "eeny, meeny, miny, moe", and you can't decide to receive an efficacious sign of grace (Sacrament) without spending time with God. We are not taking attendance at every Mass, there is no little card to drop in the collection, there is no "everyone from Confirmation please stand" moment at Mass. What there is, is a trust that, as you prepare to become adults in the Church, you, as adults in the Church, will make the adult decision. We get that people travel, that schedules change, and that SIJ may not be the place you are able to attend Mass each and every weekend. Wherever you find yourself, trust that there is a Catholic Church. Little known fact: St. Luke Church is the Catholic Church right on Ocean Highway in Ocean City. They have regular services, and you can hit the Dough Roller after Mass!

Confirmation Retreat

This is the pivotal moment of the Preparation process. The Confirmation retreat will take place at the Msgr. O'Dwyer Retreat House. The Retreat will begin at 7:00 pm sharp on Friday, December 10 and ending at noon on Sunday, December 12. The Retreat is a requirement of the program. The retreat will end with a Mass, to which families are invited. During the retreat, your child will not go hungry. In addition to all of the food available, we will have a "snack table" that is always overflowing with snacks (both health and comfort). There are perpetual drink fountains and a deer park water machine. Candidates are asked to bring a Bible, their notebook, and a pen; and are asked to leave technology at home. If your child takes regular medication, please give it to one of the adult leaders when you arrive. They will ensure that the medications are dispensed at the times you state. The permission form asks for the over-the-counter medications that you will allow us to dispense to your child. We will only give the recommended dose on the bottle (ie: 2 Advil), and we will only dispense to your child the medications you approve.

If there are any issues, both medical and/behavioral, we will contact you from the retreat house to inform you. The retreat house have a strict no devices policy for teens. During the retreat, we ask that you leave the phones at home. All of the adults will have their phones on them, and we will make them available should an emergency arise. The motto of the retreat house is "come apart and rest awhile." Part of the rest they are talking about is a break from social media for a weekend. We all managed to survive our teenage years without any social media or texting late at night at all, they can make it 48 hours...I promise.

More information about what to bring and not to bring on retreat will be distributed at the November session.

Service Projects

Due February 27

Everyone is asking you to do service hours for whatever reason. Frankly, I don't have any desire to make you "do X amount of hours", it simply defeats the purpose of service projects in my eyes. You don't want to do it, I don't want to hound you for them, so, instead, SIJ does this requirement (from the Archdiocese of Baltimore) a little differently. Pick two of the three things you need to do and then write about it. After each one, go to the Confirmation page of the parish website, click the link, type two paragraphs, and check it off your list.

1. **Family project:** Help a family member or within your own house. If your regular chore is taking out the trash, that does not count. But, if your mom or dad have a particularly busy day ahead of them and you intentionally wake up early to make breakfast, you have completed this item (and you have made them very happy). Help Grandmom clean out the garage or weed the garden. Help Great Aunt Tilly and cut the lawn. Help Uncle Phil take a load to the dump. Whatever it is, give someone a hand. (continued)

2. **Parish project:** Get involved in a ministry: help at the Food Pantry, Knit a blanket for a newborn, become an Altar Server, join *The Enlightened Band*, be an assistant for Faith Formation, become an usher at the 5:30 PM Mass, the sky is the limit on what ministry you can join. You don't have to make it a permanent thing, just try it out and see how it fits. Don't like it? Try another one and see what you think.
3. **Community project:** You can bake a casserole or two (they get expensive quickly), but why not try writing cards for soldiers? Sending cards to a nursing home? Helping on a community clean up day? Start a food drive? Volunteer at a soup kitchen? Just try something to give back and/or help others in need.

Parish projects and community project requirements can be fulfilled each month at ACTS 29 events. One of our Monday night drop-ins each month will be a service night. This is an easy way to complete the service projects and ACTS 29 requirements at the same time! Oh, and to help your community and parish.

Capstone Project

Due March 27

To sum up your journey of faith so far, pick one of the capstone projects below. These are not huge projects, just a way to share your creativity and your faith at the same time:

1. Make a video
2. Write and perform a song
3. Write and read a poem (longer than a Haiku, please)
4. Paint or draw a picture
5. Write a 3 page, double spaced, 12 pt., Times New Roman, 1" margin paper (please don't choose this one)
6. Scrapbook of a pilgrimage taken with the family (list of suggested locations provided online)

Your topics for the Capstone project you choose from above can be:

- a. Why your faith is important
- b. How you can be a disciple in high school
- c. The gifts/fruits of the Spirit
- d. Any aspect of the Catholic faith that interests you.
- e. Any Encyclical from a Pope (there are some great ones out there!)
- f. Something that you understand better about the faith now that you are ready to be confirmed

Write a letter to Fr. Brian

Due March 13

This letter is your official request to be confirmed. In the letter, you are going to give your name (and if there was any special reason you were given that name), your saint name and why you have chosen it, a favorite verse from scripture, how you have changed since the beginning of the program, and what you plan on doing in the faith from your Confirmation on. This is a serious letter, so take a moment to write a draft before the final version.

Candidate interviews

Completed during the month of March

Following the Confirmation retreat, the candidates will meet with a member of the parish staff and Fr. Brian to discuss their readiness for Confirmation. This is NOT a test of knowledge, just a time for the teens to have a frank conversation about their faith, ask any questions they may have, and share any concerns they may have. The dates and sign-up will be sent out following the retreat's conclusion.

Confirmation rehearsal

Wednesday, April 13

This will be the walk through for the Easter Vigil, and will include the Confirmation rehearsal. Candidates and sponsors are required to attend this rehearsal. The date will be given out multiple weeks prior to the rehearsal to give families plenty of time to make arrangements. For now, know that it will take place during an evening of Holy Week.

Confirmation Mass

Saturday, April 16 8:00 pm

Our parish has a tradition of Confirming candidates at the Easter Vigil. This is the night of nights in the Catholic Church, and it is a very special time to receive the Sacrament. Since we have the Confirmation at the Vigil, our Pastor, Fr. Brian Nolan, will be the one to confirm the candidates. More information will be given at the end of the retreat with the logistics for the Confirmation Mass: Attire, guests, seating, arrival time, pictures, etc.

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Acknowledgement of Confirmation program requirements

Please return this page, signed by both a parent/guardian **and** teen, at the first session.

I, _____ am the parent/guardian of _____.

We have read and agree to the requirements of the '21/'22 Confirmation program at St. Isaac Jogues.

Print parent/guardian Full Name

Print Candidate Full Name

Parent/guardian Signature

Candidate Signature