

“Be Sealed with the Holy Spirit”

Guidelines and basic information about Confirmation Saints Philip and James Church

The Sacrament of Confirmation is an important part of our lifelong friendship with God. When we are Confirmed, God strengthens us with a special gift of the Holy Spirit, to help us live the Catholic Faith we received in Baptism. Because it helps us to live our faith in Jesus fully and completely, Confirmation is often called a sacrament of Christian maturity.

The following pages are filled with information for members of Saint Philip and Saint James Church who wish to receive Confirmation. It explains the required preparation and answers many questions. Please keep this booklet for future reference as you prepare to be sealed with the Holy Spirit in Confirmation.

These pages have been modified due to the Covid – 19 pandemic, which has forced some changes to our Confirmation program. Please be sure to read this carefully!!! The Confirmation folder referred to can be found online at our parish website spsj.org. You can also call the Parish Office and have them email one to you. We will do everything in our power to help you prepare for Confirmation safely this year.

When is Confirmation usually celebrated in our parish?

Confirmation is usually celebrated sometime during the eighth grade for members of our parish. The exact date comes from the Bishop's office and is not usually known to us until a few months before the actual celebration. It has been in February the last two years – and may be again this year, too! The parish office will share this date with you as soon as we receive it!

What is required of those who wish to be Confirmed in our parish?

Because of the importance of this Sacrament, those who wish to receive it must fulfill three series of requirements: Spiritual, Educational, and Christian Charity.

Spiritual

- You must have already received the Sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist (First Communion).
- You must be attending Mass regularly – when that is possible. We realize that not everyone can come to Mass regularly at this time. This includes people whose health makes them more susceptible to Covid – 19 and its effects. If you can come to Mass at this time, please call the Parish Office to make a reservation to attend Mass on Saturday or Sunday evening.
- You must participate in a Confirmation Retreat. Details will be provided. If you cannot make this retreat (illness, etc.), please contact the parish office for an alternative plan.
- You should make a good Confession before your Confirmation day.

Educational

- You must complete at least two years of educational preparation for this sacrament. This may be done in one of two ways:
 - Successful completion of **7th and 8th grade level CCD** (Traditional Weekly or Online Family Program).
 - OR
 - Successful completion of **7th and 8th grade in Catholic School**.
 - Public school students who have already passed the 7th or 8th grade but have not yet completed the corresponding level of CCD, should speak with the pastor or Religious Education Director to work out the details of their educational requirements.
 - Home schooled students should likewise speak with the pastor to plan their Confirmation.

Christian Charity

- While many parishes ask you to perform Community Service for Confirmation, our parish prefers you perform Christian Charity or

Works of Mercy. This can include simple things like babysitting for your family or helping your grandparents. While it can also include service to the larger community (food drives, soup kitchens, etc.), these things may not be possible this year. For this reason, we simply ask you to perform some acts of kindness and charity to the members of your family. While there is no specific amount of charity you must perform, I would suggest you perform a kindness or act of charity for someone in your family each day!

Choosing a sponsor.

Those to be Confirmed must choose a sponsor. A sponsor is a good Catholic who helps you – by word and example – to live your Catholic Faith. The importance of the sponsor's role is highlighted by the requirements the Church sets forth for them. These requirements are as follows:

Sponsors must:

- Be practicing Catholics who have received the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Communion.
- If they are married, their marriage must be recognized by the Catholic Church.
- Be sufficiently mature to fulfill the role of sponsor (usually understood to mean that they are at least 15 years old).

A Sponsor Form is included in your folder. Please give it to your sponsor to have them complete. Once their pastor has signed it, they should return it to you, to return to us. It is also OK for their pastor to give them a different form that he uses in his parish.

Please note that your parent cannot be your sponsor.

Choosing a Confirmation Name

One of our most beautiful Catholic traditions is that of choosing a Confirmation name. It should be the name of a saint whom you admire and whose holy example you wish to follow. You will be required to complete a very simple Saint Project on the saint whose name you choose – to help you think about how you might follow him/her in life. If

you need help thinking of a saint's name or learning about saints you might be interested in, please speak with our pastor. A list of possible saints' names for boys and for girls is included in your Confirmation folder.

It is also acceptable to use your Baptismal name as your Confirmation name. In that case, your Saint Project would be about a saint who shares your Baptismal name. If your Baptismal name is not that of a saint, your project may be about a favorite saint. Your Confirmation folder contains a Saint Project which is the form to be used for your saint report.

Dress Code for Confirmation

Your clothes on Confirmation Day should reflect the importance and holiness of this Sacrament. We should dress our best for God! With that in mind, the following guidelines are to be followed exactly:

- Boys
 - Dress shirt and tie.
 - Nice shoes and socks (no sneakers).
 - Dress pants.

- Girls
 - Dress or skirt and nice top.
 - Nice shoes (no flip flops or sneakers).
 - Excessive make up and perfume should be avoided.

***Both Boys and Girls are reminded of the importance of modesty in their dress. Low cut blouses, very short skirts, etc are simply not acceptable dress for Christian ladies and gentlemen – especially at Confirmation!

Please know that anyone failing to adhere to the dress code will not be permitted to participate in the Confirmation Mass. We have to ensure the dignity of the celebration show God the respect He is due.

Other Things

There will be a rehearsal scheduled shortly before the actual Confirmation. It is absolutely essential that this rehearsal be attended by

each Confirmation student and their sponsor. If the sponsor cannot attend the rehearsal, a parent may stand in for them.

It is important for you to begin praying for the gift of the Holy Spirit as you prepare for Confirmation. Prayer helps prepare us for the gifts God wants to give us – gifts like His Holy Spirit. Pray at Mass and privately, asking God to open your heart to receive and love the Spirit He will send.

Please know that our pastor (Fr. John) and Confirmation coordinator (Escarlen Duran) will be very happy to answer any questions you may have about the Sacrament of Confirmation. You can reach them thru the parish office (908-454-0112). Our whole parish is happy that you want to celebrate this sacrament and live your Catholic Faith with the help of the Holy Spirit. Indeed, your Confirmation will make our parish stronger and holier because it will bring another confirmed Catholic into our midst! For this, we give thanks to God.

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