



CONFIRMATION 2009

FAQs

COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the recommended age for Confirmation?

Each diocese is different. The Archdiocese of Baltimore recommends youth Confirmation between the 8th and 10th grade. At St Paul Church, Confirmation preparation is offered for youth in 9th grade and above.

Do I have to get confirmed this year?

No. No one—including the Pope, the Archbishop, pastor, or even your parents can MAKE you get confirmed. Confirmation is YOUR saying yes to Jesus; yes to committing your life to being a good Christian; and yes to being a practicing Catholic.

What if I am just not sure about being a Catholic or about being confirmed?

It is not uncommon to wonder about or question our faith. Please talk to an **adult** you trust—a parent, relative, priest, teacher, religious, or youth minister.

Is everything on the schedule “Mandatory”?

Everything on the St Paul schedule is based directly on the Archdiocesan requirements for Confirmation. A copy of the Archdiocesan book “Seal of the Spirit” is available in the Office of Youth Ministry.

When are the classes?

Confirmation classes at St Paul are the 3rd Tuesday of the month, from 7-8:30 PM. Classes will be held in Dohony Hall, unless otherwise noted.

What if I miss Confirmation classes?

The Archdiocese of Baltimore has set rules for Confirmation. The St Paul schedule is designed to satisfy the requirements established by the Archdiocese. Attending ALL classes is necessary to get the minimum hours of required catecheses. Classes can NOT be made up. ***Family emergencies are understandable***

What is a “Red Mass Shirt” and what do we do?

The 1st Saturday of each month is the ‘red shirt’ Mass. All youth are invited to attend and sit together on the right-hand side of the church, (St Joseph side), in the front pews. We invite parents to take turns celebrating at these Masses with the youth. Youth should play their musical instrument, or sing with the music group at this Mass. Other youth will help as ushers, greeters, presenting the gifts. If youth are scheduled to serve Mass or help in the parish nursery the next day, you are invited, but not expected to attend that ‘red shirt’ Mass.

What kind and how many hours of service do I have to do?

The St Paul Confirmation preparation process, invites each of you to serve God by helping in our parish, in our community and at a soup kitchen. We also encourage and request that your family do a service project together! Be creative – enjoy your time together, sharing your talents to help others. St Paul does not track service by ‘hours’, but by experience.

How can I help St Paul Parish?

We ask that you participant in weekly Liturgies, and physically help our parish for one full year. You can help by being an altar server or a lector, helping in the nursery, being a music group member, helping with a variety of parish events (such as Breakfast with Santa, Shrove Tuesday dinner, Parish picnic, Giving Tree, Church decorating and at the Lenten dinners).

How can I help in the community?

A limited number of community service projects will be arranged by St Paul parish. Confirmation candidates are also invited to arrange a community service project of their own. For example, if you volunteer your time at a refreshment stand at sports/band/drama event for free, that can be considered service. If you shovel snow for your neighbors, or take care of their children for free, that can be considered as community service.

What soup kitchens do I volunteer to help?

St Paul will arrange dates to help at Beans & Bread, Our Brother’s Keeper, Our Daily Bread, and Helping Up Mission. We invite your sponsor or parent to share this experience with you.

How will you know if I did my service projects?

You are required to write reflection papers. They are due 2 weeks after you complete the service. If they are not turned in on time – it’s like your homework at school – you don’t get credit, and you need to complete another service project.

What are reflection papers?

These are papers you write on your experience. They can be typed or legible hand writing. If you are more comfortable drawing instead of writing, you may ‘draw’ your reflection. Reflection papers do NOT need reviewed by your parent(s). They should be “a good paragraph long”, that answers these two questions: What you learned from doing this service and where did you see the face of Christ? Reflection papers are due TWO WEEKS after the event is completed.

What events do I have to write reflection papers for?

The soup kitchen

The two community service projects

The one family service project *** your parent can write this paper instead of you! ☺

The family visit to the shrine

After I am confirmed do I have to come to church?

Catholics are to “keep holy the Sabbath” and to grow in knowledge and faith. Attending Mass every week is important (and required). Continuing religious education (classes, Catholic school, youth group) bible studies, mission talks, visits to other churches and other events and programs are good ways to help one grow in knowledge and faith.

How is the family involved during the Confirmation process?

First, by prayer. Praying for and with family ~ while sharing a meal, driving to school, practices, games, concerts (a decade or two of the Rosary is GREAT!), celebrating the Liturgy of the Mass together, and private prayers are good anytime.

Secondly, each family and your sponsor are asked to visit, tour and share a Eucharistic celebration at a nearby shrine. Examples include, the Franciscan Friary (in Ellicott City), the Basilica (in Baltimore), Shrine of Elizabeth Ann Seton (Emmitsburg).

Third, by serving others together. We ask each family to do a service project together, as a family. This can be as simple as raking neighbors leaves, taking your movie (pizza, babysitting, etc) money, going grocery shopping for non-perishable items, then donating them to a food pantry. Contact the Salvation Army for a needy family, and take them a Thanksgiving Dinner. Call a nursing home, arrange a visit; maybe read to a senior citizen, or just talk with them. Have a neighborhood (or sports team, dance club, band, RE class) baby shower; give the collected infant gifts to the Pregnancy Center or Gabriel House. Arrange for a time to visit the Ronald McDonald house of Baltimore and see what they need. Prepare a Christmas 'shoe box gift'. Clean up a neighborhood park. Collect lightly used jackets, and donate them to an organization. Offer to plant flowers at a senior center, area of highway, park, or community building. If you have a snow day – help neighbors shovel their driveways – and use the snow to have a neighborhood snowman building contest! Use your imagination!

Who can be a sponsor?

Any practicing Catholic, who is confirmed, at least 16 years old and is a good example to the person to be confirmed, can be a sponsor. A sponsor can be a relative, a godparent, a friend, - but not a parent. Relatives include siblings, grandparents, uncles and aunts. Sponsors can be either gender- a male can choose a female sponsor and vice versa.

What does St Paul need to know about my sponsor?

Sponsor name, complete address, phone number, and e-mail (if they are comfortable sharing e-mail @). We do not require a letter from their home parish verifying they are members of a Catholic Church.

What if my sponsor can't be at the Confirmation celebration?

If your sponsor cannot attend your Confirmation, a "proxy" may take her/his place. Anyone (including a parent) can be a proxy. However, the name of the chosen sponsor is recorded in the Church records.

Do I have to use my Baptismal name as my Confirmation name?

No. It is a custom in the church that at Confirmation the person is free to choose his/her own "name". The name must be a Christian name- a saint's name, or a person from the bible. Choosing a saint whom one wishes to have as a role model is a Catholic tradition. Baptismal names can be used as your Confirmation name.

Where is the record of my Confirmation kept?

In two places- at the place of your Confirmation, and the information is also sent to the Church where you were baptized.