

SAINT ALOYSIUS RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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2019 CONFIRMATION PROCESS CATECHETICAL GUIDELINES

Saint Aloysius Sacramental and Catechetical guidelines require that:

1. Families are registered members of Saint Aloysius Parish. A copy of the candidate's baptismal certificate must be on file with us in Religious Education (unless they were baptized at St. Aloysius.)
2. Children are enrolled in a Religious Education program from the reception of their First Communion through Grade 8 or attend Catholic School. Make-up courses may be required.
3. For those who are older or who have not completed their religious education, individual programs may be provided so that they may be eligible to join the Confirmation process.
4. Confirmation sponsors must be at least 16 years of age, practicing Catholics, have been Confirmed already, and not the Candidate's parents. Godparents are a good option.

Guidelines for families with children in the Religious Education program and Catholic Schools:

- Consistent attendance at and satisfactory completion of Religious Education classes; or Consistent attendance during the school year and passing grade of Religion subject.
- Consistent attendance at Sunday Mass (every weekend), Holy Days and Confirmation Ritual Masses.
- Attendance at ALL Sacramental Preparation sessions as scheduled in the Confirmation Preparation calendar.
- Participation in parish ministries and events, offering back God's gifts to us of our Time, Talents and Treasures.

Summary of Program Requirements:

- Attendance and full participation at Confirmation retreat.
- One page double-spaced, typed paper on a Catholic Saint, **which will be the Candidate's Confirmation name.** Other options . create an original poem, slideshow presentation, artwork or song on the Saint.
- Completion of Service Projects and brief written reflections on each.
- Attendance at four Monday evening Confirmation Formation Sessions during the spring.
- Pass a written review on basic knowledge of our Catholic Faith, our Parish and the Sacrament of Confirmation. A Study Guide will be completed containing required material.
- Attendance and participation at two weekday Confirmation practices for candidates AND one rehearsal for sponsors and candidates the night before Confirmation.
- Confirmation activity fee payment of \$120. (Includes instructors/speakers, transportation, chaperones, lunch and materials for Confirmation Retreats; Confirmation Prep Binder; Formation Sessions and Assessment Exam; Practices; Confirmation Mass Gown rental; Confirmation Certificate; Light Reception in Gym, etc.) Please contact Mr. Karpinski if you have financial hardships.
- Submission of **all** Information Sheets including Confirmation candidate and sponsor information.

It is expected that all requirements will be completed by the assigned dates. **If a Confirmation candidate does not attend required sessions or parent does not call regarding his/her absence, it may be necessary to ask that candidate to delay his/her Confirmation until the following year.** We will address such issues on a one-to-one basis. An excused absence would be illness, family emergencies or unexpected events that require the presence of the candidate and his/her family. This excludes sports, scouts, school activities and recreational family activities/functions.

Outline of 2019 Confirmation Process

(Dates subject to change)

I. Invitation Stage

1. December 3, 2018 . 8:15pm in St. Al~~o~~ Church
Initial Information and Orientation Meeting for Parents and Candidates; Online 2019 Confirmation Registration form (Parish web site); Candidates/parents receive first half of Confirmation Preparation Binders which include an Outline and Guidelines of the process and additional details. \$120 Confirmation Prep fee (due by March 1, 2019; pay online via parish web site, cash or check payable to St. Aloysius Religious Ed.)
2. March 16, 2019 (Saturday) . Archdiocesan Retreat Youth Center (ARYC), Kearny, NJ
Full Day Retreat for Candidates and chaperones with PGC credentials; round-trip transportation will be provided via buses from St. Al~~o~~ parking lot.
3. March 24th (Sunday) . 7:00pm Mass in St. Al~~o~~ Church
Entrance Ritual Blessing at Mass for Candidates, Parents and Sponsor (if available).

II. Formation Stage

1. Four Candidate Confirmation Formation Sessions (Monday April 29th, May 6th, 13th, and 20th). Parents and sponsors may be invited to two of the sessions.
2. One page paper on your selected Confirmation Saint Name (May 13th)
3. Confirmation Binder Study Guides completed, studied and turned in after assessment. Assessment taken with Confirmation Team during the final formation session (Study Guides may be used). Completion of Letter to Bishop. (May 20th)

III. Reflection Stage

1. Ritual Blessing at Mass (Sunday, May 19th at 7:00pm Mass) for Candidates and Parents; Sponsors, if available.
2. Reflection on Confirmation, prayer and service during this preparation stage.

IV. Decision Stage

1. Candidates' final Service Project Sheets and all forms (July 15th)
2. Candidate Confirmation Mass Selection Form emailed out by August 30th to ONLY those candidates completing all requirements.
3. Final Ritual Blessing at Mass (September 22nd at 7:00pm Mass) for Candidates and Parents; Sponsors, if available.
4. Confirmation Practices
 - 2 one-hour practices for **Candidates only** (Tuesday & Wednesday before Confirmation; time depends on Mass selection);
 - 1 one-hour rehearsal for **Candidates and Sponsors** (evening before Confirmation; time depends on Mass selection)
5. Confirmation Masses are scheduled for **Saturday, October 12, 2019** (1.5 hrs. each); Morning Mass (10:30am); Afternoon Mass (1:30pm). (Date/times to be finalized);

* Mission Period – Through Entire Confirmation Prep Process (and throughout life)

1. Each candidate is required to complete at least 3 Service Experiences and Service Project summaries in the following areas: Parish (approximately 5 service hours); Community (approx. 5 service hours); and Family (approx. 5 service hours).
2. Continue Service, Ministry and Active Parish Participation into the future.

COMPONENTS OF THE PROCESS

Attendance

Attendance is extremely important to the process. By being present at each session the candidates become comfortable with each other and more likely to participate in discussions and shared faith experiences. Attendance also allows for the candidate to form relationships and in so doing - a community of faith.

Confirmation Names

The practice of choosing a Confirmation name to reflect or symbolize the candidate's personal conversion is part of the process. The candidate may choose to keep his or her given name (**if it's a saint's name**) or choose a new name (**a saint's name**) for the celebration of the sacrament. **The name of the Saint you choose for your Saint Project must be the same name as the Confirmation name you choose.**

Retreat

The purpose of the Confirmation Retreat is to help the candidates prepare for the celebration of the Rite of Confirmation. The Confirmation Retreat focuses on the meaning of faith, what it means to be a Christian, and the call of Christians to live out their faith within a community of believers.

Service

In facilitating the call to Christian service, each candidate will participate in service experiences with our community of faith and with his/her family, as well as with the larger community. This should continue throughout the candidate's life.

Sponsors

With the current theology of the sacrament of Confirmation, sponsors need to be looked at as spiritual companions for the candidate, not because he or she is a favorite relative or being urged by a parent to choose such a relative. Frequently, the intent was to somehow honor the relative with the invitation. Catholic Canon Law states that a sponsor must be at least sixteen years old, must be a fully initiated Catholic (received sacraments of Baptism, First Communion and Confirmation), must not be bound by any church penalty and **not be a parent of the one to be confirmed**. Canon Law establishes a starting point for the role of sponsor. With the idea of a sponsor as a spiritual companion, candidates will be encouraged to invite someone who is a member of our community of faith; someone who the candidate views as positive and who has a comfortable relationship with the candidate; and finally someone willing and capable to engage in the Confirmation process as a means of enhancing his or her own growth as a Christian adult.

CONFIRMATION PROCESS

Confirmation is first and foremost a Sacrament of Initiation. Though one cannot deny that Christian maturity should be recognized and even desired in adolescents, it is not the focal point of our approach. The sacrament should be conferred when there is some evidence of conversion. Therefore, this is not a class, this is a journey, more specifically, a faith journey. The destination of the journey is conversion. Those undertaking the journey seek a change of heart, stimulated by an increase in religious knowledge, motivated by service, and guided by prayer and reflection. The goal of this process is conversion that engages the whole person - mind, body, heart and soul.

Goals for Period of Invitation

- ✝ To begin the preparation process on a positive note
- ✝ To establish initial trust
- ✝ To help the candidates reflect on their personal religious experience
- ✝ To prepare for the entrance ritual

Goals for Period of Formation

- ✝ To generate or renew candidate interest in the Gospel story of Jesus
- ✝ To review essential elements of the Gospel
- ✝ To present the core beliefs, moral vision, and sacramental life of Roman Catholicism
- ✝ To call candidates to discipleship

Goals for Periods of Reflection and Decision

- ✝ To spark the candidates' enthusiasm for deeper participation in the life of the church
- ✝ To prepare candidates for the meaningful celebration of Confirmation
- ✝ To prepare for the covenant ritual

Goals for Candidates Mission

- ✝ To reflect on the experience of the Rite of Confirmation
- ✝ To prepare for transition out of preparation and to mission
- ✝ To introduce opportunities for continued involvement and invite the newly confirmed to commit to ongoing formation