

# Sacred Heart Church

West Des Moines, IA



Candidate/Parent Handbook  
2017-2018



## Confirmation Prayer

Spirit of God, grant me:

The gift of **wisdom**

To see the world through your eyes,

The gift of **counsel**

To make difficult decisions,

The gifts of **knowledge** and **understanding**

To use my mind to know you and to love you,

The gift of **fortitude**

To have the courage to live in the faith despite the  
difficulties and disappointments,

The gift of **piety**

To be able to express my special love  
and commitment to you,

And the right kind of awesome **fear**

That makes me pause to wonder and revere God's Love.

**Amen**

## Contact Information

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# Confirmation Calendar for 2017-2018

- Sunday  
Sept. 10  
All Masses      **Confirmation Orientation/Rite of Enrollment:**  
Candidates will be recognized and receive a special blessing at each Mass. Parent and candidate meeting following each Mass. Choose one to attend.
- Wed., Nov. 8, 2017  
6:30-8:00 pm      **Confirmation Session:** (Parish Center)  
*(Note: This is the 2nd Wed. of the month because All Saints Holy Day is the 1st Wed. of the month)*
- Wed., Dec. 6, 2017  
6:30-8:00 pm      **Confirmation Session:** (Parish Center)  
**\*\*Sponsor Name Due**
- Wed., Jan. 3, 2017  
6:30-8:00 pm      **Confirmation Session:** (Parish Center)  
**\*\*Sponsor Interview Due**
- Sunday,  
Jan. 14, 2018  
11:15 am-5:30 pm  
Parish Center and Church      **Confirmation Retreat:** The retreat begins with 11:15 Mass and concludes at 5:30 pm. **\*\*\*Parents (and sponsors if available) are encouraged to attend the Mass with the candidate (student)**  
*Attendance of a retreat is required by the Diocese for all Confirmation Candidates and must be attended in its entirety.* If the candidate cannot attend the entire retreat, you will be required to identify another approved retreat in a Catholic parish in our area and attend that event. Please call our office immediately if attendance is an issue.
- Wed., Feb. 7, 2018  
6:30-8:00 pm      **Confirmation Session:** (Parish Center)  
**\*\*Saint Report Due**
- Wed., March 7, 2018  
6:30-8:00 pm      **Confirmation Session:** (Parish Center)

Wed., April 4, 2018  
6:30-8:00 pm

**Confirmation Session:** (Parish Center)

Wed. Sept. 5, 2018  
6:30-8:00 pm

**Confirmation Session:** (Parish Center)  
\*\*Service verification forms/logs due

Sunday, Sept. 23,  
2018  
6:30-8:00 pm  
Church

**Parent/Candidate/Sponsor Session & Rehearsal:**

This event is required of both the candidate and a parent (Sponsors are highly encouraged to attend). The sacrament of Confirmation and the Confirmation Mass are much more meaningful when we understand the details of the sacrament and the signs and symbols of the Mass. Why does the bishop celebrate this sacrament with us? What does it mean when he lays hands on the candidates? How did the sacrament originate? This required session for parents and candidates will make your experience of confirmation more than just going through the actions of another sacrament. We will also be practicing the actual process of how candidates, sponsors and parents will walk up to receive the sacrament.

**Sun., Sept. 30,  
2018**  
4:00 pm Candidates  
with **last names A-J**

**Confirmation Masses 2018**

Candidates, parents and sponsors should arrive at the church by 3:30 pm. Following Mass a cake and punch reception will be held in the Parish Center. Expect the Confirmation Mass to last at least 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  hours. The Bishop will stay and be available for photos with candidates after Mass.

**Sun., Oct. 7, 2018**  
4:00 pm Candidates  
with **last names K-Z**

## What is Confirmation?

Confirmation is the sacrament that completes Baptism; in it the gift of the Holy Spirit is bestowed upon us. In Confirmation the soul of a baptized Christian is imprinted with a permanent seal that can be received only once and marks this individual forever as a Christian. The gift of the Holy Spirit is the strength from above in which this individual puts the grace of his/her Baptism into practice through his/her life and acts as a "witness" for Christ.

Confirmation means accepting responsibility for your faith and destiny. Childhood is a time when you're told what to do, and you react positively to reward and negatively to punishment. Adulthood, even young adulthood, means that you must do what's right on your own, not for the recognition or reward but merely because it's the right thing to do. The focus is on the Holy Spirit, who confirmed the apostles on Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4) and gave them courage to practice their faith. As Catholics, we believe that the same Holy Spirit confirms Candidates during the Sacrament of Confirmation and gives them the same gifts and fruits.

# Choosing a Sponsor

Much thought should go into the choosing of a Confirmation sponsor. This portion of the booklet is provided to help you select a sponsor that will guide you and act as a good example of Catholic Christian faith as you approach your Confirmation. At the end of this section, you will find the Confirmation guidelines found in The Code of Canon Law.

At the time of your Baptism, your Godparents represented the community of faith in welcoming you to the family of the Church, the Body of Christ. They and your parents accepted a responsibility at your Baptism to help you grow as a Catholic. For Confirmation, the Church asks that you choose a sponsor - someone other than your mom or dad. This special person represents the faith community at the *Rite of Confirmation* and symbolizes the support of the entire Body of Christ for you in your life as a disciple. Thus, this person joins your parents and your family as you journey through the Confirmation preparation period. He or she supports you and helps you grow in your life of faith. The sponsor is your challenger and your guide in discovering what it means to be a true witness of Christ.

## Who should you choose?

At Baptism, your Godparents were witnesses to your belonging to the Church; Baptism and Confirmation are intimately connected. (Your Confirmation is your promise which fulfills the promise made by your Godparents and parents at your Baptism.) Talk with your parents about who can best support you during the Confirmation preparation as well as after - who will support you in living out your Baptismal promise?

- ✓ Consider a person you know who is a role model, who truly lives the Good News.
- ✓ Consider a person you can learn from by his or her example of Christian living. A person who is Catholic and has received the three sacraments of initiation. (Baptism, Eucharist and Confirmation)
- ✓ Consider a person who, for you, is a spiritual role model who will be willing to make the commitment to be with you at this time and beyond the celebration of Confirmation.

- ✓ It is preferable that you choose someone who lives nearby so that the sponsor is able to participate in some of the events throughout the year.

Remember, it is an honor to be chosen as a sponsor for Confirmation. Do not hesitate to ask! If you have difficulty with your decision, talk it over with your parents. If you run into a situation where you do not have someone you feel comfortable asking, call the CFF staff and they can give you some help.

Below we have listed some excerpts from The Code of Canon Law regarding selecting your sponsor.

**Canon 892** - As far as possible, a sponsor for the one to be Confirmed should be present; it is for the sponsor to see that the confirmed person acts as a true witness to Christ and faithfully fulfills the obligations connected with this sacrament.

**Canon 893** - To perform the role of sponsor, it is necessary that a person fulfill the conditions mentioned in canon 874.

It is desirable that the one who undertook the role of sponsor at Baptism be sponsor for confirmation.

**Canon 874** - To be admitted to the role of sponsor, a person must:

1. be designated by the one to be Confirmed, by the parents or the one who takes their place, or in their absence, by the pastor or minister;
2. be at least sixteen years of age, 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 the role to be undertaken;
4. not be bound by a canonical penalty legitimately imposed or declared;
5. not be the father or the mother of the one to be Confirmed.

Choose your sponsor as soon as possible. **You must have your sponsor chosen by December 6, 2017.** You will be asked to complete an interview with your sponsor and fill out the "**Sponsor Interview Form**" included in your Confirmation folder. **This is due by January 3, 2018.**

# Choosing a Confirmation Saint Name

As a candidate, you are given the opportunity to choose the name of a Saint for Confirmation by which the bishop will address you. Your Baptismal name may be used, especially since this shows the unity between Baptism and Confirmation. If your Baptismal name is a saint's name, you will still be asked to write a saint report. The name should represent someone who is a role model to you during your preparation time and throughout your life.

It was customary in the early Church to take a new Christian name after being initiated representing the rejection of the old life. These names were chosen on the basis of their meaning to the community, such as Fidelia (faithful). Eventually, new Christians chose names of saints, holy ones from the early times.

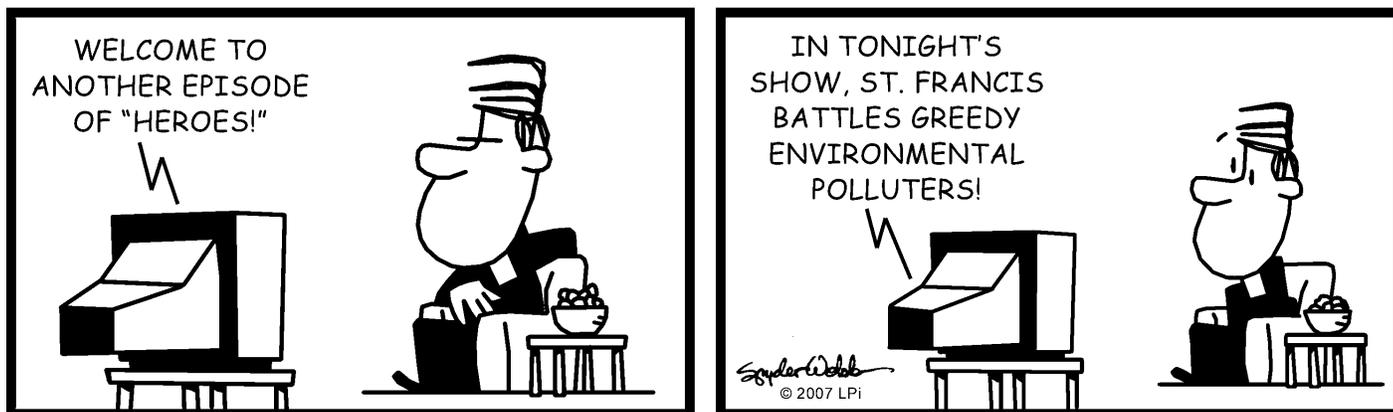
The purpose of taking a Saint's name for Confirmation is to learn about that person's life and how they lived as a follower of Christ. The characteristics of the Saint you choose should be ones that you hope to imitate in your own life.

Candidates will be asked to do some research about Saints outside of class time. Simply use an internet search engine and type in "Catholic Saints" and you will have many choices. In addition, candidates should discuss their possible choices with parents and/or Sponsor.

We have included a form for you to use for your Confirmation Saint name report in your Confirmation folder, but you are free to simply write or type your report on a separate piece of paper.

**CONFIRMATION SAINT NAME REPORTS DUE BY FEBRUARY 7, 2018**

ALL SAINTS / OUR COMMUNION WITH THE SAINTS



# Confirmation Service Expectations

Ongoing acts of Christian service are essential to the faith life of the Catholic Christian. Developmentally, our Confirmation candidates are at a point in their lives where they are forming their conscience as well as exploring and seeking affirmation of their gifts and talents. Service projects, as part of the preparation process of Confirmation, help the candidate find ways to use their talents in building up God's Kingdom.

It is the hope of the community of Sacred Heart that our young parishioners who are preparing to be initiated into full membership of the church will find their calling and their place in the Church. The service projects should stretch the candidate just a little beyond his or her comfort zone and help the young person appreciate personal gifts which will be strengthened in the Holy Spirit at Confirmation.

Christian Service can be defined through the Corporal Works of Mercy, as well as through several other aspects of Catholic Theology and Tradition. The Corporal Works of Mercy are outlined in the Gospel of Matthew 25: 34-40. They are to: give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, visit the imprisoned, shelter those without homes, visit the sick, feed the hungry, bury the dead, and welcome the stranger. Additionally, we seek to instill in our candidates the responsibility to be positive stewards of the Earth. We also encourage our candidates to understand the value of education by encouraging them, as the Spiritual Works of Mercy call us, to instruct the ignorant.

While general community service is valuable, activities that cannot be defined by one of the above Works of Mercy will not be accepted. Examples include but are not limited to volunteering for concession stand duties, keeping score or being a team manager for an athletic event, etc. If you are unsure about the validity of a service opportunity contact Deanna Lane at 225-0546 or [Deanna.lane@sacredheartwdm.org](mailto:Deanna.lane@sacredheartwdm.org)

***Candidates must demonstrate an understanding of their baptismal call to serve others by completing one of the following:***

- Participate in your school's service cord program (i.e. Silver Cord) and **provide a log of service activities by Sept. 5, 2018**
- Dowling students who complete their service requirement for religion class may **complete a log of service activities by Sept. 5, 2018**
- Non-Dowling students who are not participating in a school service cord program must participate in a minimum of **THREE Christian Service Projects** and **submit signed verification forms by Sept. 5, 2018.** (*FIA and Summer mission trip will each count for completion of 3 projects*)

Verification forms or logs should be turned in to your small group leader or the Youth Ministry office throughout the year as you complete service.

**DON'T WAIT UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE!**

**As you schedule your service projects, please keep the following in mind.**

- A service project must consist of time you donate to the community. You may not be reimbursed financially for your time.
- Activities that assist your immediate family may not be considered as service hours. As family members these are considered familial obligations. Immediate family includes those living in your household.
- Service Project verification forms may not be signed by family members or a student.
- A variety of service is encouraged. Exiting your comfort zone is good!

**Below you will find some ideas for service offered through the parish:**

- ✓ CFF Volunteers: CFF can use help at the First Eucharist Retreat in March of each year, at receptions for First Reconciliation (December), and First Eucharist (May).
- ✓ Parishfest Celebration: Typically held in late August. Watch the bulletin and website for details.

- ✓ Church Decorations: Help decorate/clean up the church before/after the change of the liturgical seasons. Watch the parish bulletin for announcements of help needed.
- ✓ FIA (Faith in Action): Spring Break Service Adventure. Sun.-Wed. of spring break. Teens in grades 9-12 spend the days serving at local agencies that help the poor and needy and the evenings engaging in social justice learning and various prayer and community building experiences. More information available late fall on the website [www.sacredheartwdm.org](http://www.sacredheartwdm.org)
- ✓ Lenten Fish Fry: Each Friday of Lent the parish hosts a fish fry. Watch the bulletin and website for details. [www.sacredheartwdm.org](http://www.sacredheartwdm.org)
- ✓ Love in the Heart of Christ (Parish Day of Service): Held annually in the fall. Participate in outreach to help parishioners and neighbors with everything from yard work, small household projects and visits with the homebound. Watch the bulletin for details and sign-up information. (Oct. 28-29, 2017)
- ✓ Summer mission trip: Each summer, youth ministry sponsors a week-long mission trip for teens that have completed 9-12<sup>th</sup> grade. Recent locations have been Mazatlan, Mexico, Winnebago Indian Reservation, and South Texas. More information available in December or January.
- ✓ Teen Choir: This group of energetic musicians leads sung prayer at Mass once a month (usually 11:15). Rehearsals are about two Sunday evenings per month 6:30-8:00 pm. Contact Deanna Lane 225-0546 or [Deanna.lane@sacredheartwdm.org](mailto:Deanna.lane@sacredheartwdm.org) to sign up.
- ✓ Our Lady of Guadalupe Celebration: Help with the celebration after the Mass on Dec. 12, 2017. Contact Deanna or Hispanic Ministries coordinator to sign up
- ✓ Watch the bulletin and SMASH update emails: Opportunities will appear throughout the year. Watch the bulletin and read emails carefully for additional opportunities. (Christmas Shopping for Human Services in December, Meal packaging TBD)

### **Service Opportunities Throughout the Community:**

A list of many approved organizations that provide ongoing opportunities for Christian Service will be available at [www.sacredheartwdm.org](http://www.sacredheartwdm.org) click on "Liturgy/Sacraments" then "Confirmation"

If you are unsure whether an event or organization is considered Christian Service, contact Deanna Lane at 225-0546 or [Deanna.lane@sacredheartwdm.org](mailto:Deanna.lane@sacredheartwdm.org)

# Preparation and Requirements for Confirmation

- **Parental involvement**: Parents are the primary catechist (teacher) in their child's faith formation. We only see your child a few hours a month, you interact with them every day! The family of the candidate must be properly involved, instructed and supported. Parents are expected to attend several instructional meetings during the process.
- **Weekly Mass Attendance**: Attendance at the weekly Eucharistic Liturgy is expected. Without participation at weekly Mass, no preparation could effectively evoke the communal nature of our Roman Catholic faith that comes from sharing in the breaking of the bread and the sharing of the cup.
- **Prayer**: The second most important responsibility after Mass attendance for the candidate, their family and the sponsor is to pray. Choosing to complete initiation into the Church is a discernment process. This is a decision that comes from the core of the candidate. To reach that core, one must pray and pray often.
- **Catechetical Sessions**: Monthly preparation sessions that instruct about the basic beliefs of the Catholic Faith and the Sacrament of Confirmation are mandatory, not elective. Good attendance is essential; make up sessions are required for all approved absences (see policy below). Confirmation preparation is a process that prepares the candidate for a life-long membership in the Roman Catholic faith. This is a process not of convenience, but of commitment.
- **Attendance Policy**: We understand extraordinary circumstances may arise such as illness or family emergencies. In these cases a parent must notify us in ADVANCE of the absence. Call 225-0546 (O) or 491-3631 (Cell) or email [Deanna.lane@sacredheartwdm.org](mailto:Deanna.lane@sacredheartwdm.org) In all cases, due to the fact that we only meet once a month, **every session missed must be made up.**
  - **First missed session**: Attend any SMASH on Wednesday Youth Group meeting before the next Confirmation session.
  - **Second missed session**: Meet with Confirmation leader individually to cover the missed material.
  - **Third missed session**: The candidate will not be eligible to receive the sacrament of Confirmation during this session. They may choose to begin the process again the following year.
  - *If there are extenuating circumstances, contact the office to discuss options. Decisions will be made on a case by case basis.*

- **Retreat**: Attendance at the Confirmation retreat will be required of the candidate during preparation for the sacrament. Since attendance at the retreat provides the candidate with an invaluable experience, if the candidate is unable to attend, they will be required to attend an alternate Confirmation retreat at another Catholic parish. The Confirmation staff should be notified well in advance and will need to seek approval of an alternate event.
- **Service**: Service is time set aside ministering to others. As members of a church family where we are loved and cared for, it is our responsibility to love and care for others. Candidates must choose one of the following ways to demonstrate their understanding of this call to serve:
  - Participate in their school service cord program
  - Complete required hours for Dowling religion class
  - OR participate in THREE Christian Service Projects.

A service verification form or log should be completed and turned in by Sept. 5, 2018. (*see complete service expectations on pp 12-14*)

- **Sponsors**: Sponsors not only stand with the candidate at the time of Confirmation, but should be an example and a guide throughout the preparation process. Sponsors should be mature, practicing Catholics; Baptized and Confirmed in the Church and committed to grow in their Catholic faith. The sponsor must be 16 years of age or older, and cannot be a parent of the candidate. Each candidate should choose a sponsor who is available to attend meetings and events throughout the process. Candidates will be required to interview their sponsor and fill out the "Sponsor Interview Form" by January 3, 2018. (Sponsors should be chosen as soon as possible so they can be praying for and connecting with the Candidate along their spiritual journey)
- **Confirmation Saint Name**: Candidates are given the opportunity to choose a Saint's name for Confirmation by which the bishop will address the candidate when Confirmed. Students will be asked to write an explanation about their choice of a Confirmation name in a report which will be due by Feb. 7, 2018.
- **Integration into the parish community**: Candidates must be made aware of and encouraged in their responsibility to participate in parish life during their preparation as well as after the reception of the sacrament. Candidates are strongly encouraged to attend and participate in the activities of SMASH (Student Ministry at Sacred Heart).

## Summary of Required Forms and Deadlines

It is the responsibility of the candidate, with the support of the parents and the sponsor, to make sure that all appropriate forms and requirements are met by the necessary due dates. Please read the following information carefully.

**The following copies and forms should be completed and sent to the church office or given to your small group leader by the date required.**

### Baptismal Certificate

We must have a record of the candidates Baptism before receipt of the sacrament. Please provide our office with a copy at the beginning of the process. If the candidate was Baptized at Sacred Heart Church, we must either have a copy of the certificate, or the exact date of the Baptism. Baptismal records are recorded by date, not name.  
**DUE ASAP**

### Sponsor Interview Form

A sponsor should be selected as soon as possible. The Candidate must interview their chosen sponsor and complete the "Sponsor Interview Form" **by Jan. 3, 2018**

### Confirmation Saint Name Report

This report should describe the Saint name you have chosen and the reason(s) why. **Due by February 7, 2018**

### Service Verification Form or Log

Dowling students and Silver Cord participants will turn in a log of their service activities. Other candidates will need to complete three Christian Service projects and turn in "Service Verification Forms" Turn in sheets as you complete projects.  
**All projects are due by Sept. 5, 2018.**

# Confirmation Rehearsal and Mass Details

## Confirmation Candidate/Parent Session & Rehearsal:

**Sunday, September 23, 2018 6:30-8:00 pm in the Church**

Candidate and at least one parent are required to attend. Sponsors are highly encouraged to attend.

## Confirmation Masses

Due to the large number of candidates this year there will be TWO Confirmation Masses.

**Sunday, September 30, 2018, 4:00 pm - Candidates with last names A-J**

**Sunday, October 7, 2018, 4:00 pm - Candidates with last names K-Z**

Candidates and sponsors should arrive by 3:30 p.m. A pew will be reserved for each candidate. Following the Confirmation Mass, we will host a cake and punch reception in the Parish Center for all candidates, family members, and guests. Expect the Mass to last at least 1 ½ hours. The Bishop will be available for photos with the candidates following Mass.



# GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

## **WISDOM**

*To value the things of God*

## **UNDERSTANDING**

*To grasp faith's mysteries*

## **COUNSEL**

*To make wise decisions*

## **FORTITUDE**

*To strengthen your will*



## **KNOWLEDGE**

*To enlighten your mind*

## **PIETY**

*To love and serve God*

## **FEAR OF THE LORD**

*To respect God's majesty*

