

St. Michael the Archangel Parish Emlenton, Pennsylvania



“Be sealed with the Holy Spirit!”



Welcome!

On behalf of St. Michael the Archangel Parish,
we welcome your family to the Confirmation Program and pray
that you and your daughter or son will have many growing
experiences into the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Confirmation completes the process of initiation into the Holy Catholic
Church and sets the newly confirmed on the way of Discipleship.
Parents, you are the primary faith educators of your child.

Over the coming months, candidates will be doing much reflecting,
sharing, praying, celebrating, caring and growing in the sacramental
knowledge of our faith. St. Michael's is committed to supporting
these young people every step of the way.

May the Holy Spirit strengthen and guide you.

Confirmation Prayer

*God, our father, we ask you to bless all candidates
who are now preparing to receive the spirit of your
love in the Sacrament of Confirmation.*

*May the gifts within each one be touched by your Holy Spirit
and become blessings for our parish family.*

*Bless, too, our parents, our sponsors, our teachers
and Catechists, and all those who have been the
reflection of your son's love for us. This we
ask you through Christ, our Lord. Amen.*

Common Prayers That Will Help You on Your Journey Toward The Sacrament of Confirmation



Prayer to the Holy Spirit

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of the faithful
enkindle in them the fire of your love.
Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created
and you shall renew the face of the earth.

Let us pray: O God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit
did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant us in the same
Spirit to be truly wise and ever to rejoice in his
consolation. Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayer to the Holy Spirit for Enlightenment

Let us pray: O Holy Spirit, divine Spirit of light and love, I consecrate to you my understanding, my heart, my will, my whole being for time and for eternity. May my understanding always be submissive to your heavenly inspiration and to the teachings of the Holy Catholic Church, of which you are the infallible Guide; may my heart ever be inflamed with love of God and of my neighbor; may my will always conform to the divine will, and may my whole life be a faithful imitation of the life and virtues of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, to whom be honor and glory forever. Amen

St. Augustine's Prayer to the Holy Spirit

Breathe in me, O Holy Spirit, that my thoughts may all be holy. Act in me, O Holy Spirit, that my work, too, may be holy. Draw my heart, O Holy Spirit, that I love but what is holy. Strengthen me, O Holy Spirit, to defend all that is holy. Guard me, then, O Holy Spirit, that I always may be holy. Amen

Prayer for the Help of the Holy Spirit

O God, send forth your Holy Spirit into my heart that I may perceive, into my mind that I may remember, and into my soul that I may meditate. Inspire me to speak with piety, holiness, tenderness and mercy. Teach, guide and direct my thoughts and senses from beginning to end. May your grace ever help and correct me, and may I be strengthened now with wisdom from on high, for the sake of your infinite mercy. Amen.

What Must I Do To Have Eternal Life?

¹⁶ Now someone approached him and said, “Teacher, what good must I do to gain eternal life?”* ¹⁷He answered him, “Why do you ask me about the good? There is only One who is good.* If you wish to enter into life, keep the commandments.” ¹⁸ He asked him, “Which ones?” And Jesus replied, “ ‘You shall not kill; you shall not commit adultery; you shall not steal; you shall not bear false witness; ¹⁹honor your father and your mother’; and ‘you shall love your neighbor as yourself.’”

Matthew 19:16-19

The Ten Commandments

1. I am the LORD your God; you shall not have strange gods before me.
2. You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain.
3. Remember to keep holy the LORD’s day.
4. Honor your father and your mother.
5. You shall not kill.
6. You shall not commit adultery.
7. You shall not steal.
8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
9. You shall not covet your neighbor’s wife.
10. You shall not covet your neighbor’s goods.

Renewal of Baptismal Promises

We profess our faith every time we pray the creed at Sunday Mass. More formally we renew our baptismal promises every Easter Sunday, at the beginning of the Rite of Baptism and at the beginning of the Rite of Confirmation.

Baptismal Promises

1. Do you reject Satan?
2. And all his works?
3. And all his empty promises?

Profession of Faith

1. Do you believe in God, the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth?
2. Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary, suffered, died and was buried, rose from the dead and is seated at the right hand of the Father?
3. Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of Saints, the forgiveness of sins, and the resurrection of the dead and life everlasting?

Precepts of the Church

The precepts of the Church are set in the context of a moral life bound to and nourished by liturgical life. The obligatory character of these positive laws decreed by the pastoral authorities is meant to guarantee to the faithful the indispensable minimum in the spirit of prayer and moral effort, in the growth in love of God and neighbor. (CCC 2042-2043)

1. You shall attend Mass on Sundays and on holy days of obligation.
2. You shall confess your sins at least once a year.
3. You shall receive the sacrament of the Eucharist at least during the Easter Season.
4. You shall observe the days of fasting and abstinence established by the Church.
5. You shall help provide for the needs of the Church.

Fruits of the Holy Spirit

The fruits of the Holy Spirit give evidence that a healthy life is being lived! Trees that bear fruit are healthy trees. Souls that manifest the fruits of the Holy Spirit are healthy souls! You can find them in the Bible in Galatians 5:22-23.

- Charity
- Kindness
- Trustfulness
- Joy
- Goodness
- Modesty
- Peace
- Generosity
- Self-Control
- Patience
- Gentleness
- Chastity



Works of Mercy

The works of mercy are charitable actions by which we come to the aid of our neighbor in spiritual and bodily necessities. Instructing, advising, consoling, comforting are spiritual works of mercy, as are forgiving and bearing wrongs patiently. The corporal works of mercy consist especially in feeding the hungry, sheltering, clothing. Among all these, giving alms to the poor is one of the chief witnesses to fraternal charity; it is also a work of justice pleasing to God. (CCC 2447)

When we attend to the needs of those in want, we give them what is theirs, not ours. More than performing works of mercy, we are paying a debt of justice.

St. Gregory the Great, Regula Pastoralis.

Corporal Works of Mercy

1. Feeding the hungry
2. Giving drink to the thirsty
3. Clothing the naked
4. Sheltering the homeless
5. Visiting the sick
6. Visiting the imprisoned
7. Burying the dead



Spiritual Works of Mercy

1. Counseling the doubtful
2. Instructing the ignorant
3. Admonishing sinners
4. Comforting the afflicted
5. Forgiving offenses
6. Bearing wrongs patiently
7. Praying for the living and the dead

Gifts of the Holy Spirit

The moral life of Christians is sustained by the gifts of the Holy Spirit. These are permanent dispositions which make us docile in following the divine inspiration of the Holy Spirit. They complete and perfect the virtues of those who receive them. (CCC 1830)

1. Wisdom
2. Understanding
3. Counsel (Right Judgment)
4. Fortitude (Courage)
5. Knowledge
6. Piety (Reverence)
7. Fear of the Lord (Wonder and awe)



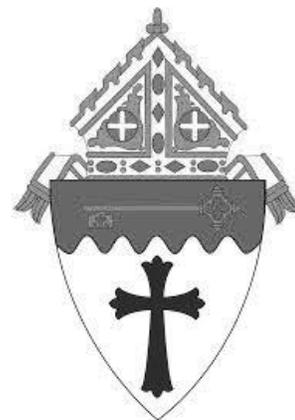
Confirmation Policies of the Diocese of Erie

Administrative Policies

- Confirmation will be administered only to those who have been properly instructed, actively involved in the parish program, and who freely wish to be confirmed.
- Parishes have the responsibility to provide adequate opportunities for preparation of candidates for this sacrament. Requirements for the Confirmation Program should be clearly communicated to candidates and their parent(s)/guardian(s).
- The appropriate period for the celebration of Confirmation is to be no earlier than the eleventh grade.
- All Confirmation names must be that of a saint of the Church. Only saints whose names can be found in *Butler's Lives of the Saints* may be used. This policy does permit the use of Scripture names of the holy persons/angels of both the Old and New Testaments.
- Each Confirmation candidate must request the Sacrament from the Bishop in a letter that follows the instructions listed in this handbook. The appropriate personnel in the parish must review all letters to ensure that the Bishop does not receive letters from candidates indicating that they do not wish to be confirmed or containing inappropriate material.
- The pastor or his representative must interview each candidate at least once at the end of the preparation process.
- The candidate must perform 25 service hours through the year – 5 hours of which must be spent in the candidate's home parish.
- As primary educators of their children, parent(s) are to be intimately involved in the catechesis for Confirmation. This will help them renew and strengthen their own faith and serve as positive faith examples for their children.
- The Confirmation retreat is an important part of the candidate's preparation and is not to be omitted. Pennsylvania Act 175 offers a ready opportunity for release of students for such retreats during the school day. These forms are located in the office of Religious Education.
- The retreat before Confirmation is a valuable opportunity for the students to build community, receive catechesis and experience conversion. The full text of the Bishop's expectations for a Confirmation Retreat is in this handbook.
- Sponsors are to be confirmed, practicing adult Catholics other than the candidate's parents. Since Confirmation is the completion of Baptism, one's godparent could well be a candidate for this role. Sponsors do not have to be of the same sex as the candidate.

Confirmation Guidelines of the Diocese of Erie

- An initial interview by the pastor/staff member is strongly encouraged to determine whether the candidate is ready to begin the preparation process. This is encouraged in addition to the interview process required at the end of the preparation process. Critical to the determination of a candidate's readiness would be the candidate's willingness to receive the Sacrament and to fulfill the requirements of the program.
- It is suggested that the candidate's letter to the Bishop be used as an outline for the final required interview.
- The Rite of Intention, modeled on the Rite of the Catechumenate from the RCIA is to be celebrated with the parish community at a Sunday liturgy. The date of this celebration will be made by Fr. Bill and announced at Mass and in the bulletin. All Confirmation candidates will be required to attend this Mass.
- The Rite of Acceptance, modeled on the RCIA will be celebrated at a Sunday liturgy sometime after the second interview. The date of this celebration will be set by Fr. Bill and announced at Mass and in the bulletin. All Confirmation candidates will be required to attend this Mass.



Letter to the Bishop

Instructions

The following issues should be addressed in the letter to the Bishop requesting the Sacrament of Confirmation. As you respond to each question, please use the question number to identify your response. The letter should be addressed and sent to the Bishop who will be ministering Confirmation at your celebration.

1. Why do you feel you are ready to celebrate this sacrament?
2. Please list the service projects in which you were involved.
3. Please write a few words on how you felt about giving during your service projects. How will these experiences encourage you to further service in the future?
4. What saint's name have you chosen?
5. What characteristics of the saint or the person whose name you are taking would you hope to model in your life?
6. What was the theme of your Confirmation retreat? Please write a few words on what was the most meaningful part of the retreat for you.
7. Tell why you picked your sponsor. What in your sponsor's life tells you what it means to be a follower of Christ?
8. God calls each of us to be disciples in a particular way of life. This call is lived out through a variety of vocations such as marriage, the single life, the life of a deacon or priest or that of a religious sister or brother. Have you prayed to God asking that he reveal your vocation to you?
9. Have you ever thought God might be calling you to follow him as a priest or deacon, religious sister or brother?



Bishop Persico's Expectations For a Confirmation Retreat

The Retreat before Confirmation is a valuable opportunity for the students to build community, receive catechesis, and experience conversion. After a good retreat, youth are more fruitfully disposed to receive the grace of the sacrament of Confirmation and more likely to continue their practice of the Catholic faith. In order to accomplish these things, the following are the Bishop's expectations:

- It is valuable to give the group time for joyful interaction, renew acquaintances, and build a sense of preparing for the Sacrament together.
- The goals of the retreat are:
 - to initiate (or deepen) a personal experience of Christian conversion;
 - to have a change of heart (or a strengthening) regarding the sacrament of Confirmation.
- The sacrament of Penance should be offered. Students should receive a comprehensive and compassionate examination of conscience and be encouraged to make individual confessions. This will require adequate time and a sufficient number of priest confessors. Secondary expressions (e.g. symbolic burning of written sins) should never replace sacramental confession, nor seem to the students to be a more effective way to experience God's mercy. If used, such tangential gestures should highlight the real absolution of sin that comes with the sacrament of Penance.
- Normally, Mass should be scheduled as part of the retreat, unless circumstances of time preclude it.
- If possible, young people who have made a significant commitment to Christ and the Catholic faith should be invited to give witness to the young people preparing for Confirmation.
- If possible, students should be reminded of the beauty and value of vocations to priesthood and consecrated life, in addition to marriage.
- The retreat should never be replaced by a day of service. While such a day can be an important part of the Confirmation program, it does not achieve the goals of a retreat.
- This retreat is a unique opportunity for parishes to evangelize their youth prior to Confirmation. Other retreat opportunities (e.g. TEC, youth rallies, etc.), although warmly encouraged, should not replace this unique communal experience.

The Bishop readily acknowledges that there are many creative ways to achieve the goals indicated above. He encourages those in retreat work to share their best ideas with each other for the good of the students.

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Contact Information

Should you or your family have any questions, or needs, please feel free to contact us. We are all here for you.

Fr. Johnathan Schmolt

724-867-2422

Lisa Cirell

724-867-0110

Religious Education

elisa.cirell@stmichaelrcchurch.org

The goal of our Confirmation preparation program is to nurture, enhance, and deepen the spirituality of our youth through the religious education process. During this time Candidates are guided toward the maturity level of a fully initiated adult Christian. Using an experiential learning process of community service, retreats and fellowship the primary objective will be to understand and bring to life the mission Christ calls each one of us to live out as an Apostle of His love.