

OFFICE OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

ST. JOSEPH'S CHURCH

CONFIRMATION PREPARATION PACKET 2023-2024 IMPORTANT DATES AND INFORMATION

Confirmation Prep – Year 2

- Oct. 8th ***St. Vincent DePaul Walk for the Poor for PREP & SJRS - over the Somers Point/Ocean City Bridge, Somers Point, NJ (participation will fulfill **2 hours** of service)- 11:00 am/registration/12:00 noon/walk.***
- Oct. 15th ***Mass of Enrollment for PREP & SJRS Confirmation Candidates @ 12pm Mass. Contract of Enrollment (last colored sheet in this packet) must be signed by parent/guardian and confirmation candidate, and brought with you to Mass.***
- Oct. 30th ***Confirmation Workshop #1 – 6:00-7:45 pm @St. Joseph School (**PREP only**)***
- Nov. 27th ***Confirmation Workshop #2 – 6:00-7:45 pm @St. Joseph School (**PREP only**)
Saint Report due from **PREP** candidates - **SJRS** date tbd by Mrs. Dondero-Garvey.
Confirmation Form and \$50 Confirmation fee due (**PREP & SJRS**)***
- Dec. 9th ***Confirmation Retreat - 8:30 am Mass (St. Joseph Church - followed by the retreat from 9:00 am-1:00 pm @St. Joseph School\(**PREP & SJRS**)***
- Dec. 11th ***Advent Confessions – 6:00 p.m. in St. Joseph Church (**PREP only**)
(SJRS candidates will celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation during school hours)***
- Jan. 29th ***Confirmation Workshop #3 – 6:00-7:45 pm @St. Joseph School (**PREP only**)
Sponsor Eligibility Certificates due from Sponsor's parish (**PREP & SJRS**).***
- Jan. tba ***Chastity and Morality Workshop. 6:00-7:30 @St. Joseph Church (**PREP & SJRS**)***
- Feb. 26th ***Workshop #4 – 6:00-7:45 pm @St. Joseph School (**PREP only**)
Service Outreach completed and Service Hour Sheets submitted (**PREP & SJRS**)***
- Mar. 4th ***Lent Confessions – 6:00 p.m. in St. Joseph Church (**PREP only**)
(SJRS candidates will celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation during school hours)***

Dates and related information about Confirmation and rehearsals will be announced when available. We wish you a renewed heart and spirit as you participate in the Sacramental Program for Confirmation. If you have any questions or concerns, please call Karen Pells at (609) 927-3568, ext. 24, or email the Religious Education Office at reled@stjosephsomerspoint.org. Updates will also be posted on our PREP webpage at stjosephsomerspoint.org. May God bless you and keep you in good health!

CONFIRMATION PREPARATION PROGRAM

PARENTAL SUPPORT

Parents are asked to participate to the fullest in Sacramental Preparation. We encourage you to impress upon your child, by your support and example, the seriousness of the commitment he or she is making. The more you do, the more your candidate's faith and yours will be strengthened. Please pray with your child and be a witness to your own faith. All required activities must be completed and documented by the dates indicated. Failure to do so may result in a delay in the reception of Confirmation for your child.

MASS ATTENDANCE

Confirmation is the completion of the Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism and Holy Eucharist being the first two) so that with its reception the candidates become full members of the Catholic Church. By participating in the preparation program, the candidate is publicly stating that he or she desires to be a Catholic and to live according to the teachings of the Gospel and the Church. Therefore, **faithful weekly attendance at Mass is a MUST for all candidates.**

NAME FOR CONFIRMATION

The baptismal name is the preferred name at the time of Confirmation. This expresses the relationship between Baptism and Confirmation. If a new name is taken, it should be the name of a recognized saint of the Church. If the baptismal name is not that of a recognized saint, a new name should be chosen for the celebration of Confirmation or a middle name can be affirmed.

SAINT REPORT

The candidates for Confirmation (8th graders) are asked to write or type a report on the name they have chosen for Confirmation. It should be about the name of the saint they have chosen to "imitate", or about the saint whom they were named after (baptismal name). Please refer to the Saint report guidelines included in this packet for more details for PREP students. SJRS students will receive information from their classroom teacher.

WEEKLY "REACHING OUT" ACTIVITIES

Service to help others is part of our Catholic faith and can take on many forms and time commitments. It is up to you to decide what best fits your schedule, personality and interests. You have many talents and gifts to share with others, so consider sharing your time within your family, neighborhood, or the school you attend on a weekly basis to further your Catholic ministry.

OUTREACH PROGRAMS

There is an ancient tradition within our Church of candidates for Confirmation preparing themselves to receive the Holy Spirit by dedicating themselves to Christian service to others. Every candidate needs to be aware that the gifts of the Holy Spirit are always given to build community, and to assure that all members of the community are cared for according to their needs. Candidates for the Sacrament of Confirmation are expected to be willing to extend themselves on behalf of others in obedience to Jesus' teaching:

"For I was hungry and you gave me food. I was thirsty and you gave me drink. I was a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me. I was ill and you comforted me, in prison and you came to visit me.

"Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you or see you thirsty and give you drink? When did we welcome you. ..clothe you...? When did we visit you when you were ill or in prison?"

"I assure you, as often as you did it for one of my least brothers or sisters, you did it for me." (Matthew 25:35-40).

One of the most important aspects of your everyday life and your preparation for Confirmation is your involvement in your parish and community. **All 8th grade students are required to participate in service activities** - some service activities will be coordinated by the parish, and others should be sought out and done individually or with your sponsor.

*Classroom organized **group activities** will encourage active involvement in our own Church.

*Individual classes may decide on a local service opportunity, or one promoting global awareness, that they could participate in as a **group activity**.

*Parish organized **group activities** will encourage active participation in your own Church.

*Each student is also asked to work **independently on service to others, the world and his/her community**. 8th graders should perform this service work independently or with their sponsor. Please **describe your completed activity on the form included in this packet**.

Suggestions for the Independent Outreach Program are listed on the Service Pages included in this packet. The point is to **HELP OTHERS**, so If there is a service you wish to do and have questions about it, please contact your classroom teacher or the Religious Ed Office at reled@stjosephsomerspoint.org or by calling (609) 927-3568, ext. 24.

INDEPENDENT SERVICE OUTREACH PROGRAM

One sure sign of increased maturity is increased responsibility. As people discover that you can be trusted to carry through on your promises, they will begin to count on your help in numerous ways. As you mature in your faith, you will discover increased responsibilities in this area of your life, too. It is not enough that you know about your faith. The question is:

- How do you put your faith into practice?
- How often do you go out of your way to help others?
- Are you creative in finding ways to serve others, as Jesus asks us?

During these difficult times, there are so many people in need, and unlimited possibilities for projects of service, depending on how much time you have, where you live and what your interests and abilities are.

Your service is not "one more thing to get done". It is selflessly and lovingly sharing your unique gifts with others. You should reflect on how your service projects are helping you **take on the mind and heart of Jesus**, fulfill the needs of others, and build up the Christian community. The giving of service does not end with your Confirmation. It is only the beginning of your Catholic ministry which will continue for the rest of your life.

Love one another

The parable of the Good Samaritan is found in the Gospel of St. Luke (Lk 10:29-37). In it, a man from Samaria stops to help a mortally injured Jew, even though their peoples are bitter enemies, and even though the Jew's own people have refused him aid. Since it is unlikely that we will ever travel the road from Jerusalem to Jericho ourselves, how can we, today, imitate the Samaritan of Jesus' parable? ***By practicing the spiritual and corporal works of mercy.***

Spiritual Works of Mercy

1. Admonish the sinner
2. Instruct the ignorant
3. Counsel the doubtful
4. Comfort the sorrowful
5. Bear wrongs patiently
6. Forgive all injuries
7. Pray for the living and the dead

Corporal Works of Mercy

1. Feed the hungry
2. Give drink to the thirsty
3. Clothe the naked
4. Visit the imprisoned
5. Shelter the homeless
6. Visit the sick
7. Bury the dead

If we look closely at each of the works of mercy and think about the spirit of love that these works inspire in us, we come to the realization of what the Divine Teacher is asking. Each of us is invited to become the Good Samaritan in a variety of ways, according to what is possible for us. For example, we can practice a spiritual work of mercy right now by saying a prayer for someone who really needs it. We can also pray for those who have shown special love for us, such as our family, neighbors and friends. Each of the works of mercy brings a two-fold gift: relief to a fellow suffering human being and joy to the one who practices the work of mercy.

Service Project Guidelines

As a Catholic, you are called to service by God. Service projects are a formative time to explore each of your gifts and to transform these unique gifts into ministry to the people of God. Service projects are not a choice for Christians but a true privilege and obligation.

- We require service based on the Corporal Works of Mercy.
- How many projects can you do? We prayerfully hope you do as many as you can!
- **Please turn in all your hours and complete the Service Report Sheet included in this packet.**
- Are there certain service projects that are not accepted? Please contact the Religious Education Office if you have any questions.

General Guidelines:

The following activities are **not** acceptable as service projects:

- service for family members (this is already expected of you as a member of the family)
- any activity for which you receive payment (such as baby-sitting or yard work)
- projects for class or school clubs
- service to sporting events (some activities may qualify – check with the office)

Service project sheets should be signed by the person receiving the service and returned to the Religious Education Office. Keep a photocopy or picture of each sheet you hand in for your records.

Approved Projects

Church:

- assist catechist in a religious education classroom; care for catechist's children while class is in session
- assist Religious Education Office Staff with parish or family events
- assist during VBS week
- assist at parish socials/events/breakfasts organized to bring parish members together
- prepare meals for sick parishioners or neighbors
- altar serving – Sunday Mass, funerals, sacraments, etc.

Community:

- Volunteer at senior citizens centers and nursing homes – sit and talk, make cookies, play an instrument, sing Christmas carols or make holiday door decorations for residents, play games, read to the residents, etc.
- prepare food baskets for the needy
- Help at school organized activities to serve the homeless
- Organize a food or clothing drive in your neighborhood and deliver to a local food bank or Catholic Charities

- visit shut-ins, the elderly, people recovering from illness; help them with yard work (raking leaves, shoveling snow) or household chores (dishes, shopping, cleaning)
- Adopt a family through ARC and raise money to bring them a holiday meal
- Make meals for Plates for Christ and collect them on the first Sunday of the month.
- Collect toiletries for Hospice Care or a homeless shelter
- Volunteer at SVdP Walk for the Poor, Junior Olympics, Special Olympics, Cancer Society Relay for Life, Animal Shelter, etc.
- Tutor younger children or help with remote learning for younger family members
- Participate walk-a-thons for charitable purposes.
- Participate in Environmental services, clean-ups, etc.

2023/2024 - 7th & 8th GRADE SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

CHILDREN'S LITURGY AIDE: Teen Volunteers are needed to assist an adult Catechist for the Children's Liturgy of the Word, which is a program to explain the Liturgy of the Word to children in Grades K through 5 during the 10:00 am Sunday Mass. The CLW is only about 20 minutes in length, but with early arrival and clean-up, Aides will receive credit for one hour of service per week.

PARISH/FAMILY EVENTS AIDE: Teen volunteers are needed to assist during parish or family events, during VBS week next summer, parish socials, events, KOC pancake breakfasts, and altar serving at Sunday Mass, funerals and sacraments. These opportunities will include, but are not limited to the following. More information will be sent out to families prior to each event.

- St. Joseph Church Fall Fiesta (9/24)
- KOC Columbus Day Golf Tournament (9/25)
- SJRS Family Fun Fall Fest (10/20)
- SPPD Trunk or Treat (St. Joe's sponsoring a decorated trunk – 10/21)
- Thanksgiving Food Drive (11/11)
- Somers Point Christmas Parade and Tree Lighting (12/1)
- Christmas Family Event (Living Nativity) (12/18)
- First Reconciliation Workshop (1/13)
- Parish Baby Shower (2/25)
- First Holy Communion Workshop (3/16)
- Living Stations of the Cross (3/22)
- Lenten Service Project (tba)

Service projects must be completed and paperwork submitted by February 26, 2024.
(A service project sheet is included in this packet)

THE SPONSOR FOR CONFIRMATION

ROLE OF THE SPONSOR

The sponsor has a very important place in our program. The sponsor is an adult Catholic who serves as a witness of Jesus Christ and his Church, who knows the candidate and helps him or her in preparation for Confirmation. Individual sponsors must be selected. A sponsor must be a person who knows and can help the candidate on the spiritual journey of their Christian Faith. Ideally it would be someone who has been already involved in the spiritual formation of the candidate, such as godparents or member of the local parish.

ELIGIBILITY OF SPONSORS

1. Must have completed the sixteenth year of age.
2. Must belong to the Catholic Church and have been initiated in the three sacraments of Baptism, Eucharist and Confirmation.
3. Must comply with all the stipulations of the godparent at Baptism. Since a parent may not sponsor a child at Baptism, according to the new Church laws -- a parent may not be a sponsor for the Sacrament of Confirmation.
4. May be the same sponsor the individual had at Baptism.
5. May be a sponsor selected specifically for Confirmation.
6. May be either male or female.
7. All sponsors must have a Certificate of Eligibility (or recommendation) from their parish priest. A sponsor may attain this by requesting it from his or her parish church. (See Certificate of Eligibility information below).

This certificate of eligibility is to be handed in to your teacher or catechist or brought directly to the Office of Religious Education at the parish office by January 29, 2024.

We hope that this will be of some help in guiding you to make these important choices toward the Sacrament of Confirmation. May we continue to grow in the spirit of Jesus during this special year.

OBTAINING A CERTIFICATE OF ELIGIBILITY

1. If your sponsor is a registered member of St. Joseph Parish, Somers Point, and is eligible, please have him/her complete the form included in this packet.
2. If your sponsor is from a different parish, please have him/her ask for a certificate of eligibility from the Church to which he/she is registered.

Choosing Your Confirmation Name **(Saint Report Guidelines)**

Your name gives you an identity. It tells others who you are. When you were baptized, your parents chose your name. Now that you are to be confirmed, it is time to choose the name you will take as a sign of your growth in faith.

The tradition of taking on a new name to show a new role can be traced back to the Old Testament. When Abram was called to lead his people to believe in the one God, his name was changed from Abram, meaning "father of many" to Abraham, meaning "father of many nations". Again, in the New Testament, we find Simon's name changed to Peter, meaning "rock", because he was to become the rock upon which Jesus founded His Church.

Your confirmation name should reflect your new role as a mature Christian. Perhaps you would like to take the name of a person whom you admire. Many candidates, recognizing the growing bond of love with their parents, take a parent's name. You may choose your baptismal name. The only limit that is placed on your choice is that it must be a saint's name. Please verify that you are choosing an approved name with one of these Catholic websites:

<http://www.catholic.org/saints/>
<https://mycatholic.life/saints/>

After you decide on a name, prepare a report on the saint you have chosen.

Include the following information:

- 1) biographical information
 - born (where, when, parents and family)
 - lived and worked (where, when, life work or accomplishments)
 - died (where, when, circumstances)
 - canonization date and/or feast day
- 2) particular qualities or virtues for which the saint is known
 - talents, gifts
 - faith and love of God
 - service to God and others
- 3) your reasons for choosing this particular saint
 - what you like most about this saint
- 4) how you can become a better Christian by imitating the qualities of this saint
 - lessons this saint teaches

Please make a special effort in writing paragraphs 3 & 4 as they are the part of the saint report that relate directly to you and your commitment to the sacrament. Your saint report should not be a difficult assignment. Information regarding the content of the report is listed above. We would like for you to follow the format listed below:

1) Cover Page

- saint name
- student name
- pictures or graphics (optional)

2) Report Format

- font – Times New Roman – 12 point
- one inch margins sides
- one inch margin top and bottom
- no titles
- double spaced
- **No extra space between paragraphs**

The saint's name cannot be changed in any way. No variations of the name or change of gender. The name you choose must be spelled as the saint spelled his/her name.

This report should be no less than 2 pages in length and is due on or before **November 27, 2023 for PREP students.** The due date for SJRS students will be announced by Mrs. Angela Franzoni. The final report can be handed in to your teacher, mailed to or dropped off at the Church Office, or emailed to the Religious Education Office at reled@stjosephsomerspoint.org.

PREP students will be informally interviewed during their Monday evening workshops. SJRS students will have interviews during school time. Interviews are not a test, but a conversation to assess the candidate's readiness to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. Candidates should review and be familiar with the following:

Confirmation Interview Review Sheet

1. What miracle happened at Pentecost? **The Holy Spirit descends on the Apostles and Mary and they began to tell of Jesus. All people heard them in their native language. Pentecost is the birthday of the church**
2. Who is God? **God is love and He created everything out of nothing**
3. What or who is the Holy Trinity? **Father, Son and Holy Spirit**
4. Who do we encounter in every sacrament? **Jesus Christ.**
5. How many sacraments are there? **Seven**
6. Which sacrament welcomes us into the church? **Baptism**
7. The sacrament of **Confirmation** is a renewal of your baptismal promises.
8. The sacrament of **Reconciliation** absolves us of our sins.
9. The sacrament of Holy Eucharist is **when we receive the body, blood, soul and divinity of Jesus Christ in Communion. Also called Holy Communion.**
10. The person a candidate for Confirmation chooses to help them prepare for the sacrament. **Sponsor**
11. The ordinary minister of Confirmation is the **Bishop**
12. Who is our bishop? **Bishop Dennis Sullivan**
13. Jesus chose **Peter** to carry on His church and to be the **first Pope**
14. Who is our current Pope? **Pope Francis**
15. There are **10** Commandments
16. The greatest commandment is the one Jesus gave us – **Love God with all you heart, soul, and strength, and love your neighbor as yourself.**
17. What are the three groups of sacraments?
 1. **Sacraments of Initiation: Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist**
 2. **Sacraments of Healing: Reconciliation, Anointing of the Sick**
 3. **Sacraments of Vocation: Holy Orders, Matrimony**

The Bishop has asked that all Confirmation Candidates memorize the Works of Mercy

Corporal Works of Mercy

**Feed the hungry.
Give drink to the thirsty.
Clothe people who need clothes.
Visit prisoners.
Shelter the homeless.
Visit the sick.
Bury the died.**

Spiritual Works of Mercy:

**Forgive the sinner
Instruct the ignorant
Counsel the doubtful
Comfort the sorrowful
Bear wrongs patiently
Forgive all injuries
Pray for the living and the dead**

Based on the service projects you have turned in and plan to complete before being confirmed, what corporal work of mercy would they be considered?

Who is your sponsor and why did you pick that person?

What is your prayer life like?

Do you regularly go to Mass on Sundays?

What is your relationship with God like?

What are the 10 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 (*go to Mass on Sunday*).**
4. **Honor your mother and your father.**
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.**

Be prepared to say why you chose the saint name you did and know the following about that saint:

- First and last (if they have one) name of saint
- What country are they from
- What century (birth date)
- Something important that saint did.
- Why you chose the saint.

Know the 7 Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Wisdom
Understanding
Knowledge
Counsel
Fortitude/Courage
Piety
Wonder and Awe

Please bring this signed form to the 12:00 Noon Enrollment Mass on Sunday, October 15, 2023.

Contract of Enrollment

Commitment to Enrollment in the Confirmation Preparation Program

The parish family of St. Joseph invites you to prepare for your Confirmation in our Catholic faith. This invitation comes at a turning point in your life, a time when lots of things are changing. You are maturing into a young adult, and our faith community wants you to discover and enjoy the life we share. The life of the Spirit!

Jesus said, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life." Your parish family of St. Joseph cares about you, respects you, and very much wants you to be an active and involved member of our Catholic Community. You will receive support. You will learn more about the way of Jesus.

At Confirmation you will receive the fullness of the **Holy Spirit!**

Please read the expectations listed below. If you freely intend to cooperate please sign your name.

I, _____ AGREE TO:
(Print Your Name)

1. cooperate enthusiastically with the parish program preparing me for the Sacrament of Confirmation by attending the preparation workshops and participating in them to the best of my ability;
2. participate in workshops, retreats, activities, and the service of others;
3. participate regularly in the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist;
4. pray for growth in Faith, Hope, and Love;
5. strive for greater maturity and use my gifts and talents in some form of Christian service;
6. accept more responsibility in my family, my parish, and my community;

In keeping with the terms of this commitment, I ask the help of my family and friends, as well as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit to assist me in living up to this agreement.

Signature _____ Date _____

Witnessed by parent/guardian _____
(parent signature)

**This form to be used ONLY if your child's sponsor is a
REGISTERED MEMBER of ST. JOSEPH CHURCH**

ST. JOSEPH ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

606 Shore Road
Somers Point, New Jersey 08244

**SACRAMENTAL SPONSORSHIP FORM
DECLARATION OF FULL PARTICIPATION IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH**

PLEASE PRINT:

I, _____, a registered member of St. Joseph
Roman Catholic Church in Somers Point, New Jersey, have been asked to stand as a
godparent/sponsor for:

_____ (Name of Candidate),

For the Sacrament of _____ (Baptism of Confirmation).

In accepting this honor, I truthfully state the following:

- **I am a Catholic at least 16 years of age;**
- **I have received the Sacraments of Baptism, Eucharist, and Confirmation;**
- **If married, I am in a marriage blessed by a Catholic priest;**
- **I attend Mass faithfully on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation, and receive the Sacraments of the Catholic Church regularly.**

I understand the above statements and freely accept the responsibility which I undertake as a
godparent/sponsor to this person. I promise to be a support and example in his/her efforts to live
a Catholic Life that reflects the spirit and teaching of the Catholic Church. I also commit myself
to assisting the parents in their Christian duty by my active support, example, encouragement and
prayer.

_____ (Signature of Godparent/Sponsor)

_____ (Address of Godparent/Sponsor)

I certify that the above person attested to and signed this declaration in my presence and is a
registered parishioner of St. Joseph Church. To the best of my knowledge, this person is capable
of assuming the duties of sponsorship for this Sacrament and is sincere in the promises which are
stated above.

_____ (Signature of Priest/Delegate)

_____ (Date)

Confirmation Form

Completed form is to be returned by **November 27, 2023**, to the Religious Education Office. (Mailing address: 606 Shore Road, Somers Point, NJ 08244)

Kindly print all information (Please use complete legal names, correctly spelled, no nicknames, as this will appear in the permanent Church record.)

(Candidate's First Name)	(Last Name)	(sex M/F)
(Date of Birth)	(Place of Birth)	
(Father's Full Name)		
(Mother's Full Name)	(Maiden Name)	
(Address)	(City, State, Zip)	
(Parents email)	(Home/Cell phone)	
(Date of Baptism - month, day, year)		
(Complete Name and Address of Church where Baptism was celebrated)		
(Saint's name chosen for Confirmation)		
(Sponsor's First and Last Name)	(Sponsor's Email address)	
(Sponsor's parish)	(City and State)	

*** Candidate's height _____

Fee: \$50.00 -- for Confirmation robe rental, retreat expenses including food and leaders, guest speakers, printing expenses, etc., payable upon return of this form. (Checks may be made payable to St. Joseph Church.)

A parent already fulfills the role of primary educator and faith example to his/her child. Therefore, a parent cannot be a sponsor for his/her child or stand in as a proxy for is/her child's sponsor. Sponsor is to obtain the Sponsor's Certificate from his/her own parish.