

# ***Confirmation Preparation Candidate Guide***



***2023/2024***

**Catholic Community of Waukesha**

St. John Neumann • St. Joseph

St. Mary • St. William

DEAR CANDIDATE,

Welcome to preparation for the sacrament of confirmation. During this very important time in your faith journey, you will be exploring what it means to be a disciple of Christ and your commitment to practicing that discipleship within the Catholic Church.

The sacrament of confirmation is one of the Seven Sacraments of the Catholic Church. Like all sacraments, confirmation is a public expression of an inward reality, namely, your commitment to God. Confirmation is the *beginning* of your **never-ending** journey of faith in which you are sent forth, as the apostles were, to share the love of God with all people and to live out your Catholic Faith in a real and tangible way.

By choosing to be confirmed, you are not saying you have all the answers – you are saying *yes* to being a disciple of Christ and to being an active member of the Catholic Faith. Additionally, you are affirming your desire *to know God, to love God, and to serve God*, as we are all created to do. Just as the Holy Spirit strengthened the Apostles on Pentecost, you too will receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit to shield and guide you in your mission.

Through confirmation, the grace given to you at baptism is sealed and strengthened. Your parents and Godparents spoke for you at your baptism, but at confirmation, you speak for yourself, and you claim the Catholic Faith as your own. This is *your* confirmation and *your* strengthening of faith. Through confirmation, you will receive the maturity and protection of Christ himself through the power of the Holy Spirit. **This choice is yours; no one can make it for you.** We ask for full and active participation in confirmation preparation, but keep in mind that no one can force you to be confirmed. You must choose freely to be confirmed, and so the confirmation preparation program is meant to help you say *yes* to God with conviction and courage.

Please know that your parents, Godparents, families, sponsors, and the Catholic Community of Waukesha support you as you prepare for confirmation. We pledge to be examples in word and deed of the living Gospel of Christ. We encourage you to participate actively in your parish through attendance at Mass, participation in parish events, and a commitment to Christian service.

In the Peace of Christ,

*Erin Erickson*  
Youth Ministry Coordinator  
eerickson@ccwauk.org  
262-922-9285 ext. 2301

*Julie Dennert*  
Faith Formation Associate  
jdennert@ccwauk.org  
262-922-9285 ext. 2304

## **Required Program Elements**

Candidates are expected to complete all required elements of the confirmation preparation program. If conflicts occur, candidates must contact their small group leaders and the Youth Ministry Office to arrange an alternate session. The confirmation preparation program consists of the following required elements:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initial Interview<br>*Candidates will sign up for a fifteen-minute interview during one of these timeframes. | June 11, SJN, 9:00-Noon -OR-<br>June 25, SJN, 9:00-Noon  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Small Group Sessions (8)   | Various, September-April   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Small Group Service Experience   | To be scheduled by small groups  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Large Group Meetings (2)   | August 27, 2023, 4:00 p.m.<br>St. Mary Community Room<br>-AND-<br>January 7, 2024, 1:00 p.m.<br>St. John Neumann, Neumann Hall |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Candidate/Sponsor Meeting  | November 5, 2023, 1:00 p.m.<br>St. William, Parish Hall  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Service Hours/Reflections (25)<br>*For a detailed description of service requirements, see Service Booklet   | To be chosen by candidate  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Confirmation Retreat<br>*Candidates will indicate preference when completing registration forms.             | October 13-15, 2023      -or-<br>December 8-10, 2023      -or-<br>January 19-21, 2024  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Teaching Mass  | February 11, 2024<br>St. Mary Church, 2:00 p.m.  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Confirmation Name Paper  | Due at Teaching Mass   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bishop Questionnaire   | Due at Final Interview   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Final Interview<br>*Candidates will sign up for a fifteen-minute interview during one of these timeframes.   | March 17, SM, 9:00-Noon<br>March 19, SM, 4:00-6:00 p.m.<br>March 20, SM, 4:00-6:00 p.m.  |

## Confirmation Expectations

The goal of the confirmation preparation program is to challenge candidates to be witnesses for Christ and to live as disciples. This process serves to determine candidates' readiness to receive the sacrament of Confirmation. This goal is achieved through catechesis, evangelization, discipleship, and participation in small and large faith communities.

In order to make the confirmation preparation process fruitful for candidates and leaders, we ask that all participants and their parents commit to the following responsibilities.

### **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- Fulfill **ALL** Sunday and Holy Day obligations.
- Actively participate in **ALL** program elements, including small and large group meetings, retreat, and Mass experiences.
- Be present; leave cell phones and other distractions in the car.
- Make up any missed events by attending an alternate meeting or completing make-up work. **More than 2 absences can delay receiving the sacrament.**
- Request confirmation from the Bishop
- Choose a confirmation name and complete a Confirmation Name Paper.
- Choose a sponsor that can truly help you in your Christian growth and complete all Candidate/Sponsor Discussion Sessions.
- Have an active prayer life.
- Receive the sacrament of Reconciliation before the sacrament of confirmation.
- Set goals for the future of your faith journey.
- Strive to live as a true disciple of Christ, following Christian morals and values.
- Complete service experiences and reflections as outlined in the Confirmation Service Guide.
- Keep an open mind and an open heart.

### **PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- Fulfill **ALL** Sunday and Holy Day obligations.
- Pray for and with your son/daughter
- Support and guide your son/daughter throughout the confirmation process.
- Help your son/daughter to make Confirmation a priority.
- Help your son/daughter schedule all confirmation activities on their calendar and yours.
- Attend Teaching Mass with your son/daughter.
- Encourage your son/daughter to choose confirmation for themselves and not to please others.
- Strive to model life as a true disciple of Christ.
- Support the process by serving as a chaperone for retreat.
- Keep an open mind and an open heart

## Confirmation Schedule 2023-2024

DATE/TIME	EVENT	DESCRIPTION	LOCATION
<b>Sunday, June 11, 2023</b> 9:00 a.m. – Noon  <b>Sunday, June 25, 2023</b> 9:00 a.m. – Noon (Candidates will register for a specific time)	<b>Initial Interview</b>	<i>Each candidate must complete a 15-minute interview prior to registering for confirmation preparation. Candidates will sign up for a specific time through SignUpGenius. Only those candidates who have completed an interview will receive a link to our registration materials.</i>	St. John Neumann, Neumann Hall
<b>Sunday, June 30, 2023</b>	<b>Completed Registration Forms Due</b>	<i>Registration Form can be completed online. Candidates must choose a small group option on our SignUpGenius page to complete registration. If you do not have internet access, contact the Youth Ministry Office as soon as possible. Email a scanned copy of your baptismal certificate to <a href="mailto:jdennert@ccwauk.org">jdennert@ccwauk.org</a> or drop off at St. Mary's Parish Office.</i>	
<b>Sunday, August 27, 2023</b> 1:00-2:30 p.m.	<b>Large Group Session with Small Group Orientation</b>	<i><b>This meeting is for Candidates and parents.</b> Please bring personal calendars so small group meeting dates can be arranged. <b>Sponsor information is due.</b></i>	St. Mary Community Room
<b>October 13-15, 2023</b>	<b>Confirmation Retreat Option 1</b>	<i>Confirmation retreat is mandatory for all candidates. Make sure your schedule is clear; <b>candidates must attend the retreat in its entirety and cannot arrive late or leave early.</b> Small groups, including small group and peer leaders, will attend together.</i>	Pallotine Retreat Center, Elkhorn, WI (bus from St. John Neumann)
<b>November 5, 2023</b> 1:00-3:00 p.m.	<b>Candidate/Sponsor Event</b>	<i>This event is for <b>candidates and sponsors.</b> If a sponsor is unable to attend, candidates must attend with a supportive adult.</i>	St. William Parish Hall
<b>December 8-10, 2023</b>	<b>Confirmation Retreat Option 2</b>	<i>Confirmation retreat is mandatory for all candidates. Make sure your schedule is clear; <b>candidates must attend the retreat in its entirety and cannot arrive late or leave early.</b> Small groups, including small group and peer leaders, will attend together.</i>	Pallotine Retreat Center, Elkhorn, WI (bus from St. John Neumann)
<b>January 7, 2024</b> 1:00-2:30 p.m.	<b>Large Group Session</b>	<i><b>Candidates only.</b> Parents and sponsors do not need to attend this presentation and dialogue with a selected guest speaker</i>	St. John Neumann, Neumann Hall
<b>January 19-21, 2024</b>	<b>Confirmation Retreat Option 3</b>	<i>Confirmation retreat is mandatory for all candidates. Make sure your schedule is clear; <b>candidates must attend the retreat in its entirety and cannot arrive late or leave early.</b> Small groups, including small group and peer leaders, will attend together.</i>	Pallotine Retreat Center, Elkhorn, WI (bus from St. John Neumann)

<b>Sunday, February 11, 2024</b> 2:00-4:30 p.m.	<b>Teaching Mass</b>	<i>This Mass will count as a Sunday Mass, so candidates do not need to attend a weekend Mass prior to this event. Parents and sponsors are encouraged to join us for this event.</i> <b>*Confirmation Name Paper due at this time*</b>	St. Mary Church
<b>Sunday, March 17, 2024</b> 9:00-12:00 p.m. <b>Tuesday, March 19, 2024</b> 4:00-6:00 p.m. <b>Wednesday, March 20, 2024</b> 4:00-6:00 p.m.	<b>Confirmation Final Interview</b>	<i>Candidates will sign up for a fifteen-minute final interview with a member of the Confirmation Team using SignUpGenius.</i> <b>Candidates must turn in completed, typed, printed, and hand-signed Bishop Questionnaire. All service reflections and any make-up work should be complete at this time.</b>	St. Mary Parish Offices
<b>Wednesday, April 24, 2024</b> 6:00 p.m.	<b>Confirmation Rehearsal</b>	<i>Confirmation rehearsal is mandatory for all candidates and their sponsors. If a sponsor is unable to attend, a parent must attend in their place.</i>	St. William Church
<b>Sunday, April 28, 2024</b> 2:00 p.m. with Bishop Schuerman	<b>Confirmation: Come Holy Spirit!</b>		St. William Church

**SMALL GROUP MEETINGS AND INFORMATION:**

**LEADER INFORMATION:**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ CONTACT: \_\_\_\_\_

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ CONTACT: \_\_\_\_\_

**FILL IN THE MEETING DATES FOR YOUR SMALL GROUP MEETINGS BELOW:**

SESSION	DATE	LOCATION	NOTES
1	_____	_____	_____
2	_____	_____	_____
3	_____	_____	_____
4	_____	_____	_____
5	_____	_____	_____
6	_____	_____	_____
7	_____	_____	_____
8	_____	_____	_____
SERVICE	_____	_____	_____



## Confirmation Name

At Confirmation, the confirmation candidate is asked to provide a name by which they want to be confirmed. Throughout the Church's history, this name has been either the name of a Catholic Saint who has characteristics and qualities the candidate would like to exemplify, or it is the candidate's baptismal name. ***The first is much preferred as it is a chance to express the personal desires and reflection of the candidate.***

Choosing the name of a saint who has the virtues, qualities, and characteristics that you want to emulate allows you to claim that identity for yourself and to have the spiritual support and intercession of that patron saint. By choosing your baptismal name, you reaffirm the unity between Baptism and Confirmation.

**You will need to write a one-page reflection on your choice of Confirmation name.**

The reflection paper should state the name you have chosen and why you chose that name. This paper is NOT meant to be a research paper or biography about a specific saint, but rather an explanation of why you are identifying yourself with this name. *Note: If you are choosing your baptismal name, you still need to write a paper explaining your decision.* Put some thought, prayer, and effort into this. There are thousands of incredibly inspiring saints out there. Remember, the name you choose is the name the Bishop will use to confirm you as a member of the Catholic Church. Make sure your sponsor knows the name you have chosen so he/she can present you to the Bishop by your name.

At your Confirmation, the Bishop may ask why you chose your name. This paper is meant to help you prepare for that.

**Below are some guidelines to clarify some of the requirements of choosing a name:**

- Candidates may use their baptismal name (first or middle name) or another Christian name when receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation.
  - A Christian name would be the name of a saint or blessed.
  - Derivatives of names (Kelly for Catherine; Jenna for Genevieve) or Old Testament names are also appropriate.
- The candidate should know the relationship of the name to the religious Christian tradition.
- Exceptions can be made if a particular non-Christian or family name has significant meaning for a candidate that can be articulated to the Bishop.
- ***Most importantly, candidates are encouraged to learn about their patron as part of their preparation for the sacrament and should particularly focus on the virtues of their patron they wish to emulate.***

Papers are due at or before Teaching Mass on February 11.

## Confirmation Name Paper Guidelines

Your name paper should be at least one page, typed using 12 point, Times New Roman font. If you are choosing the name of a blessed or saint, your paper should include the following elements:

- A brief introduction of your saint or blessed. *Include your saint's name, the time period in which he/she lived, where your saint lived, how your saint died, etc.*
- The feast day for your saint, when he/she was canonized or beatified by the Catholic Church, and the cause(s) of which your saint is the patron (St. Francis of Assisi is the patron saint of animals)
- Summarize the basic events of your saint's life. *Include interesting obstacles or struggles, stories about this person's conversion to Catholicism, how he/she followed Jesus, how did this person spend his/her life in service of others and the Church?*
- Summarize the accomplishments of this saint. *Include why this saint is known. What miracles are attributed to this person?*
- Does this saint have a specific prayer that you can incorporate into your prayer life?
- Why you are choosing this saint to be your guide and patron. *Include the qualities about this saint that you admire and wish to emulate. Discuss how you can be like this saint and how you will model your life after this person.*
- How does knowing about this person bring you closer to God.

If you are choosing to keep your baptismal name, your paper should answer the following questions:

- Why did your parents choose your name?
- Were you named after anyone? If so, is it someone you know? Do you admire that person, and why?
- Are there any saints or people from scripture who share your name? If so, research those people and share a little about their lives. How can you model your life after these people?
- Why are you choosing to keep your name? How can this bring you closer to God?
- What connections do you see between your parents naming you at baptism and your confirmation?

Remember, no matter which name you choose, we were all fundamentally created to be saints! This is how we are to live out our calling and our purpose. Any life that is not lived in pursuit of sainthood is a life that is not doing what it is supposed to do. We are created to be united with God forever in heaven, in a perfect communion with all the saints of history. We might not all be called to be famous saints, but we are all called to be saints nonetheless.



## Sponsor Selection Information

Sponsors are called to act as companions, models, witnesses, and spiritual guides. Select a sponsor who will challenge you in your faith, and who you see as having more wisdom about their faith than you do. You will be meeting frequently with your sponsor, so be sure he/she is someone with whom you feel comfortable talking about your faith. When choosing a sponsor, please keep in mind that your sponsor is expected to interact with you on a regular basis, both at church and outside of church, so where your sponsor lives should be taken into consideration. A sponsor must also be willing to respond to a candidate's questions, and research answers whenever possible. The Youth Ministry Office is available for any aid in this matter.

### A Sponsor for the Sacrament of Confirmation must:

- be chosen by the candidate,
- be at least 16 years old,
- be an active, practicing Catholic who has received the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist and leads a life in harmony with the faith and the role to be undertaken,
- **not** be a parent of the Candidate – Canon Law does not allow parents to sponsor their own children. (If necessary, a parent may serve as a *proxy* for a Sponsor at the celebration of the Sacrament, but he/she cannot be the sponsor.)

Please prayerfully consider who will support you, guide you, and be a true companion with you on your faith journey, both this year and throughout your whole life. As long as the sponsor meets the requirements listed above, a sponsor can be a family member, Godparent, or friend.

When choosing a sponsor, ask yourself, "Who will pull me back if I fall away and rejoice in the Lord's blessings with me? Who will be there to support me through all things?" If you are having trouble selecting a Confirmation Sponsor, or if you are having trouble finding someone who meets all the requirements, please contact the Youth Ministry Office for help.

Once you have asked this person to be your sponsor, and he/she has accepted, please give them the Sponsor letter and the Sponsor Information form to be completed and returned to the Youth Ministry office **no later than Sunday, September 10, 2023**. Be sure to invite your sponsor to attend the Candidate/Sponsor Event on Sunday, November 5 at 1:00 p.m. at St. William.

# Candidate Questionnaire for the Reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation

Each confirmation candidate must request to receive the sacrament of confirmation by completing a Candidate Questionnaire for the Reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation. This questionnaire will be provided to you as fillable PDF, which must be completed prior to your final interview.

The Bishop personally reads all questionnaires sent to him, so it is expected that you put some time and thought into your answers. The Youth Minister will also read all questionnaires before they are sent to the Bishop.

## **Use the following guidelines to help you complete your questionnaire:**

- You will receive your Questionnaire when you register for your final interview.
- You will type your answers in the fillable PDF version of the Questionnaire document.  
**Print and sign your questionnaire with blue or black pen.**
- Answers should be longer than one sentence but fit within the space provided. This is your chance to share your readiness with the Bishop; answer the questions appropriately.
- This is a formal document. Be sure to proof read your answers and avoid any abbreviations or slang. Use complete words and sentences. Check your spelling.
- Read each question thoroughly and answer all parts of the question. Several questions will have multiple parts; you must answer each part thoroughly.
- In order to prepare to complete your questionnaire, consider the following:
  - 1. Your preparation journey.**
    - a. **Retreat.** What did you like? What did you take away from that experience?  
Where did you struggle?
    - b. **Service experiences.** How did they affect you? What service will you continue as you move forward?
    - c. **Small and large group meetings.** What did you learn? Where did you grow?
    - d. Meeting with your sponsor. How has your sponsor helped your faith life?
    - e. **Your current faith life.** Where have you struggled? What concerns do you have moving into the future? What struggles will you face as a young Catholic?
  - 2. Your relationship with God.**
    - a. How has your relationship with God become more important/grown deeper in your life over the course of the past few years (especially over the past year)?
    - b. How will you follow Christ and the Church after confirmation?
    - c. What goals do you have for the future? What prayer requests do you have?

**Printed and signed questionnaires are due at your final interview.**