

St. Mark's Church

Religious Education Program



Confirmation Handbook

2017-2018

Rev. Msgr. Sean P. Flynn, Pastor

Diana Zuna, Coordinator of Religious Education

215 Crescent Parkway, Sea Girt, NJ 08750

(732) 449-6364 ext. 105

diana@stmarkseagirt.com

Dear Parents of the Confirmation Candidates,

Welcome to St. Mark's Sacrament of Confirmation Program. I am so delighted to be part of this parish family and I am blessed to be trusted with this preparation program. During the 2017-2018 year, we the Church, and your family will journey together to share in the important responsibility for your child's Confirmation preparation phase. The Sacrament of Confirmation is an exciting and intense time for young Catholics.

The Sacrament of Confirmation program will allow your teen to grow closer to Christ and His Church through regular sessions at which your children will be drawn into a deeper faith that will transform their hearts and change their lives not only during their Confirmation preparation phase, but into the rest of their high school and young adult years. Confirmation is not the end of the road; it is not the final step in faith, it is the stepping stone into a mature religious life.

The best preparation that you, as a parent, can give your son or daughter is to practice and live your Catholic faith through word and deed. As you continue ministering to your family, your parish and your community, we ask you to be especially faithful in attending Sunday liturgy. It is your example that will have the greatest impact on the faith formation of your child. Each of us has been called to witness Christ's love for our children and each other.

During our time together, we will examine what it takes to live your faith day by day and practice those lifelong skills that lead to a richer spiritual life. May these blessings be a continuous faith journey guided by the Holy Spirit to follow Jesus Christ.

Thank you for letting me direct your child's path towards the Sacrament of Confirmation. Together, we will all grow deeper in our faith.

Diana Zuna

Coordinator of Religious Education

What is the Sacrament of Confirmation?

The Sacrament of Confirmation is the strengthening and fullness of the Holy Spirit already received in Baptism. When we were baptized we became children of God. As children of God we share the life of God; the life of three persons in one love. The Spirit is the love between Father and Son. The Spirit acts in us urging us to move beyond our individual selves into making the community on Earth like the community of love that is God. Confirmation calls us to a greater participation in the mission of Jesus and the Church. Through Confirmation our relationship with God is deepened and we are incorporated more completely into the body of Christ. Confirmation obliges us, as true witnesses of Christ, to spread and defend the faith by word and deed.

Our Goal is to form disciples by leading teens to:

- Develop a personal relationship with Jesus Christ,
 - Experience the power of the Holy Spirit,
 - Awaken a sense of belonging to the Church,
- Encourage a sense of belonging by developing a fellowship among the youth of the parish.

Confirmation Candidate Required Responsibilities

Based on the guidelines published by the Diocese of Trenton, the following requirements must be met by all candidates before receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation at St. Mark's Church.

All Candidates must assume the responsibility of completion of all parts of preparation and program obligations listed below.

- Attend Sunday Mass and pray daily.
- Attend ALL classes, Reconciliation services, and Commitment Mass.
- Provide a copy of the Baptism certificate.
- Know the teachings of the Catholic faith, the Church precepts and formal prayers.
- Complete at least 20 or more hours of Community Service.
- Complete all assignments, projects and homework.
- Choose a Confirmation name and submit a Saint Report (500 word essay).
- Choose a Confirmation Sponsor using the guideline and criteria established below.
- Attend the Confirmation Retreat and Confirmation practice.
- Write a letter to Msgr. Flynn indicating your readiness and desire to be confirmed.
- Participate in parish community life by volunteering for chosen parish ministry.
- Participate in at least 3 service projects, sponsored by St. Mark's Church.
- Exhibit appropriate Christian behavior at all times.

Baptismal Certificates

The Religious Education Office MUST be provided with a copy of your child's Baptismal Certificate. If your child was baptized at St. Mark's Church, you do not need to provide the certificate, it is on record. If you provided us with a copy at the time of registration, please confirm that you handled one in by calling the Religious Education Office (732) 449-6364 ext. 105.

After your child is confirmed, we will send a notice to the church where they were baptized so their Confirmation may also be recorded.

Important Dates and Information

Rite of Commitment Mass: Sunday, October 15, 2017 at 10 a.m.

At this time, the Candidates will present to the community their signed "Candidate Commitment Promise" to pray, study and attend Sunday Mass, as they begin their preparation for the reception of the sacrament. All Candidates and their parents are expected to attend this special Mass.

Confirmation Retreat: Wednesday, February 28, 2016 at 5:00 p.m.

All candidates and the Sponsor or (1) parent are required to attend. Failure to attend may result in not being confirmed. Make sure to reserve this date. Please check any conflicts and let us know. We can find an alternative if given enough notice, but it is one of the requirements that the Confirmandi attend a retreat prior to Confirmation. Thank you for your understanding. Please contact the office for more information.

Confirmation Practice: Monday, March 12, 2018 at 7:00- 8:30 p.m.

All candidates and their sponsor are required to attend.

Confirmation Date: Tuesday, March 13, 2018 at 4:00 p.m.

Bishop David M. O'Connell, C.M. will be officiating. Please arrive by 3:15 p.m.

Class Expectations

- Students are expected to be on time and prepared for every session. Our time together is limited, and we hope to fill every minute to its fullest. Parents are responsible for ensuring students attend the classes on time and the child should be prepared. If for any reason you are unable to attend a class, please contact your catechist as soon as possible.
- Students are expected to contribute to the safe-space environment through their behavior and kind words. Our sessions together should inspire students to share and discuss. Creating a safe and spiritual environment is the key to our success. Should any situations arise, I will contact parents to best decide a plan for success. Creating a safe and welcoming environment is my first priority.
- Attend weekly Mass. Sunday liturgy is the way to experience community, as well as deepen your faith and spirituality. As a candidate in the sacramental preparation program for Confirmation, you are required and expected to attend weekend liturgy.
- Attend Rite to Commitment. To involve the whole parish community in the journey of your Confirmation the Rite of Commitment will be celebrated at a weekend liturgy.

Dress Code for Confirmation Day

Confirmation is a very special and important occasion in our Christian life. Like all occasions which are significant, dressing appropriately enhances, honors and respects the occasion and the people present. Please use the following guidelines when selecting clothing.

GIRLS: Dress or skirt and blouse, and dress shoes. No bare shoulders, no flip flop shoes or UGGs.

The appropriate length of the skirt or dress should fall between the knee and ankle. Skirts and dresses should be no more than three inches above the knee.

BOYS: Dress pants, shirt and tie. Dress shoes and socks. Sport coats are optional. No cargo pants and no sneakers.

SPONSORS: Please follow the above dress code.

At the Celebration of Confirmation, the dress of the candidates and sponsor should be suitable and modest for the occasion.

Confirmation Service Project

The concept of service is not just a Confirmation project, it is necessary to the life of the Church. During the time of Confirmation preparation, each student will have the opportunity to give some form of Christian witness and service. Service and projects are those opportunities that candidates participate in outside the home. These opportunities are to go beyond their regular day to day responsibilities. It is hoped that all students would engage in these opportunities enthusiastically and in good faith.

Confirmation candidates at St. Mark's must participate in a minimum of 20 hours of community service. Hopefully you will find it so rewarding you will want to do more.

The following is a suggested list of projects which would enable you to serve others, free of charge. You may work by yourself, or with others. You may spend the time on several different activities. All service projects must be signed and dated by a supervisor or person in-charge.

- Altar Server
- Assisting with Parish Activities
- Annual Bake Sale (December)
- Catechist Assistant (Help during CCD classes)
- Christmas Sing-a-Long at Sunrise at Brandywine, Belmar, NJ.
- Caring Cooks, Ronald McDonald House, Long Branch, NJ (Prepare, bake and serve a meal)
- Coat Collection, Spanish Ministry (Sort coats for coat drive in November)
- Fulfill, Monmouth & Ocean County, Neptune, NJ (Stacking shelves, sorting food)
- Madonna House Neptune, NJ (organize and clean up)
- Sunnyside Manor Nursing Home, Manasquan, NJ (Activities for seniors)
- Trinity Church Soup Kitchen, Asbury Park, NJ (Set up, prepare and serve meals and clean up afterwards)
- Visiting nursing homes and hospitals
- Collecting food for the poor and delivering it
- Assisting in meal programs for the poor and elderly
- Build a house with Habitat for Humanity.
- Donate blankets to a homeless shelter.
- Teach computer skills at a senior center.
- Volunteer to tutor. Check with your guidance office to see if your school offers peer tutoring.
- Volunteer to coach or referee with a youth team.
- Volunteer to give music lessons to people in your community, or perform at local shelters or senior organizations.

**Babysitting, doing chores at home, cleaning, raking leaves for pay, etc. are not considered community service and will not be accepted as service projects **

St. Mark's will sponsor some of those projects above, they will be discussed in more in detail at our first Parent Meeting in October.

Sponsor Requirements

The sponsor is an invaluable assistant to parents in transmitting faith. The sponsor needs to be able to fulfill several requirements:

The Church requires that the sponsor be an active, practicing Catholic who has already celebrated the Sacrament of Confirmation. The Church recognizes that a person cannot transmit what the person does not have.

- It is important that the sponsor be more mature, more informed, and more experienced in the ways of our faith and culture than the candidate is.
- It is recommended that the sponsor be an older person who has some experience with his or her faith and therefore a clearer perspective from which to speak.
- The sponsor needs to be willing to meet with the candidate on a regular basis prior to the celebration of Confirmation and to make a commitment to continue the faith journey after the celebration.
- The sponsor is one who is willing to share his or her faith with the candidate.
- The sponsor is an assistant to the parents as the prime transmitters of faith.
- The sponsor is to be a person of strong and committed personal faith.
- The sponsor needs to be an open, honest, caring, committed and encouraging person who will help the candidate grow in his/her understanding of the faith as the young person comes to a deeper appreciation of God in his/her life.

Important information about Sponsors

The candidates in consultation with their parents choose a sponsor. The role of the sponsor is an important one. A sponsor must be a person who knows the candidate, who is willing to share his/her own faith, and who can be of help to the candidate on this spiritual journey to Confirmation.

The sponsor must be a companion on the journey of faith. He or she is present as a friend, specifically a Christian friend. Just as friends do things together, share themselves and their resources, support and encourage each other, so do sponsors in the area of Christian and Church life. Sponsors are there when needed: to affirm, teach, advise, console, strengthen and guide. They personally introduce the candidate to the Church.

Requirements: (According to Church Canon Law and Diocesan mandates)

- Sponsor must be 16 years of age and fully initiated in the Catholic Church.
- Sponsor must belong to the Catholic Church and have received the three sacraments of Baptism, First Holy Communion, and Confirmation.
- Sponsor, if married, it must be in valid Catholic marriage. In all cases, the sponsor's living situation should be in conformity with the Catholic morality.
- Sponsor may be the same person the Candidate had as a Godparent for Baptism, or a new sponsor selected specifically for Confirmation.
- Sponsor may be either male or female for any Candidate.
- **Sponsor may not be a parent or stepparent.**

***Please note that no one can be a sponsor without meeting the above requirements.**

If the sponsor is a member of St. Mark's Church, please fill in the sponsor's information on the candidate's information form. In this case, your sponsor does not need to obtain a separate sponsor eligibility form. We will confirm the eligibility requirements in our parish office.

If the sponsor is not a member of St. Mark's Church, your sponsor must obtain a sponsor eligibility certificate from his/her parish and attach it directly to the sponsor eligibility form. Be sure to add the Confirmation candidate's name to the certificate. If time is of the essence, your sponsor may mail this form directly to us at:

St. Mark's Church
Office of Religious Education
215 Crescent Parkway
Sea Girt, NJ 08750

Suggested Candidate-Sponsor Activities

Being a sponsor is more than just holding an honorary title and showing up for a ceremony. The person chosen to be a sponsor accepts more than a casual interest in a person's spiritual life. The sponsor is the model and guide for the candidate in his/her preparation for and living out the Sacrament of Confirmation. Here are some suggestions that the candidate and sponsor can do together as they prepare for the Sacrament of Confirmation.

1. Attend Mass together. Attend a Sunday Liturgy or a daily Mass together. Discuss the readings and homily and the significance they have in your lives. If the sponsor and candidate do not live in the same city, attend Mass on the same day in your respective churches.
2. Discuss prayer. Discuss types of prayer, favorite prayers, time of prayer, frequency of prayer, and type of prayer most often used. Discuss ways of improving your prayer life and develop a plan to do this.
3. Participate in a service project together. Journal about the service experience identifying: the project, who you served, when and where it occurred, and the result of your service. Explain how you felt about the experience, including how it felt to work with your sponsor/candidate.
4. Share a meal together. Discuss the similarities of sharing a meal and sharing the Eucharist and the relevance to your life as a Catholic.
5. Discuss the Holy Spirit. Discuss who the Holy Spirit is, evidence of the Holy Spirit's work in your lives, and anticipation of the work of the Holy Spirit after reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation.
6. Discuss Saint Name. Discuss why you choose your Saint name and what qualities you admire in your Saint. Ask your sponsor who their Confirmation Saint name was and why they choose that Saint.

CANDIDATE'S APPLICATION
FOR THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION

Please type or print:

Name of Candidate: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Telephone: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Confirmation Name: _____ **Candidate's Height (for gown size)** _____

Sponsor's Name: _____

Sponsor's Home Parish: _____

Sponsor's Parish Address: _____

Record of Baptism

Church of Baptism: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Date of Baptism _____

Godparents: _____

Father's Full Name: _____

Mother's Name _____ Maiden Name _____

- If the candidate did not receive the Sacrament of Baptism here at St. Mark's, please attach a copy of the Baptismal Certificate (*not* the original) to this form.
- If the candidate was baptized here at St. Mark's, please complete the following information only:

My child was baptized at St. Mark's on: _____

My child received First Holy Communion at St. Mark's on: _____

Confirmation Fee:

Please attach a check for \$25.00 to this form. This fee will cover the candidate's robe rental and retreat.

CHOOSING A CHRISTIAN NAME

Many people choose an additional Saint's name at Confirmation. The preferred name, however, is the baptismal name because it expresses the relationship that exists between Baptism and Confirmation. If the baptismal name is not that of a recognized saint of the Catholic Church, or if a new name is chosen, that Confirmation name must be that of a recognized saint. Candidates should choose a saint's name, not because of the attractiveness of the name, but because that saint served as a patron or role model of the Christian life.

Find out more about your patron saint's life, and **write 500 word essay about this saint whose name you have chosen for your Confirmation name. You may include a picture.**

Saint's Name: _____ Feast Day: _____

Confirmation Name (or derivative) you have selected to use to honor this special patron: _____

Saint's Place of Birth: _____

Family: _____

Occupation: _____

Life and/or Death: _____

What virtues did this saint practice in his or her life?

What aspect of this person's Christian life attracted you?

How is this saint a model for Christian's today?

Signature of Parent: _____ Candidate's Full Name _____

CONFIRMATION SPONSOR ELIGIBILITY FORM

I accept the role of Confirmation Sponsor for:

CANDIDATE'S NAME: _____

I understand the responsibility I undertake, both to serve as a model of Christian living and to pray for my candidate. I attest that the information provided on this form is true. I am a practicing Catholic; I believe and accept the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church.

(Please print information)

SPONSOR'S NAME _____ Age: _____

HOME ADDRESS _____

SIGNATURE OF SPONSOR: _____ Date: _____

Sponsor - Please ask your Parish Priest to sign this form and place the parish seal on it.

THIS FORM CERTIFIES THAT (SPONSOR NAME) _____
IS A REGISTERED MEMBER OF OUR PARISH, AND TO THE BEST OF OUR KNOWLEDGE, IS A QUALIFIED
MEMBER TO SERVE AS A CONFIRMATION SPONSOR.

PRIEST'S SIGNATURE _____

PARISH _____

ADDRESS _____

Please return this form to St. Mark's Religious Education Office, 215 Crescent Parkway, Sea Girt, NJ 08750.

PARISH SEAL

Parent/Candidate Check Off List:



Did you:

- *Read the Confirmation Handbook*
- *Complete the "Confirmation Application Form"– include all pertinent information – include height of candidate for robe size*
- *Attach copy of Baptismal Certificate – if candidate was not baptized at St. Mark's Church*
- *Attach \$25 Fee for Confirmation robe and retreat*
- *Complete the "Choosing a Christian Name Report"*
- *Complete the "Saint Report" & A 500 word Essay – Don't plagiarize!*
- *Complete the "Sponsor Information Form"*
- *Attach the "Sponsor Eligibility Form"*
- *Write a letter to Msgr. Flynn*
- *Complete the Community Service Project sheet*

Then:

- *Mark your calendar with all important dates*
- *Make a copy of all important information for your records*

ALL THE INFORMATION ABOVE SHOULD BE ENCLOSED IN AN ENVELOPE AND RETURNED NO LATER THAN JANUARY 7, 2018.

*To the Religious Education Office
St. Mark's Church
215 Crescent Pkwy, Sea Girt, NJ 08750
Att: Diana Zuna*

You're done!!!

St. Mark's Community Service Opportunities

Spanish Ministry: Setting up and sorting clothes (Sunday 3:30- 4:30 p.m.). If you would like to volunteer, please report downstairs in the parish hall on Sunday evenings and look for Mrs. Donatelli or Ms. Diana Zuna at (732)-449-6364 ext. 105.

Teacher Assistants for CCD: Monday or Tuesday afternoon classes 4:00-5:15 p.m. Please contact Ms. Diana Zuna at (732)-449-6364 ext. 105.

Coat Drive

Drop coats in Church basement before November 19. Please consider donating gently used coats because we are in dire need this year. Coats will be given to needy people in our Hispanic Community here at St. Mark's. **Sort Coats for Coat Drive:** Sunday Morning November 19 at 2:00 p.m. at Fr. Child's Hall. Contact person: Marianne Schoebel (732) 449-3468

Bake, Coffee and Raffle

Weekend of December 10 & 11. Bake, raffle and coffee sale after all Masses.

Sign up for the Mass you want!

Saturday 4:30 p.m.

Sunday 8:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m. & 12:00 p.m.

Proceeds from the bake, raffle and coffee sales will be donated to Maryknoll Missions. Cost is \$10 for 16 oz. bag – whole bean and ground. We will be taking orders for Christmas. Contact person: Diana Zuna Ms. Zuna at (732)-449-6364 ext. 105.

Fulfill of Monmouth and Ocean Counties: February 1, 2018 from 5:30-7:30 p.m.

3300 Route 33, Neptune, NJ – stacking shelves, sorting food. Call to sign-up Ms. Zuna at (732)-449-6364 ext. 105.

Madonna House

We plead for your support. By giving alms for God's poor women and children through Madonna House, you are showing God's mercy towards those most in need and gaining for yourselves a place in heaven. Thank you and God bless you. Contact person: Mary Lyons (732) 685-3163 or call Madonna House directly: (732) 775-1140

Project "Christmas Sing-a-Long" with Karaoke: December 12 from 6:30-7:30 p.m. Sunrise at Brandywine 2600 Allaire Rd Belmar, NJ. Call for more information
Catechists: Rosemary Luisi (732) 718-5954 & Kathy Langeveld (732) 223-7060 or Director at Sunrise: Nicole (732) 228-1760

Sunnyside Manor Nursing Home. 2500 Ridgewood Rd., Wall, NJ 07719

Activities for seniors- ongoing!! Contact: Maureen Machirella (732) 939-1344

Sunday 3-5 pm activities (10 students)

Date: TBA

Contact person: Christine – Activity Director (732)528-9311

Ronald McDonald House: Prepare, bake and serve a meal. All meals must be prepared in house, or prepared by a restaurant or grocery store. This mission enables families to come home to our House after a long day, enjoy a meal and connect with other families.

Phone: (732) 222-8755 ext. 5000

How to Sign Up for a Meal

Visit: www.takethemameal.com

Log in with the following information:

Recipient Last Name: long branch

Password: red shoes

Common Ground Grief Center: The mission of Common Ground is to provide support in a safe place where children, teens and their families grieving a death can come together and share their experiences as they begin the journey through the grief process.

“Light a Life” A Walk of Remembrance. Volunteers need to help set up for this benefit. November 26th from 4-8:00 p.m. (rain date: December 3rd) Location: Downtown Manasquan.

Phone: (732) 606-7477

Saturday Soup Kitchen

In response to the poverty afflicting the Asbury Park area, Trinity runs a weekly soup kitchen (Saturday Soup). Initiated in 1990, the soup kitchen now welcomes up to 220 guests each Saturday for a sit-down, hot lunch from noon-1 PM. The volunteers arrive at 9:30 AM to set up tables, prepare and serve meals, socialize with our guests, and clean up afterwards. New hands and donations are always welcome! January through May. Interested in volunteering? Please contact the office at Derick (732) 775-5084 or at Office@trinitynj.com

Boys & Girls Club of Monmouth County: 1201 Monroe Ave.(off Asbury Ave.), Asbury Park (safe area – lots of activity and volunteers) – teach young children computer skills, read books to them, play games. Call the Director at (732) 775-7862.

Epiphany House: 1110 Grand Ave., Asbury Park (safe area) – volunteer at a great child care center: read to children, lots of activity. Call the Director at (732) 775-0720.