



Great Expectations

Confirmation Class of 2011

THE PROGRAM:

Confirmation is often seen within this parish as a completion of religious education, but actually, it should draw young people in to be participating members of the church community. We build on active learning about the Holy Spirit and of our faith plus incorporate service and contribution of the candidates' gifts to the community. Our catechism says, "by the sacrament of Confirmation, the baptized are more perfectly bound to the Church and are enriched with a special strength of the Holy Spirit. Hence they are, as true witnesses of Christ, more strictly ***obliged to spread and defend the faith by word and deed.***" Confirmation should not be a hollow ritual, but one that seals a person in living an active, Christian life.

This year, we have a new book for Confirmation preparation. We will be using the *Confirmed in the Spirit* book and journal by Loyola Press. This program's goals are two- fold. First, it aims to help teens recognize that they live, move, and have their being in the Spirit. Secondly, it aims to help them respond to the presence of the Spirit in their lives.

The Confirmed in the Spirit program is comprised of eight chapters. Each class will cover a part of a chapter. Many times, the class discussion is what really brings the topic home for a student. This is why it is so important for students to attend and participate in weekly class. If a student cannot attend a class for an excused reason, it is very important that he or she complete the lesson at home and discuss it with a parent. They may return the lesson information, signed by the parent, to class the following week. Parents should call the high school religious ed office at 857-1500 by 5:30 pm if a student will not be at class, and then students or parents must pick up the missed session material from Lisa Siemer.

Classes began on September 15. Please check the attached calendar for dates that we do not have class. Confirmation will hopefully be held in November 2011. Practice for Confirmation will hopefully be on the Wednesday before Confirmation. More information will be shared as soon as our new Bishop sets the schedule.

We will also be hosting an interactive program that discusses the challenges of disabilities two times this spring. Students are expected to attend one of the "Welcome to My World" programs. This has often been one of the programs students enjoy most and is a very worthwhile experience. We need 9 parent volunteers for each of the sessions. More information will be in the bulletin regarding this as well.

Next fall, we will also be having a mandatory retreat for the candidates. Retreats are a great way for kids to reflect on the things they have learned. Candidates will also be asked to meet with a parish priest or staff member regarding the Confirmation preparation. These will be scheduled in the fall.

As mentioned before, the purpose for Confirmation preparation is to involve students in active learning about their faith & the sacrament, building on the gifts of the Holy Spirit, developing the idea of serving others, and most importantly, developing a deeper relationship with God that will continue long after the Confirmation ceremony.

A Basic Layout of Our Expectations

There are several steps that happen for Confirmation preparation to be successful. Some of those steps are things we have to take care of on our end. Some are steps that students, parents, and sponsors are responsible for. The following is a guide for those things.

Person preparing for Confirmation will:

- 1) **Attend Mass weekly**
- 2) Participate in class weekly and come to class with a positive attitude and an open mind and heart
- 3) Complete the reflection journal and return it to the catechist on the last night of class second semester
- 4) Complete 25 hours of various service types within the community
- 5) Attend Welcome to My World interactive program
- 6) Attend the Day of Recollection/Retreat in the fall
- 7) Be interviewed by a parish priest or staff member regarding readiness for Confirmation.
- 8) Select a Confirmation Sponsor (someone who is at least 16 years of age and a confirmed practicing Catholic who will help you with your spiritual journey – cannot be your parent)
- 9) Select a Confirmation name (can be the same as your baptismal name)
- 10) Present their Baptismal certificate if not baptized at St. Francis of Assisi

Parents/Guardians will:

- 1) Support their children through preparation of the sacrament of confirmation
- 2) Notify Lisa Siemer or the student's catechist if the student will be absent from class
- 3) Pick up missed work if the student cannot attend religion class. Parents will go through the makeup lesson and discuss the topics with the student. The makeup lesson needs to be signed and brought to class the following week.
- 4) Support the program
- 5) Pray for their child as they prepare for the sacrament.

Confirmation Sponsors will:

- 1) Be confirmed, practicing Catholics at least 16 years of age (can be the same person as a baptismal sponsor/godparent – **NOT** a parent)
- 2) Meet with or call the student throughout the preparation process to answer the questions in the candidate's Confirmation book and to discuss any issues the student might be dealing with. The purpose of a sponsor is to help develop the candidate's relationship with God and to help answer questions that come up along the way.
- 3) Pray with and for the student as they prepare for the sacrament.

SERVICE:

Many people do many types of service throughout the community. There is a certain feeling that comes with helping others simply for the sake of being helpful. There are many opportunities for service projects. Below are several suggestions for service. Please make a plan on the following sheet of which projects you would like to participate in. Service projects are ones that you do for others, you do it because you want to – not because someone is making you, and you do not get paid in any way. **You will need a minimum of twenty five (25) service hours of different kinds of service. We would like a minimum of 10 hours of service to the church, 10 hours of service to community, 5 hours can be any service.** The hours can be broken down in a number of ways – 5) 5 hr projects, 25) 1 hour projects, 50) ½ hour projects, etc. Twenty five hours in fifteen months is really just a drop in the bucket of time. Please also remember that service hours are not just hoops to jump through in order to be confirmed. They are set to give students the opportunity to learn the value of doing service and to do what God calls us to do, “Love your neighbor”. Service does not stop at Confirmation, but instead gives us the taste of the glory of doing it. It is critical that parents also realize the importance of service. One way of parents showing the importance is to do the projects with their student or at least to encourage the student to do service with an open mind and heart.

Suggestions for “Church” service:

- Serving at Mass
- Youth Council Participant
- Youth Choir
- Search
- Pre-School/Nursery Aide
- Paint pumpkins for the elderly
- Rake & Run & the Food Pantry Scavenger Hunt
- Vacation Bible School Helper
- Catholic Heart Work Camp
- Face Painting at the ARC Family Fun Fest
- Help landscape around the track in the mini park (call Fr. Vernon any time to help!)
- Any service project the church sponsors

Suggestions for “Community” Service Hours

- Visit elderly in nursing homes or shut ins at home
- Volunteer for Second Hand Rose
- Help Habitat for Humanities
- Work at the Effingham Soup Kitchen
- Collect food for Catholic Charities Food Pantry
- Shoveling snow or raking leaves for elderly or someone who doesn’t have a chance or ability to do it for themselves.
- Work at any breakfasts the different groups put on (this does not include the band breakfast. If you are a band member, you are expected to help at this breakfast for your trip fund and it does not constitute service.)
- Wash an elderly person’s car
- Special Olympics held in Sept @ LakeLand College
- Breakfasts: Right to Life (January), Lions, K of C MR, Newman, K of C Picnic Dinner

These are suggestions. There are multiple opportunities in your life EVERYDAY for serving others!!! ***Experience the joy of different kinds of service & then report back on what you did & what it meant to you.*** It isn’t that difficult & it can be a great experience if you let it be!

CHURCH picnic does NOT count for service hours. You are already expected to work it!

Class Calendar for the Year

September 15:	1 st Night of Class
September 22:	Freshmen Parent Meeting – regular classes for sophs – seniors
September 29:	Regular Classes
October 3:	<i>Service Opportunity: Doug Goeckner Memorial Walk @ the park – sign up in advance to help (Community Hours)</i>
October 6-27:	Regular Classes
October 16:	<i>Service Opportunity: Painting Pumpkins for the elderly @9 am in the Teen Center (church or community hours)</i>
October 20:	Freshmen deliver pumpkins around town to the elderly of the parish (this is regular class – NOT counted as service hours)
November 3:	Regular Classes
November 6:	Service Opportunity: Bigger & Better – going into the community to gather goods for Catholic Charities – set as a Scavenger Hunt or game event! (church or community hours)
November 10:	NO CLASSES – CONFIRMATION for Sophs
November 13:	<i>Service Opportunity: Rake ‘n Run – meet in the teen center 8:30 – 12:00 (church or community hours)</i>
November 17:	Regular Classes
November 24:	NO CLASSES – THANKSGIVING BREAK
December 1:	Regular Classes
December 8:	NO CLASSES – HOLY DAY OF OBLIGATION – please go to Mass with your families!
December 15:	Regular Classes

CHRISTMAS BREAK

January 12 - 26:	Regular Classes
February 2 - 23:	Regular Classes
March 2:	Regular Classes
March 9:	Ash Wednesday – attend Mass with your family
March 16-30:	Regular Classes
April 5:	Regular Classes
April 12:	Closing Mass

These dates are subject to change. If school is canceled because of weather on a Wednesday, religion will be cancelled as well. If any regularly scheduled classes are canceled for any reason, we will have it announced on WCRC & WXF. The junior high religious ed program & the high school program run on different schedules. We will remain in session regardless of junior high sports conflicts.

Confirmed in the Spirit Chapter Summaries

Chapter 1: Confirmed in the Spirit: Awareness of what the Holy Spirit is and what he does in our lives.

Chapter 2: Confirmed in Discipleship: The beginning of the Church through the coming of the Spirit, and our own beginning in the Church through the Sacraments of Initiation.

Chapter 3: Confirmed in Faith: An examination of the main truths of the faith as found in the Nicene Creed.

Chapter 4: Confirmed in Love: A review of the Commandments, the Beatitudes, & the Works of Mercy.

Chapter 5: Confirmed in Holiness: A review of the theological and cardinal virtues and the Gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Chapter 6: Confirmed in the Church: A summary of the Sacraments of Eucharist and Reconciliation, which help unite us into a community of love and forgiveness.

Chapters 7 & 8 will be completed the first few weeks of sophomore year.

Chapter 7. Confirmed in Grace: The Rite of Confirmation is explained.

Chapter 8: Confirmed in Witness: A study of the Fruits of the Spirit.

Service Record

Name: _____ Year to be Confirmed 2011

EXAMPLE Project

Hours 2 Signed (by recipient of service) Lisa Siemer

Date 10/18/10 Type of Service: Church

Project (describe it & what you learned)

I painted pumpkins for the elderly of the parish at the teen center. I learned that I like helping the elderly. Lots of them don't ever get visitors & I can make a difference by doing little things for them.

Project

Hours _____ Signed (by recipient of service) _____

Date _____ Type of Service _____

Project (describe it & what you learned)

Project

Hours _____ Signed (by recipient of service) _____

Date _____ Type of Service _____

Project (describe it & what you learned)

Please complete your service hours & turn this form in October 1, 2010

Service Record

Project

Hours _____

Signed (by recipient of service) _____

Date _____

Type of Service: _____

Project (describe it & what you learned)

Project

Hours _____

Signed (by recipient of service) _____

Date _____

Type of Service: _____

Project (describe it & what you learned)

Project

Hours _____

Signed (by recipient of service) _____

Date _____

Type of Service: _____

Project (describe it & what you learned)

Service Hour Totals:

Church Hours _____ *Community Hours* _____ *Other Hours* _____