

ST. FRANCES CABRINI
2021 – 2022
HANDBOOK FOR THE
PREPARATION OF THE
SACRAMENT OF
CONFIRMATION

“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”

– Saint Frances Xavier Cabrini

Dear Confirmation candidate and family,

"The role of parents in education is of such importance that it is almost impossible to provide an adequate substitute."

Catechism of the Catholic Church, n. 2221 (CCC)

With this in mind the Religious Education office at St. Frances Cabrini makes every effort to provide the resources, structure, and encouragement necessary for children (the Confirmation Candidates) with the parent and/or sponsors help to encounter, grow and witness their faith; especially as they prepare to celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation.

There are nine learning requirements/resources/tools to help prepare the Confirmation Candidate.

1. In-Person Preparation – Confirmation candidate and parent(s) and/or sponsor attends
2. Attending Sunday Mass & complete a Mass Log
3. Retreat Days – Confirmation candidate and parent(s) and/or sponsors attend on March 6, 2022
4. *Decision Point* workbook curriculum – Confirmation candidate completes at home
5. Saint Activity – research to help select a Saint's name as a Confirmation name
6. Service Projects – in support of the Corporal Works of Mercy
7. Reconciliation – “to repent and recover the grace of friendship with God.” (USCCB)
8. Letter to the Pastor – from the Confirmation candidate on preparation, saint chosen, etc.
9. One-On-One meeting – Confirmation candidate meets with a member of the pastoral staff

Prioritizing other activities as more “important” than Mass and sacramental preparation is not acceptable and celebrating the sacrament will be postponed. Please know the Religious Education staff and pastoral staff realize from time to time life “throws us a curve ball” and our best intentions to participate in a scheduled event, attend Mass, etc. does not occur as planned. Time and events missed must be made up and communication between the Religious Education staff and you is the best way to ensure that the sacrament may be celebrated without delay.

I look forward to this time together as we prepare to celebrate Confirmation and continue our faith journey.

God bless,

Agnes Villarreal

Director of Religious Education

P.S. While participating in sacramental preparation activities please eliminate the use of email, texts, smart phones, etc. They are “Lethal Weapons” of Faith Destruction!

In-Person Preparation

In-person preparation helps reinforce that the Catholic Church is “universal”, we are not alone, and we are one body of Christ. This year the in-person preparation will consist of monthly group meetings. The Confirmation candidate and parent(s) and/or sponsor will attend the meetings together.

The group meetings will be on the following Sundays:

- ❖ Sunday, October 3, 2021 from 12:00 – 2:00pm beginning with Mass
 - Parent(s) and/or sponsor attend with the Confirmation Candidate
- ❖ Sunday, November 7, 2021 from 12:00 – 2:00pm beginning with Mass
 - Parent(s) and/or sponsor attend with the Confirmation Candidate
- ❖ Sunday, December 5, 2021 from 12:00 – 2:00pm beginning with Mass
 - Parent(s) and/or sponsor attend with the Confirmation Candidate
- ❖ No January 2022 meeting scheduled
 - Please remember to continue to attend Mass, pray daily and complete the Decision Point workbook
- ❖ Sunday, February 6, 2022 from 12:00 – 2:00pm beginning with Mass
 - Parent(s) and/or sponsor attend with the Confirmation Candidate
- ❖ Sunday, March 6, 2022 from 12:00 – 5:00pm beginning with Mass & Retreat
 - Parent(s) and/or sponsor attend with the Confirmation Candidate
- ❖ Sunday, April 3, 2022 from 12:00 – 2:00pm beginning with Mass
 - Parent(s) and/or sponsor attend with the Confirmation Candidate
- ❖ Sunday, May 1, 2022 from 12:00 – 2:00pm beginning with Mass
 - Parent(s) and/or sponsor attend with the Confirmation Candidate

The Sacrament of Confirmation is traditionally celebrated at St. Frances Cabrini in the Spring. The date is set by the Bishops office. At this time the date and time has not been set.

Attend Sunday Mass & Mass Log

Attending Mass every Sunday and completing an entry in the “Mass Log” is another way of preparing for the Sacrament of Confirmation. Each Sunday is a “little Easter”—a celebration of the central mysteries of our faith. The Church teaches that we must fulfill the command of Jesus, “Do this in memory of me,” (Luke 22:19) by attending Sunday Mass.

The Mass Log is intended to help the Confirmation candidate to be intentionally attentive during the Mass. Society is fast paced and very influential on our children. As adults we must deliberately provide our children the opportunities necessary for them to understand and appreciate the Mass, pray often listening for God’s guidance, and continuously set the example of being a good and faithful Catholic. Going to Mass on Sunday is not just an obligation but a necessity to provide our children, spouses, and ourselves the means to live a holy life and obtain eternal life in heaven.

“The Mass is the number one way God feeds us each and every week. In the Mass we are invited to encounter the True Presence of God in a way more profound and real than in any other way. It truly is the source and summit of our lives on Earth. When we approach the Mass with a deep faith and understanding of the great mystery we encounter, we will be left with a longing and desire for more. When we receive Holy Communion in faith and with an open heart we enter into communion with Jesus in the depths of our soul. He enters in, gives us Himself as our sustenance for life and transforms our hardships and struggles into joys. The Mass has an unlimited amount of power to change us and draw us closer to God. It has an unlimited amount of power to help us in life to become all that God intends us to be. In the Mass we are made one with Christ so that we can say with St. Paul, “It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me” ([Galatians 2:20](#)).” (<https://mycatholic.life/catholic-question-and-answer/why-do-we-have-to-go-to-mass-every-week/>)

It is impossible to forget the onset of COVID-19 and the State of Michigan mandate to “Stay Home, Stay Safe”. The Archdiocese of Detroit in obedience to this mandate closed churches temporarily and the faithful were not able to celebrate public Mass. Fortunately these mandates have been lifted and all Catholic churches have reopened to celebrate Mass in person!

“Considering the grave obligation we have of being physically present with our brothers and sisters at Mass on Sunday and Holy Days of Obligation for the Eucharist, each of us is asked to make a good and sincere judgement as to whether these circumstances apply or not.” (<https://www.aod.org/emergencyresponse>)

Please contact the Religious Education office for assistance if your family has not returned to Mass.

Retreat Days

Attending a retreat provides an opportunity to intentionally spend time with Jesus. Retreats encourage us to reflect on who we are and what God wants for our future. We are allowed time to concentrate on prayer and celebrate the sacrament of Reconciliation which allows us to heal our broken relationship with God.

Life is busy and recognizing our human need for rest is vital to our overall health, both spiritual and physical. Retreats allow us to dedicate time to the Lord and restore ourselves so that we might be better Disciples of Christ. In the Gospels we are reminded that Jesus retreated to the desert to spend time alone with God (Matthew 4:1-11). Then again in the Garden of Gethsemane we read,

“Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples, “Sit here while I go over there and pray.” (Matthew 26:36).

Finally, a group sharing in a retreat allows the opportunity to build a stronger faith filled community and share in an experience with others who also care about their faith.

Who: Confirmation Candidate and parent(s) and/or sponsor

When: March 6, 2022

Time: 12:00pm – 5:30pm (Tentative time)

Where: Sacred Heart Catholic Church
21599 Parke Lane
Grosse Ile Township, MI 48138

Decision Point

The resource used at St. Frances Cabrini to prepare the Confirmation Candidate to celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation is the *Decision Point* program developed by Dynamic Catholic. The lessons are structured to provide each person the opportunity to learn through visual, audio and writing prompts – thus recognizing each child learns in one or a combination of these methods.

The *Decision Point* program is divided into 12 sessions. The program is structured so each session may be completed in approximately a 60 minute timeframe or extended over shorter periods of time depending on each child's unique learning style and your family's schedule. Each session has an online video which compliments and reinforces the workbook. For online viewing, please visit:

<https://www.dynamiccatholic.com/confirmation/decision-point-program-view.html>

The optional link for parents/sponsors is:

<https://www.dynamiccatholic.com/confirmation/decision-point-parents.html>.

The Decision Point workbook is to be completed at home. The following schedule will help with time management to stay on track and complete the workbook curriculum in a timely manner before the Sacrament of Confirmation is celebrated.

- ❖ October 2021 – Due to the Religious Education Office on Monday, November 1st
 - Session One – Life Is Choices
 - Session Two – What's Holding You Back?
- ❖ November 2021 - Due to the Religious Education Office on Monday, December 6th
 - Session Three – The Jesus Question
 - Session Four – The Prayer Process
- ❖ December 2021 - Due to the Religious Education Office on Monday, January 10th
 - Session Five – The Bible
 - Session Six - Relationships
- ❖ January 2022 - Due to the Religious Education Office on Monday, February 7th
 - Session Seven – The Eucharist
 - Session Eight – The Holy Spirit
- ❖ February 2022 - Due to the Religious Education Office on Monday, March 7th
 - Session Nine – The Church
 - Session Ten - Confirmation
- ❖ March 2022 - Due to the Religious Education Office on Monday, April 4th
 - Session Eleven – Made For Mission
 - Session Twelve – Holiness Is Possible

Saint Activity

The Saint Activity is an opportunity for the Confirmation Candidate to learn more about the saints. Research will lead the candidate to discovering a saint, whom they want to be more like and has special qualities, gifts, or charisms that they find inspirational for their own Christian life. Or maybe the saint shares a loved one's name the candidate would like to honor and remember. The research will lead them to their Saint/Confirmation Name. A saint serves as a patron and model for the Confirmation Candidate, being confirmed.

Below are a couple websites to help begin the search to find a saint/Confirmation name:

- <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/roman-catholic-patron-saints>
- <https://www.catholic.org/saints/>

Please remember not all saints are Catholic, some other Christian denominations also acknowledge saints, so when searching for information on the saints please enter "Catholic saints" while researching saints on the internet.

Service Projects

Service is an opportunity for us to help others.

“The Corporal Works of Mercy are found in the teachings of Jesus (Matthew 25:31) and give us a model for how we should treat all others, as if they were Christ in disguise. They "are charitable actions by which we help our neighbors in their bodily needs" (USCCA). They respond to the basic needs of humanity as we journey together through this life.”
(<https://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/how-we-teach/new-evangelization/jubilee-of-mercy/the-corporal-works-of-mercy>)

The Corporal Works of Mercy are:

- ❖ To feed the hungry
- ❖ To give water to the thirsty
- ❖ To clothe the naked
- ❖ To shelter the homeless
- ❖ To visit the sick
- ❖ To visit the imprisoned, or ransom the captive
- ❖ To bury the dead

This year service will include three outreach projects for the Confirmation candidate and parent(s) and/or sponsor to participate in.

1. St. Frances Cabrini Service Day or another preapproved service
 - a. October 23, 2021 9:00am – 1:00pm OR
 - b. March 26, 2022 9:00am – 1:00pm OR
 - c. Service to others in need **This service is only valid when the service request proposal is submitted in writing to the Religious Education office and preapproved. (Helping “grandma”, etc. does not count for this requirement)
2. Decorate five (5) “giant size” brown lunch bags
 - ❖ The Lunch Bag should reflect our Catholic faith and be appropriately detailed in word and design for all ages to receive
 - ❖ Make it cheerful – use markers, crayons, colored pencils, etc.
 - ❖ Inspirational words, a prayer, and/or a Bible verse should be a part of the details
 - ❖ Drawings/designs are appreciated – use the gifts and talents God has blessed you with
 - ❖ Include your First Name and First Initial of your Last Name somewhere on the outside of the lunch bag
3. Create five (5) Inspirational cards
 - ❖ The card should reflect our Catholic faith and be appropriately detailed in word and design for all ages to receive
 - ❖ Make it cheerful – use markers, crayons, colored pencils, etc.
 - ❖ Inspirational words, a prayer, and/or a Bible verse should be a part of the details
 - ❖ Drawings/designs are appreciated – use the gifts and talents God has blessed you with
 - ❖ Include your First Name and First Initial of your Last Name on the back of the card

The lunch bags and cards will be used by the St. Frances Cabrini Christian Service Outreach program.

Reconciliation

Prior to receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation the Confirmation Candidate should participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. The gift of the Sacrament of Reconciliation brings us in union with God and is available to receive throughout our lifetime. The USCCB (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops) encourages all to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation and states:

“In the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation, also called confession, we meet the Lord, who wants to grant forgiveness and the grace to live a renewed life in him. In this sacrament, he prepares us to receive him free from serious sin, with a lively faith, earnest hope, and sacrificial love in the Eucharist.”

<http://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/sacraments-and-sacramentals/penance/upload/Penance-Statement-ENG.pdf>

St. Frances Cabrini offers the Sacrament of Reconciliation on Saturday at 4:00pm; additional times for Reconciliation are offered during Lent. Please refer to the St. Frances Cabrini website (<https://cabriniparish.org>) for additional times. Or the candidate may choose to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation at another Catholic Church which holds significant meaning to the candidate's family or accommodates a time more conducive to your family's schedule.

Letter to the Pastor

The intent of the “Letter to the Pastor” is to formally notify the parish where Confirmation is being celebrated that the Confirmation Candidate has spent time in preparation and has an understanding of the sacrament. The letter should consist of the:

- ❖ Introductory paragraph indicating how the candidate has prepared for Confirmation
- ❖ Saint’s name chosen
 - Facts about the saint
 - Explanation of why they chose the saint
- ❖ Information about the sponsor – why you chose them

Below is an example. Please know you have permission to use the same words, ideas, etc. in your letter.

Dear Fr. Tim,

I have spent the last several months in preparation to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. During this time of preparation I have attended Mass, discovered my Saint’s name, chosen my sponsor, completed service projects and spent time in prayer.

The Saint I have chosen for my Confirmation name is St. Philomena. She was 13 years old when she was martyred because she refused to marry as she had dedicated her life to God. 13 times the emperor tried to have her killed for her refusal to marry him. Each time an angel was by her side to protect her from death. St. Philomena is the only saint who was canonized a saint because of Miraculous Intercession. She was canonized in 1837. I chose St. Philomena as my saint because she is the patron saint of children. The name Philomena means daughter of light.

My sponsor is my Aunt Mary. She attends St. Rita’s Catholic Church. When I was a little girl my Aunt Mary taught me how to pray the Rosary. The Rosary is now one of my “go to” prayers. She always has a smile on her face and is so patient. When her husband died she was joyful because she expressed he was no longer suffering but was with Jesus. To smile showed her strength.

I look forward to receiving the Holy Spirit in the Sacrament of Confirmation, growing in my Catholic faith and using the gifts God has given me to help others.

Sincerely,

Sign Your Name – First & Last

One-On-One Meeting

The One-On-One meeting will be scheduled at a later date with the Confirmation Candidate and a member of the St. Frances Cabrini pastoral staff. It is a brief conversation (5 – 10 minutes) regarding the candidate's faith life, knowledge gained through eight years of faith formation and during this sacramental preparation time and their desire to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. The Confirmation Candidate is encouraged to ask questions as this is a conversation and not a test!

Back Up Plan and Consequences

As mentioned in the introductory letter life sometimes "throws us a curve ball". It is imperative that you communicate an absence to the Religious Education staff. While it is impossible to recreate the meeting missed time spent in the Adoration Chapel in prayer and reflection will provide the Confirmation candidate and parent(s) and/or sponsor an opportunity to spend time with Jesus. The Religious Education staff will work with you to coordinate a time for Adoration to take place under the supervision of a member of the Religious Education staff.