

St. Pius V Catholic Church

**ADULT CONFIRMATION SACRAMENTAL
PREPARATION PROGRAM**



Older Catholics remember Confirmation as the moment when their identity was changed: They "received the Holy Spirit" and became "soldiers of Christ." Today Confirmation is often defined as a sacrament of mature Christian commitment. It is the occasion when Catholics baptized as infants put their "personal signature" on their parents' decision.

The *Catechism* describes Confirmation as a deepening of baptismal gifts. It says that the sacrament roots us more deeply in our identity as God's children; unites us more firmly with Christ; increases in us the gifts of the Holy Spirit; binds us more closely to the Church; and gives us special strength to bear witness to our faith (see #1303).

OVERVIEW:

Preparation for Confirmation includes learning to articulate what it means to be a Catholic Christian: the faith we express in Creed and lifestyle. This spiritual journey is not just a matter of putting in so much time or attending a fixed number of meetings. It is a question of going on a spiritual journey that goes on for the rest of your life---it never ends.

At St. Pius V, the program includes: catechesis, Eucharistic liturgy, prayer, spiritual guidance, retreats (one day in October and a weekend retreat in Lent), service opportunities, rites and rituals, and participation in the community life of the Church. Usually this process is completed in a year or so---beginning in August and culminating with the conferral of the Sacrament of Confirmation at the Pentecost Vigil. At that point, you will be ready to stand before a representative of the larger Church—the bishop or his delegate—and be anointed with the perfumed oil (chrism) blessed by the bishop at the Chrism Mass on Holy Thursday. You can say with knowledge that you lacked as a newly baptized infant, *"Yes, this is my Church. I accept the faith of this Church as my faith. This is who I am."*

Confirmation, like the other sacraments of initiation, marks the beginning of a journey toward deeper knowledge of God. We are very excited that you are choosing to join us in claiming our heritage. For years to come, you will bear witness to what loving and believing people have handed on to you—all in the Spirit of God.

CHOOSING A SPONSOR:

You'll be required to have a sponsor—someone who will guide you and share the story of faith with you. A good sponsor will make this process a little easier and even more fun.

If all has gone as planned, the best person will be one of your baptismal godparents. The *Catechism* (#1311) and canon law (#892-893) both tell us that you need a sponsor. Having one of your godparents helps us to see how Baptism and Confirmation are connected. Sadly, by this

St. Pius V Catholic Church

ADULT CONFIRMATION SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION PROGRAM



time, many of you no longer know your godparents, or they're no longer good role models. Or maybe they just live too far away, or are simply unavailable. You will need to choose a new sponsor.

Some advice to the candidates: You're looking for someone you trust, whose faith you admire and who will be there for you. They must be *confirmed Catholics, at least 16 years old* (for maturity) and *practicing members of the Church, while not being your parents*. This means you can choose a relative, friend or someone from your parish as your sponsor

SERVICE COMMITMENT:

The 1992 American Bishops pastoral letter, titled "Stewardship: A Disciple's Response", describes a Christian steward as:

"One who receives God's gifts gratefully, cherishes and tends them in a responsible and accountable manner, shares them in justice and love with others, and returns them with increase to the Lord."

Christian Stewardship is an integral part of the Catholic faith; therefore, it is included in the sacramental preparation process. Stewardship is what we do after we say we believe. It is not about our generosity, it is about our grateful response to God's generosity. It is an attitude of mind and heart that is carried out in action, producing good works as an outward sign of one's faith.

Putting the theology of Stewardship into practice is the basis for the Christian Service component of the program. You will be provided with opportunities, activities and sharing exercises that will help you identify your unique gifts and challenge you to see the world through the eyes of a grateful steward.

The details and specific service requirements will be explained to you at a later time.

COSTS & EXPENSES:

There are expenses incurred for each individual during the course of the process. You are expected to help defray the cost of the materials, which is **\$ 70.00**. However, no one will be denied sacraments because of inability to make a contribution towards the cost of the process.

There is a required ***weekend retreat*** that takes place in Lent. Over the past few years, the cost of this retreat has been approximately **\$175.00 per person**. Again, you are expected to pay for your own retreat. If that expense works a *real* hardship on you, feel free to approach any of the team members for guidance.