

A NEW COVID-19 PROCESS FOR CONFIRMATION PREP

Please know that, due to COVID-19, dates, times, and locations of in-person events are subject to change. Please be on the lookout for emails with updated information as situations change. We will keep you posted with the most up to date information available.

The need for physical distancing and mask wearing has changed every aspect of our lives, and youth ministry and religious education is no exception. Just like our schools, we're having to take extra precautions and learn to be flexible and roll with the punches as new protocols continue to come out. Our challenge, in a nutshell, is trying to figure out how to do the ministry and Sacramental catechesis that you, the parents, are entrusting us to do while also ensuring that we keep our community safe from the spread of the pandemic. With ministry being inherently relational, it's difficult to replicate that experience in a digital or socially distanced setting.

In light of the COVID pandemic this year, similar to how First Communion and Reconciliation preparation has been done for years now, Confirmation preparation will be done from the safety of your own home. Being a part of Dynamic Catholic's "Dynamic Parish" program gives us access to a plethora of resources for sacramental preparation that allow for a seamless transition to at-home learning for our Confirmation preparation program. Families will be provided with a student workbook for teens, a leader guide for parents, and access to the video content through the Dynamic Catholic and St. Therese websites, as well as the "Decision Point" app. The step-by step process for all of confirmation prep is outlined on the next few pages, as well as a Complete Checklist at the end of this document.

Teens should watch the Confirmation videos with a parent (and, if possible, their sponsor) and follow along in the workbook. Use the discussion questions in the workbook to guide your conversations about the material. Don't be afraid to engage those difficult questions that may arise with your son or daughter - let this program draw you and your family deeper into the mysteries of our Catholic faith.

HERE'S HOW THIS YEAR WILL WORK

A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE



REGISTRATION

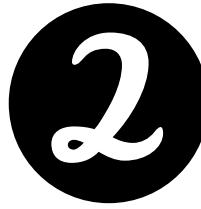
The following must be submitted no later than September 11:

- **Parents** - Register your teen for Life Teen and Confirmation and, if you are able, submit the Recommended Offering (previously called the "obligation")
- **Teen** - Fill out "Teen Pre-Interview Questionnaire"

The following must be submitted no later than October 1:

- Baptismal Certificate: photocopy or digital copy must be turned in if your child was not baptized at St. Therese and did not attend St. Therese School.
- **Teen** - Choose a Confirmation Sponsor and submit the following forms:
 - Sponsor Information Form
 - Sponsor Certificate to Serve Form
 - This form must be signed by the sponsor's pastor. If the sponsor is a St. Therese parishioner, the sponsor must directly get it signed by Fr. Joe.
- **Teen** - Choose a Confirmation Saint/Name and write a short essay on the life of the Saint and why you picked that Saint for your Confirmation Name.





SACRAMENTAL CATECHESIS AND PREPARATION

The following must be completed on a weekly basis in preparation for Confirmation:

"Decision Point" assignments:

- Watch Decision Point video assignments every week, beginning the week of Sunday, September 13, with a parent and, if possible, sponsor.
- Videos and workbook assignments will be emailed to parents and posted on the St. Therese Youth Ministry / Confirmation webpage.
- Parents must submit online verification via the Confirmation page that teen has watched the videos, discussed the content with parent and/or sponsor, and completed the workbook assignments. Assignments are due by the following Sunday. Refer to the *Complete Checklist* for more details.

Keep holy the Sabbath:

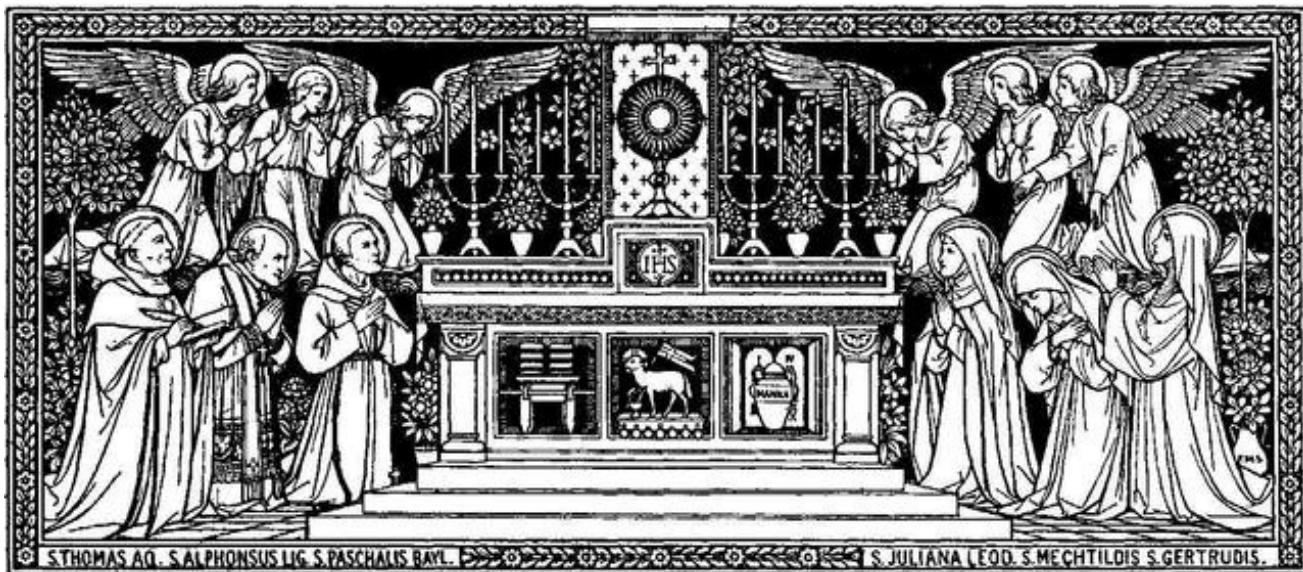
- While our Bishop, and bishops around the world, have dispensed the Faithful from their Sunday obligation to attend and participate in the Sacred Liturgy because of the coronavirus pandemic, it is still of the utmost importance to make space for God on Sunday. Every Sunday, do one of the following options as a family:
 - Attend Sunday Mass or Saturday Vigil Mass. When possible, specifically attend 5:00 PM Sunday Mass here at St. Therese with the Life Teen community, followed by Life Night from 6:15 PM until 7:30 PM in the Church.
 - Attendance at Life Nights for all Confirmation teens is encouraged, but not required.
 - Actively pray along with a live-streamed or pre-recorded mass on Sunday and make an Act of Spiritual Communion* during the distribution of Communion.
 - Read the Sunday readings aloud as a family, share your thoughts as a family on the readings, and make an Act of Spiritual Communion* together.

Attend the *virtual Confirmation Retreat* (Retreat content goes live December 6)

Complete 7 hours of approved Confirmation Service Hours and submit form

*an example of an Act of Spiritual Communion found on the next page





An Act of Spiritual Communion

My Jesus, I believe that You are present in the Most Holy Sacrament.

I love You above all things, and I desire to receive You into my soul.

Since I cannot at this moment receive You sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart.

I embrace You as if You were already there and unite myself wholly to You.

Never permit me to be separated from You.

Amen.

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FINAL WRAP-UP

Mid-December: Participate in a Confirmation final interview

- Tentatively scheduled for mid-December, after the retreat. Interviews available by appointment. More details to follow.

Friday, January 15, 2021

- Confirmation Rehearsal at 6:30 PM in the Church

Saturday, January 16, 2021

- Confirmation Mass, 12:00 PM in the Church



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why Baptismal Certificates?

If you were baptized at St. Therese or a past student here, we will obtain your baptismal certificate. Otherwise, you will need to obtain a photocopy from the church where the baptism was performed and provide it to the parish office. One must have proof of Baptism before receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation. All records are kept at the location of Baptism for all Catholic, so this helps us pass along the correct information to the location of baptism.

Who do I communicate to during Confirmation?

Sam Ford, sford@sttheresenorth.org, 816-741-2800 / 816-741-5400 ext. 119

Flocknote text messages and emails will be sent to you to keep you up to date!

Why Teen Pre-Interview Questions?

The purpose of the Teen Pre-Interview Questions is to help the Confirmation Candidate and Parent reflect on his or her faith journey, and to give us at the parish an insight into the needs of our teens. Please be honest; there is no perfect answer. This information is not being used to judge anyone but helps us see areas to focus on. This is due by September 11, 2020.

What is LIFE TEEN?

LIFE TEEN is St. Therese High School Youth Group for 9th-12th grade. LIFE TEEN is a movement within the Roman Catholic Church which leads teenagers and their families into a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ and His Church. Through powerful Eucharistic encounters and engaging catechesis, teens are immersed in a dynamically Catholic parish culture among their peers and adults who care about them. Our goal is to reach today's teens, but also to create an environment where Catholic teenagers feel supported and engaged outside of Sunday mass. LIFE Nights are Sunday nights throughout the year, 6:15pm-7:30pm. Attendance is highly encouraged for those preparing for Confirmation.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the Financial Commitment for Confirmation?

There is no charge to celebrate Sacraments at St. Therese. Sacraments are a beautiful, vital, and free gift. However, there are expenses involved in the preparation for Sacraments; there is an all-inclusive, one time recommended offering of **\$100** for the Confirmation preparation process (**\$125** for non-parishioners). These include materials, supplies, retreat, and other related expenses for the preparation. *If you are unable to pay for this you will NOT BE TURNED AWAY from Sacramental preparation.* If you are able to give more than the recommended offering in order to provide sacramental assistance to others, that would be greatly appreciated!

What are the requirements for a Sponsor?

The Confirmation Sponsor must be a confirmed, practicing Catholic. **It cannot be a parent of the Confirmation Candidate;** however, the sponsor can be a grandparent or Godparent. This should be someone the candidate trusts in seeking out faith advice and direction. While the popular choice is a family member or family friend, we also recommend small group leaders and ministry leaders. But, this is a choice up to the candidate.

In order to qualify to be a Confirmation Sponsor, you must:

- Be a Catholic who has been baptized, confirmed, and has received the Eucharist, and who is currently living a sacramental life (e.g., attending Mass regularly, making use of the sacrament of Reconciliation), and is not married outside the Church, cohabitating, or in an otherwise irregular situation.
- Be at least sixteen years of age (preferably eighteen).
- Lead a life of faith in harmony with the responsibility they are undertaking.
- Not be a parent of the individual to be confirmed.
- It is recommend that the sponsor only sponsors one candidate per liturgy.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What does a Sponsor do during preparation?

A sponsor's role is very minimal during the preparation. We ask that they do these things:

- Pray for the candidate.
- Submit all required paperwork.
- Check-in on their preparation.
- Watch the Virtual Retreat videos, preferably with Candidate. Videos go live Sunday, Dec. 6.
- Attend Rehearsal with Candidate on Friday, January 15, 2020 6:30 p.m.
 - (If Sponsor cannot attend please have a parent fill in).
- Confirmation Mass – Saturday, January 16, 2020, 12:00 p.m.

What are the requirements for a Confirmation Name (Saint Name) and essay?

In order to manifest the close relationship of Confirmation to Baptism, the candidates, according to the longstanding custom of the Church, may retain their baptismal name.

However, a special name may be chosen if desired, in which case it should be that of a recognized saint of the Church, or a person from scripture (CF Canon #855). *In our Diocese, the Bishop encourages Candidates to select a Saint name. The name must be gender specific, meaning boys select male saints and girls select female saints.*

Need help picking out a Saint? Here are some resources:

- Catholic Encyclopedia
 - <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/index.html>
- From the Life Teen blog: Biggest Best List of Confirmation Saints (for guys and girls)
 - <http://lifeteen.com/blog/biggest-best-list-confirmation-saints-guys-girls/>

What is required in the Saint Name Essay?

Tell us about your Saint; why you chose your Saint; how he/she lived his/her life that will help you in yours? A Saint must be chosen even if they decided to pick their own name.

Please submit the Essay and Confirmation Name online by October 1.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why Seven Hours of Community Service?

Seven represents each gift of the Holy Spirit - wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord.

Service Hours should be completed between September 1st and December 6th. The Confirmation Service Program is an integral part of the spiritual development of the students at St. Therese Parish. It adds the dimension of faith in action and encourages students to reach out to those in need. Our goal is to teach compassion and understanding for others and follow the model of self-sacrifice exemplified by our Savior, Jesus Christ. It is through these life-challenging experiences that students encounter the living Christ in others. We hope to kindle a spirit of giving that will last a lifetime for young men and women. For more information look for Service Project Requirements.

How do I get my service hours done and stay safe from COVID-19?

Firstly, when in public, always comply with local, diocesan, and CDC safety protocol. Maintain a minimum of 6 ft. of physical distance from other people (especially when indoors), frequently wash your hands for a minimum of 20 seconds with soap, and wear a mask.

Physical distancing will make it more difficult this year to get service hours done than in years past, but it certainly won't make it impossible! Get creative and think of what people in your community need! Here are a few ideas of things you can do!

- Do you have a shut-in or immunocompromised neighbor? Offer to run errands or tidy up their yard for them (with parental supervision).
- Spend an afternoon making handmade cloth face coverings and donate them to the Church, a homeless shelter, or nursing home
- Our St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry here at St. Therese is always looking for more volunteers - contact svdp@sttheresenorth.org
- Donate blood (age and height/weight restrictions may apply)
- Volunteer at St. Mary's Soup Kitchen - From Mary Pat DeStefano: "This ministry got started in our parish 20 years ago in order that teens in our parish could get service hours that would be accepted at all area high schools. We are delighted to have the youth join us!"
 - contact Mary Pat to volunteer! - marypatdestefano@yahoo.com

Looking for other ideas? Contact Jennifer Davis, our parish Director of Religious Ed. at jdavis@sttheresenorth.org

Wanting to do something not on this list? Contact Sam Ford for approval!



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why do we have a Confirmation retreat?

Ordinarily, the Confirmation retreat would be an in-person event geared at building community and giving the Candidates time dedicated to spiritually preparing to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. This year, out of an abundance of caution amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, the Confirmation retreat will be virtual. The content will be made available on December 6, and must be completed by December 31.

What if I have a conflict with the retreat?

I've got good news and bad news - the good news is that you can now participate in the retreat on your own time! The bad news is that, since COVID is showing no signs of going away in the near future, it will be virtual in a similar format to the weekly Confirmation Assignments.

What is the Confirmation Interview?

Your teen will have an interview with one of our parish volunteers. The interview time will be 15-30 minutes long. All service hour forms must be submitted by the interview. The interview is also a way for each child to assess his or her readiness and intention for receiving the sacrament. The interview is not intended to be a test, but rather a time to understand if the teen is ready, and if not, to determine what needs to be explained more completely. Interviews will take place in mid-December. Sign-ups will be sent out via email in the coming weeks.



COMPLETE CONFIRMATION PREP CHECKLIST

CANDIDATE	PARENT	SPONSOR	CONFIRMATION REQUIREMENT	DUE DATE
			<i>Check the boxes as each requirement is completed. If a box is blacked out, it is not a requirement for that individual. For example, only the Candidate (teen) is required to complete the "Teen Pre-Interview Questions" form.</i>	
			CONFIRMATION REQUIREMENT	
			Life Teen / Confirmation registration and the recommended offering	Sept. 11
			"Teen Pre-Interview Questions" form	Sept. 11
			Week of Sept. 13: Decision Point Session One: Life is Choices Online Videos, Parent/Teen discussion, and Workbook completed	Sept. 20
			Week of Sept. 20: Decision Point Session Two: What's Holding You Back? Online Videos, Parent/Teen discussion, and Workbook completed	Sept. 27
			Candidate's Baptismal Certificate: photocopy or digital copy must be turned in if your child was not baptized at St. Therese	Oct. 1
			Choose a Confirmation Sponsor	Oct. 1
			Choose a Confirmation Saint/Name and turn in your Saint essay	Oct. 1
			Sponsor Information Form	Oct. 1
			Sponsor Certificate to Serve Form (signed by the sponsor's Pastor)	Oct. 1
			Week of Sept. 27: Decision Point Session Three: The Jesus Question Online Videos, Parent/Teen discussion, and Workbook completed	Oct. 4
			Week of Oct. 4: Decision Point Session Four: The Prayer Process Online Videos, Parent/Teen discussion, and Workbook completed	Oct. 11
			Week of Oct. 11: Decision Point Session Five: The Bible Online Videos, Parent/Teen discussion, and Workbook completed	Oct. 18
			Week of Oct. 18: Decision Point Session Six: Relationships Online Videos, Parent/Teen discussion, and Workbook completed	Oct. 25
			Week of Nov. 1: Decision Point Session Seven: The Eucharist Online Videos, Parent/Teen discussion, and Workbook completed	Nov. 8
			Week of Nov. 8: Decision Point Session Eight: The Holy Spirit Online Videos, Parent/Teen discussion, and Workbook completed	Nov. 15
			Week of Nov. 15: Decision Point Session Nine: The Church Online Videos, Parent/Teen discussion, and Workbook completed	Nov. 22
			Week of Nov. 22: Decision Point Session Ten: Confirmation Online Videos, Parent/Teen discussion, and Workbook completed	Nov. 29
			Completed Confirmation Service Hours form	Dec. 6
			All outstanding paperwork and Decision Point assignments submitted	Dec. 6
			Virtual Confirmation Retreat	Dec. 31
			Confirmation Final Interview (by appointment)	Dec. 8-22
			Confirmation Liturgy Rehearsal	Jan. 15
			Confirmation Liturgy	Jan. 16

