

CONFIRMATION FAMILY HANDBOOK



2026-2027

CANDIDATE NAME:

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Our Approach

Families of Epiphany,

We are looking forward to spending another year with you as a community of faith. Every year we come together with families in every stage of understanding of the Catholic faith. We seek to deepen each person's unique life of faith. We desire for our young people to be well-formed persons and disciples that love the Church, Jesus, and one another manifested by a faith lived out each day.

Confirmation formation at Epiphany is not just a special year with a special program, **but an extension of an ongoing life of faith and community in Christ.** In other words, what your student does and participates in this year doesn't and shouldn't end after Confirmation.

Similar to the Christian life, this year will require a commitment from you and your family. For those seeking Confirmation, we are asking for weekly participation in The Fellowship, our youth ministry community on Wednesday evenings **OR** Epiphany School Theology. As well as at 4 Confirmation specific gatherings on Sunday morning and a day long Retreat.

We hope this approach will help accompany all interested youth toward integration into the life of our community, the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and the Christian life.

Requir

Phase 1: September - December

This is a time for you to show your desire to receive the sacrament. Readiness is determined by satisfactory participation in the weekly and monthly formation we offer.

We are happy to help families as they take the necessary steps. Eligibility for Candidacy is determined by the youth's fulfillment of the following:

1. Weekly attendance at weekend Mass and holy days
2. Attend ALL Sunday meetings (October 18th & November 15th)
3. Regular attendance at Wednesday evening community OR Epiphany School.*
4. Statements of intent (from both the parent(s) and youth)
5. Data Sheet & Newly Issued Baptismal Record
6. Meet for 2 Sponsor Conversations

* **A note on attendance:** Candidates should regularly attend formation on Wednesday evenings or through Epiphany Catholic School's Theology curriculum. We ask families to show their commitment to Catholic living through regular attendance and completion of the requirements. **If a candidate misses more than 2 sessions, the coordinator will call home to discuss the candidate's readiness** and continuation toward Confirmation. Please prioritize our Sunday Meetings on your family calendar as these mornings are all mandatory and cannot be missed. See our absence policy for more information.

e m e n t s

Phase 2: January - May

If the you have fulfilled the Phase 1 requirements, you will transition into the Candidacy phase. Through the rest of the year, you will continue to demonstrate your readiness for the sacrament by continuing to participate in the life of our parish and our youth communities. This includes:

1. Continue weekly attendance at weekend Mass and holy days
2. Attend ALL Sunday meetings (March 14th & April 11th) *
3. Regular attendance at Wednesday evening community OR Epiphany School
4. Attend the Winter Retreat with a Sponsor or proxy
5. Complete a thoughtful Patron Saint reflection
6. Completion of 12 Hours of Discipleship Experience
7. Write a 'Letter to the Pastor'
8. Meet for 2 Sponsor Conversations



Candidates who continue to demonstrate their readiness for the Sacrament will receive Confirmation on **Sunday, May 9th at 2pm at the Cathedral of St. Paul.**

Should a candidate need to wait, we will always accompany students on their journey until they are ready for the sacrament.

Role of the Parent

What is the role of the parent(s)?

"Parents have the first responsibility for the education of their children" (CCC 2223)

Parent's, you have a huge role in the life of your child(ren)'s faith! You evangelize and catechize your children by how you live out your faith on a daily basis. You can help your child by:

- Bringing them to Mass every week
- Praying for them and with them
- Sharing your faith through discussions and actions
- Attending Parent Enrichment Nights
- Helping them to be accountable to their Confirmation obligations and living an authentic Catholic life.

At your child's baptism, you made promises "to train him or her in the practice of the faith" and "to bring him or her up to keep God's commandments as Christ taught us, by loving God and our neighbor". We're here to support you in your role! Please don't hesitate to reach out if you have questions or are looking for resources.



Parent Statements of Intent are due Wednesday, October 29th, 2026

Prompts can be found on the Confirmation webpage. They should be turned in printed, either on Wednesday evening or in Theology class.

Picking a Sponsor



What is a sponsor's role?

A sponsor is someone who is able to walk with you as a mentor and guide on your faith journey. They should be living out their Catholic faith, be able to provide support for you in prayer, and offer guidance for you as you grow in faith. **Someone who fits the following is able to be a sponsor:**

- They must be a confirmed Catholic who is mature and practicing the faith.
- Someone striving to live in conformity with the teachings of the Catholic Church
- We ask that you choose a sponsor **who is 18 years or older.**
- Look for someone who is dependable and a witness to Christ's love. They should challenge you to follow Christ and the Church.
- The sponsor cannot be one of your parents.

The role of the sponsor in your life does not end after Confirmation, but is an ongoing relationships.

Help, I don't know who to ask!

If you're not sure who to ask, take a look around our community at Epiphany.

Is there someone your family sits by at Mass? A family friend or friend's parent whom you look up to? If you are in need of a sponsor, reach out to Lauren who may be able to recommend someone for our parish.

Statement of Intent



What is a statement of intent?

The statement of intent is a written letter of 500 words expressing where each teen and his or her parents are at in their faith life and what he or she desires from the Church. This is not a test but is another way we can better accompany your family as you begin the process of discerning Confirmation.

These statements will be kept confidential and will be read by only the Faith Formation staff and, if beneficial and necessary, Fr. Dufner and Fr. Hedman. Please be honest so that we may know how to best serve your family. Nothing your family shares or write will keep you from being confirmed.

There are 2 prompts for Confirmation candidates to choose from :

1. What Type of Christian Man or Woman Do you Envision Being in the Future?
2. What Steps Do you Need to Take to Get Closer to God?

There are 2 prompts for parents to choose from:

1. How Have You Shared with Your Teen the Importance of This Sacrament?
2. What is the Hope or Vision You Have for Your Child after He or She Receives This Sacrament?

Prompts can be found on the Confirmation webpage. They should be turned in printed, either on Wednesday evening or in Theology class.

Statements of Intent are due Wednesday, October 29th, 2026

Patron Saint

Why a patron saint?

Saints are ordinary people who lived extraordinary lives. A patron saint is a special saint with whom you share a bond and from whom you seek intercessory prayers. At Confirmation, we are confirmed under the name of our patron saint as a reminder of the commitments made during the sacrament.

How do I choose one?

We don't actually choose a saint, they choose us, but there are some things we can do to find them. We should pray and ask for the intercession of a particular saint and research about the lives of saints. Eventually, we will be drawn to a particular saint.

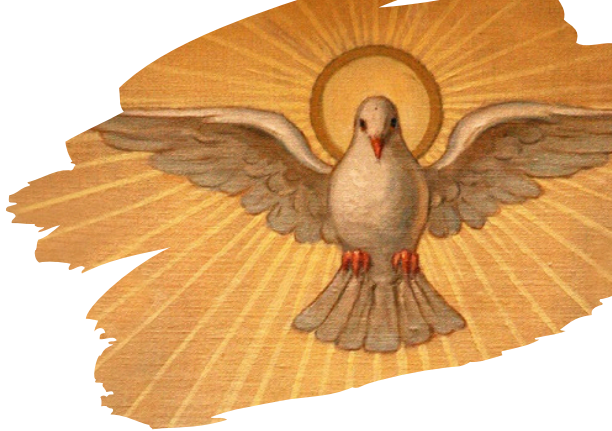
Ask yourself, "How do I identify with this person?" Relating to a saint does not mean that you are just like them, but that there is something about the saint that you admire and want to be more like. Another way to look at this is to ask, "what aspect of this person's life do you look up to as an aspire to be like?"

Patron Saint Reflection due
Wednesday, Jan 20th, 2027

*Prompts can be found on the Confirmation webpage.
They should be turned in handwritten, either on
Wednesday evening or in Theology class.*



Why a Retreat?



On a retreat, we are stepping away from the world and leaning into God. This experience is an amazing opportunity to understand our faith in a whole new way and claim it as our own. Our retreats provide a place “away” where you can experience a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ through talks and prayer.

Retreat Information

We are asking all youth seeking Confirmation to attend our retreat this winter in it's entirety with their sponsor or an adult who can fill in. During this day, we invite the youth to join each other as a community and take some time away from worldly distractions. These retreats consist of prayer, community building, the Sacraments, activities, and reflection.

Winter Retreat: Saturday, January 23rd, 2027 from 10am - 4:30pm

**Retreat attendance from start to finish
is needed to be eligible for Confirmation.**

This retreat is designed for your sponsor to attend the day with you.
If your sponsor is not able to attend, please contact Lauren.

Letter to the Pastor

Why a Letter?

Confirmation is freely given and freely received. This letter, written by each candidate and addressed to Fr. Dufner, is the candidate's opportunity to declare that they desire to be Confirmed.

What might I write in the Letter?

- Explain the reason(s) you want to be confirmed.
- Why do you think you are ready to receive this sacrament?
- Explain one aspect of the faith that became clearer to you through this process, and tell why you believe it is an important aspect of our faith.
- Explain how you plan to continue being an active member of the Church after Confirmation.
- Talk about how you are going to defend your faith and why you are Catholic.



Format:

Letter must be handwritten, no less than one page long

Addressed: Dear Fr. Thomas Dufner

Prompts can be found on the Confirmation webpage. They should be turned in handwritten, either on Wednesday evening or in Theology class.

Letter to the Pastor due Wednesday, February 25th, 2027

Discipleship Experience

Disciple Experience?

- Being a disciple of Jesus involves more than just learning about Him. Confirmation candidates are expected to devote time to living the life of a disciple. Parish Volunteering, VBS, Lifeline, and youth group must be at Epiphany. Here is an expectation of 12 HOURS of Discipleship Experience in total within the following three categories.

1. Spiritual (3+)

Examples= Adoration, Daily Mass, Praying at an Abortion Clinic, or pro-life rallies, etc

2. Pastoral (3+)

Examples= Parish Volunteering. Altar serving, VBS, All Saints Volunteering

3. Theological (3+)

Examples= Lifeline, MS Youth Group, Parish Speakers, etc

Discipleship Hours due Wednesday, March 25th, 2027

The log sheet can be found online and printed. It should be turned in, either on Wednesday evening or Theology Class.

Forms & Policies

Baptismal Record & Data Sheet

If you were not baptized at Epiphany, the archdiocese requires churches to obtain a newly issued baptismal record prior to Confirmation. This along with your Data Sheet helps provide our parish with important information needed for our Confirmation records.

We WILL still need a new baptismal certificate if you provided one at your child's First Communion. These are both due on **Wednesday, October 28th, 2026.** *Please ensure these are turned in on time as they are necessary for reception of the Sacrament.*

Absence Considerations

We ask families to show their commitment to Catholic living through regular attendance. **If a candidate misses more than 2 sessions, the coordinator will call home to discuss the candidate's readiness** and continuation toward Confirmation. *All Sunday sessions are required and should not be missed.*

Extreme circumstances, including death of a family member, severe sickness and/ or inclement weather will be considered emergency absences and a candidate may be excused from the minimum requirements. These unavoidable situations will be evaluated on a case by case basis.

Missing Forms & Reflections

A minimal amount of reflections are required of those seeking Confirmation at Epiphany. We ask each family to respect and honor the listed due dates. Please read and follow all directions thoroughly.

Failure to complete and turn these in on time may communicate a lack of desire and seriousness toward the Sacrament. Accommodations can be made for youth who struggle with written expression.

Phase 1 Checklist

- ☐ Register for Confirmation - due September 3rd
- ☐ Candidate Statement of Intent - due October 29th
- ☐ Parent(s) Statement of Intent - due October 29th
- ☐ Completed Parish Data Sheet - due October 29th
- ☐ Newly Issued Baptismal Record - due October 29th
- ☐ Regularly attend Wednesday community or Epiphany School Theology
- ☐ Weekly attendance at Mass (and Holy Days)
- ☐ Attend all Sunday Meetings
 - October 18th, 2026
 - November 15th, 2026



Phase 2 Checklist

- ☐ Patron Saint Reflection - due January 20th
- ☐ Attend the Winter Retreat with Sponsor - January 23rd
- ☐ Letter to the Pastor - due February 25th
- ☐ Discipleship Hours - due March 25th
- ☐ Regularly attend Wednesday community or Epiphany School Theology
- ☐ Weekly attendance at Mass (and Holy Days)
- ☐ Attend all Sunday Meetings
 - March 14th, 2027
 - April 11th, 2027



"THE HOLY SPIRIT COMES
WHERE HE IS LOVED,
WHERE HE IS INVITED,
WHERE HE IS EXPECTED."

St. Bonaventure