

**Confirmation Preparation**  
**2017-18**  
**A GUIDEBOOK FOR CONFIRMATION**  
**CANDIDATES AND PARENTS**

**St. Elizabeth of Hungary**



*"...that their hearts may be encouraged as they are brought together in love, to have all the richness of fully assured understanding, for the knowledge of the mystery of God, Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."*

Col 2, 2-3



## INTRODUCTION

Welcome! We are looking forward to sharing with you this journey of faith as you prepare to receive the sacrament of Confirmation. As you will see, Confirmation preparation involves learning, sharing, serving, fellowship, spiritual growth and fun! You will be given the opportunity to learn more about your Catholic faith and what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ.

Confirmation is the Sacrament in which one is enriched by the gift of the Holy Spirit and bound more perfectly to the Church. It strengthens us and obliges us to be witnesses to Christ by word and deed and to spread and defend the faith. It is the Sacrament in which one enters into full membership in the Catholic Church.

Confirmation perfects Baptismal grace; it is the sacrament which gives us the Holy Spirit in order to root us more deeply as children of God, incorporate us more firmly into Christ, strengthen our bond with the Church, associate us more closely with his mission, and help us to bear witness to the Christian faith in words accompanied by deeds.

Confirmation, like Baptism, imprints a spiritual mark or indelible character on the Christian soul; for this reason one can receive this sacrament only once.

A Christian does not live as a child of God through his or her own efforts alone, but through the grace of God. We see this in a practical way when we look back on our own lives and the lives of others, even the lives of saints. Therefore, it is our duty to seek the grace that God offers us in order to live our lives as Christians in the way that God intends.

## WHO MAY BE CONFIRMED?

Confirmation candidates:

- \*Are between the ages of thirteen and eighteen
- \*Have received the sacraments of Baptism, Reconciliation, and Eucharist.
- \*Are practicing their faith
- \*Are in the state of grace
- \*Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the responsibilities of a member of the Catholic Church
- \*Are aware of the initiation aspect of the Sacrament of Confirmation and be committed to continuing the faithful practice and study of their religion
- \***Have a sincere desire to receive the sacrament** as well as an appreciation of sacramental life.
- \***Register with their parish for the sacrament of Confirmation (Religious Education registration form)**

## CONFIRMATION CANDIDATE EXPECTATIONS - at a glance

- ❖ Participate in weekly Mass
- ❖ Participate in classes
- ❖ Choose a saint's name as your Confirmation name and write a biography about that saint
- ❖ Participate in Rite of Enrollment Mass on November 19, 10:30am Mass
- ❖ Participate in Confirmation retreat
- ❖ Be regularly involved in social justice activities (community service)
- ❖ Perform or attend at least one additional spiritual activity. (See page 7)
- ❖ Participate in the Confirmation rehearsal (during class)
- ❖ Participate in the Confirmation liturgy



## **EXPECTATIONS IN DETAIL**

The following explains each of the Confirmation expectations in detail and in some cases, the reasons the requirements are important to the formation of the candidate. Please remember that while in many cases we list a minimum requirement for Confirmation, the candidates should be encouraged to make many of these activities a regular part of their religious practices.

### **Participate in Mass on Saturday evening or Sunday each week**

The Confirmation candidate and his or her parents (along with the rest of the family) must have a sincere intention of participating in Mass every week. Participating in the Eucharistic life of the community is both a privilege and an obligation of Confirmed Catholics. This is also an important way that parents can demonstrate to their children the importance they place on the faith they are handing on to their children. Worshipping as a community we build up the Body of Christ. If your family has not been attending Mass regularly in the past, we are confident that by doing so you will notice many benefits by the time Confirmation approaches.

### **Participate in Confirmation classes**

Attendance at the Confirmation classes is extremely important in preparing the candidates for reception of the sacrament. When a class is missed, the candidate loses time for fellowship and prayer as well as the material covered that day. We expect that you will make these gatherings a priority and therefore make a sincere effort to adjust your other obligations accordingly. Students are expected to be prepared for the classes, which includes completing any assigned readings or homework. Contact Mrs. Mount immediately if critical circumstances will not allow you to attend a class. Mrs. Mount will determine an appropriate at-home assignment so that he/she doesn't fall behind in the lessons. All missed work must be made up. Excessive absenteeism (6) can affect the candidate's ability to enter fully into this important period of preparation.

### **Confirmation Questions**

In April the children will be asked to answer questions. A study guide has been included in this packet. A schedule will be sent out.

## **SPONSOR INFORMATION**

The choice of sponsor for confirmation is a very important one. It is an honor to be chosen but there is much more to the role than being honorary.

### **THE SPONSOR**

1. Witnesses, prays and is active in the liturgical life of the church, participating in Sunday Mass and receives the sacraments regularly.
2. Is a real friend, someone whom you can trust and confide in, someone who is “there” when needed, the kind of person you would like to be.
3. Is a guide, a good “listener” who is ready to give advice when asked, one whose experience as a practicing Catholic is an invaluable source for helping you to make decisions about your own life as a Catholic.
4. Takes an interest in the program you are following and will be ready to accept the invitations you send to take part in the special masses celebrated during the preparation program.
5. Knows you well enough to say before the parish when the time comes that you are someone who is choosing freely to celebrate confirmation.

Sponsors are expected to be positive role models, that is, persons to whom young people can look up to, and observe how a mature, committed member of the faith community lives. We don't normally go around considering ourselves models of many things, especially of virtue, faith and the like. It should be stressed, then, that model as used here doesn't mean one who has achieved the ideal of Christian perfection. Rather the sponsors are being asked to model the behavior of a person striving to follow Jesus and His teachings. In that sense, they can be authentic models with whom you can identify. Just as a young person experiences weakness, you can look to your sponsors to see how the more mature Christian deals with his or her personal weakness in the light of faith.

Another image of the role of sponsor is that of mentor. A mentor is a fancy name for a coach – a person who has learned by the experience of playing the game. The mentor or coach gives advice, challenges the person to try harder, to develop their hidden talents and to overcome bad habits. The coach praises and the coach scolds and knows when one is more necessary than the other.

It is necessary for the Sponsor to get a Certificate of Eligibility from the sponsor's parish. Once you have asked the person of your choice and he/she agrees to serve as your sponsor, please ask them to return to you their Certificate of Eligibility and the attached Sponsor Form. If they are a registered parishioner of St. Elizabeth, no Certificate of Eligibility is required.

The certificate and forms are due **Sunday, January 28, 2018 to the Religious Education Office.**

There are certain qualifications that the Church has for sponsors. Consider the following question before choosing a sponsor who has to be eligible according to the Church :

**REQUIREMENTS FOR A SPONSOR**

	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>
1. My sponsor is 16 or older. ....	___	___
2. My sponsor has been baptized a Catholic (or made a profession of faith in the case of a conversion to the Catholic faith) .....	___	___
3. My sponsor has been confirmed in the Catholic Church.....	___	___
4. <b>My sponsor is a practicing Catholic.</b> That is he/she attends Mass weekly and contributes to the support of the Church. He/she is known to the parish priest where he/she is registered and the priest can testify to this.	___	___
5. If my sponsor is married, he/she was married in the Catholic Church. ....	___	___
6. If my sponsor is divorced, and has not remarried .....	___	___
7. My sponsor can obtain a certificate from his/her parish that they are a Catholic in good standing. (Every sponsor needs one.).....	___	___
8. My sponsor may be the one I had at Baptism.		
9. My sponsor may be specially chosen for Confirmation.		
10. My sponsor may be a male or female.		
11. <b>My sponsor cannot be my parent.</b>		

If I have to answer "NO" to any one of questions 1 through 6 that person cannot be a sponsor according to Church rules. Do not ask him/her.

This paper is meant as a help for you in choosing a sponsor. Do not return it with the answers checked. It is to help us keep from hurting people’s feelings. **If they do not meet the Church’s qualifications please do not ask them and force us to say they are ineligible.**

*The following was taken from a bulletin at another church in the Diocese of Trenton.*

***Sponsorship Letters***

*Every week we get requests for letters for people who want to sponsor a child for Baptism or a student for Confirmation. This is not a problem when the person is registered in the parish and is known to us. It becomes a problem when the person is not registered in the parish, and does not receive or use donation envelopes or uses online giving. The sponsorship letter requires the pastor to attest that the bearer of the letter is a practicing Catholic in good standing with the church. Every week I hear: “well, I go to other churches” or “I just don’t want to use envelopes” – which is fine as long as I, the pastor, or someone else in good standing, can attest to the fact you are in fact a practicing Catholic in good standing with the Church. I cannot, and will not sign my name to a statement that I do not know to be true. Please do not put me in that position. The use of parish envelopes/online giving is not the only way, but one good way of documenting your presence and your participation – however little, you are able to put in the envelope. You can receive envelopes by calling the Rectory (732-774-4089).*

### **Choose a Confirmation name and write a biography about that saint**

In both the Old and New Testament, when God had a new mission for someone, He often gave them a new name. Even without a new name, your name has always told others who you are. God calls on each of us to fulfill a special mission. It may be converting nonbelievers, helping the poor, being a peacemaker or one of many other callings. Confirmation may be the continuation of a mission you began at Baptism, or the beginning of a new mission. Therefore there are two options when deciding on a Confirmation name:

**First-** Confirmation is the strengthening of the work that God began in your life at your Baptism, it is recommended that you give first preference to using your Baptismal name for Confirmation. This shows the integral link between Baptism and Confirmation (note: this applies only if your Baptismal name was a Saint's name.)

**Second-** Perhaps you see Confirmation as the beginning of a new mission for you and a fresh beginning in your faith journey. Then you may choose a new name for Confirmation. Your Confirmation name should be that of a saint you admire or the saint name of someone you know and look up to as a Christian role-model.

There are many helpful websites available to assist you in gathering information about the saints. Just a few are:

[www.catholicforum.com/saints](http://www.catholicforum.com/saints)  
[www.catholic.org/saints](http://www.catholic.org/saints)  
[www.catholic-pages.com/dir/saints.asp](http://www.catholic-pages.com/dir/saints.asp)  
[www.theworkofgod.org/saints](http://www.theworkofgod.org/saints)

Once the candidate has chosen his/her Confirmation name, Mrs. Mount will have them complete a biography of that saint.

### **Participate in the Investiture and Rite of Enrollment Mass**

All candidates, parents and if available, sponsors should plan to attend the Investiture and Rite of Enrollment, celebrated at St. Elizabeth Parish on **November 19, 2017 at 10:30AM** Mass. During the Mass the candidates will declare their intent to seek the Sacrament of Confirmation with the parish community as witness. In return the community agrees to support and pray for all those involved in this faith journey.

### **Participate in the Confirmation retreat**

Retreats provide a unique opportunity for the candidates to spend an extended time in discernment and reflect on the gifts of the Spirit and reflect on their relationship with God and their faith life. It is therefore required that each candidate attend a least the Confirmation retreat hosted by the parishes in their Confirmation year.

### **Be regularly involved in social justice activities (community service)**

**Confirmation Service Commitment: 25 total hours— must include**  
**At least 5 hours -Church Service**  
**Balance of hours -Community Service**

An awareness of the importance of and vital need for performing service to others is critical in preparing the candidates for Confirmation. Throughout Scripture we are called to love our neighbor and stand up for justice and peace. Since service and justice are so important to who we are as Catholic Christians, we ask that the candidates make his/her service projects a priority. Serving others is not something we do “to get it over with”. It is something we do because we recognize the presence of Jesus in all persons and in all of God’s creation. Therefore it is encouraged that the candidates get involved in a new service activity which is an ongoing and a regular commitment.

Some things to think about when considering your service are:

- ❖ What are people’s needs or problems and what can I do to help?
- ❖ Who needs time, effort, work or service from me?
- ❖ What unique gifts or talents has God given me that can be used to serve others?

Once you identify where service is needed, make specific plans and follow through with those commitments.

There are many, many opportunities to serve at the church and in the community. Just a few examples are:

- \*Join the parish - Reader, Altar Server, Greeter.
- \*School - Opportunity to do work after school. Contact your principal.
- \*Public Library – Possible opportunity to do general library and/or clerical work.
- \*Local Food Banks

### **Participate in at least one additional spiritual activity that is new to you**

Spending time in prayer and reflection does not end when we leave the church on Sunday. It is so important for the candidates to become aware of the many opportunities that are available for them to meditate, celebrate and further their relationship with God.

*The following is a partial list of spiritual activities:*

- Attend daily Mass
- Participate in Advent and/or Lenten preparations
- Participate in a Christmas pageant, Living Stations of the Cross, Shadow Stations
- Participate in the Triduum services- Holy Thursday, Good Friday, or Easter Vigil
- Attend Adoration or Reconciliation on a regular basis
- Reflect on Scripture- in your journal for three minutes each Sunday
- Pray the Rosary

Although the minimum requirement is to participate in one of these activities, we sincerely hope the candidate and his or her family will have an active and ongoing spiritual life!

### **Attend Confirmation Rehearsal**

All candidates **must** attend the Confirmation Rehearsals, which will be held on the 2 Sundays prior to Confirmation.



## **Participate in the Liturgy and Rite of Confirmation**

Confirmation will be celebrated on Tuesday, May 8, 2018 at 4PM, with Rev. Msgr. Edward J. Arnister officiating.

*“All-powerful God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, by water and the Holy Spirit you freed your sons and daughters from sin and gave them new life. Send your Holy Spirit upon them to be their Helper and Guide. Give them the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of right judgment and courage, the spirit of knowledge and reverence. Fill them with the spirit of wonder and awe in your presence.” -Rite of Confirmation 25*

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS**

*“As the primary educators of their children: parents are to be intimately involved in the catechesis for Confirmation. This will help them renew and strengthen their own faith, besides enabling them to set a better example for their children.”(NCD, no. 119)*

### **Because parents:**

Are the primary educators of their children

Are responsible for initiating their children into the sacramental life

Serve as role models for their child by being committed Christians

### **Parents should expect to:**

Worship with your families regularly

Be actively involved in the Confirmation preparation of the candidate

Engage in discussions about the material being studied including sharing your understanding and perspective

Encourage your child to reflect and thoughtfully consider the decision to receive the sacrament of Confirmation

Pray for your child’s spiritual growth every day.

Support and encourage completion of assignments, activities and expectations

Emphasize the importance of the sacrament of Confirmation by taking an active part in the celebration of Confirmation

**Confirmation - Attire:**

**Boys:** Khaki slacks, white dress shirt and dress shoes (red tie supplied)

**Girls:** Dresses and dress shoes (white collar - attached to robe)

**Robes:** Will be given out to the children at last practice

**NO:** Jeans, short-shorts etc. Remember you can see through these robes.

Children will not carry or wear: flowers, gloves etc.

**Photographers**

We will have a photographer for First Communion and Confirmation, the children will take a group picture and you may choose additional pictures from Expressive Image Photography of Wall. The packet will be sent home with your child a week or two before, so that you may choose what individual photo's you would like. **NO** other photographers will be allowed in the Church during the services. Family members may take pictures from their seats during the services.

**Altar Servers and Ushers:**

If a member of your family is a Priest, Deacon, Reader, Eucharistic Minister, Altar Server or an Usher and wishes to help with the ceremony, please call Mrs. Carol Freda at 732-774-4089 ext. 205 or speak with Mrs. Bernadette Mount.

If you have any questions please feel free to e-mail or call:

Mrs. Carol Freda                    732-774-4089            financeadmin@verizon.net

Mrs. Bernadette Mount    732-869-1666            bermaxm@aol.com