**2025-2026**

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| christ the king-st. stephen  Parent  handbook |
| confirmation Y1 candidates |
| **Parent Prayer**  Dear God,  You love us so much that You sent the gift of Jesus. You allowed Jesus to join the human family to grow in wisdom and age with loving guardians, committed to building a home of faith, hope, and love. In doing so, You made all families holy, unique, and beautiful.  As my child prepares to celebrate Confirmation, send us Your Spirit to help us grow in holiness. Help us to pray together and remember one another in prayer. Help us to strengthen our bond as a family as we strengthen our relationship with You. Help us to worship You together in the Eucharist, and to turn to you in reconciliation. May we be living examples of Your love in the world.  Amen. |
| |  **“...Confirmed by the gift of the Spirit, that they give witness to Christ by lives built on faith and love...”**  ***-*General Intercessionfrom the *Rite of Confirmation*** |

**Congratulations!** Your child has chosen to prepare for the Sacrament of Confirmation. You have been journeying with your child in this adventure of life and faith. This is an important part of the road you are travelling on; a chance to stop and view where you have been, where you are and where you are going, both in your own life of faith and together with your child. As a parish community, we strive to support you and your family as you share life and faith with your adolescent.

This handbook is a resource, a “trail guide” to aid you on journey with your young person throughout our confirmation program here at Christ the King-St. Stephen Parish and as your child enters a life of faith into adulthood. It is our hope that you will gain a few new insights and understanding about your teenager and your relationship with them. We offer an understanding of confirmation that is based on the Catechism of the Catholic Church, scripture reflections that you can discuss with your teenager during the confirmation preparation process, guidance in helping your child choose a sponsor for confirmation, and other support in enriching your child’s faith journey.

If you have any questions about Confirmation preparation, the contents of this handbook, or anything else, feel free to reach out to me. We are excited to be with you all as you help your child grow in their faith and prepare for the Sacrament of Confirmation.

God Bless,

Nelson Gonzales

Youth Minister/Confirmation Coordinator  
Christ the King-St. Stephen

**Confirmation Y1 Calendar**

* **Class times are from 4:00pm to 6:30pm (including 4pm Youth Mass)**
* **Check in 10 minutes before mass to get your badge.**
* **Class will be held at St. Stephens Parish Hall until CTK church roof is completed then we will return to CTK Parish Hall.**

**To help with food costs, we ask that each candidate contributes an item to share on their designated snack/drink date. *(You should have received the snack calendar at the orientation meeting*). Some candidates are assigned snacks; and some are assigned drinks. If you are unable to attend your designated date, please make arrangements with another candidate to swap dates. Plan to provide snacks and drinks for 30 people. Bring items to the hall no later than 6pm.**

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| **Session** | **Date** | **Candidates** |
| Orientation | **Oct. 12** | * **Parent/Guardian Orientation Meeting** |
| 1 | **Oct. 26** | * **Session #1** |
| 2 | **Nov. 9** | * **Session #2** |
| 3 | **Nov. 23** | * **Session #3** |
| 4 | **Dec. 14** | * **Session #4** |
| 5 | **Jan. 25** | * **Session #5** |
| 6 | **Feb. 22** | * **Session #6** |
| 7 | **Mar. 8** | * **Session #7** |
| 8 | **Mar. 22** | * **Session #8** |
| 9 | **Apr. 26** | * **Session #9** |

**Program Expectations**

**STUDENT EXPECTATIONS**

**MASS/CLASS ATTENDANCE**

**All candidates are expected to:**

* **Attend the 4 PM Sunday Mass with their class before the Confirmation class sessions.** *(Exceptions will be given only to those who are actively serving in different masses such as altar servers. Parents/Guardians and Confirmands are required to show proof of service.)*
* **Regularly participate in Sunday Mass (or Saturday evening Mass) and Holy Days of Obligation outside of class sessions.**
* **Bring their designated snack or drink contribution** on their assigned confirmation class day. If a candidate must be absent on their contribution day, they must make a plan to switch with another candidate.

***Absences***

* **A total of 2 absences** (excused and non-excused) for the entire year is permitted.
* **Three (3) absences** will result in the candidate needing to repeat their confirmation year**. Absences must be communicated within at least 1 week,** unless in the case of an emergency (i.e. death in family, illness, or injuries).
* Candidates are expected to do **make-up work** for missed classes.Assignments will be emailed and expected to be completed by the next class date. ***The use of ChatGPT is strictly prohibited.***

***Tardiness***

* **Check-in 10 minutes before mass** where attendance will be taken. **Each late arrival will be recorded**.
* **Two (2) late arrivals will count towards one (1) absence. Missing mass will result in an automatic absence**. In addition, parents may be notified for a meeting with their child and the Coordinator & Pastor.

***Release of Students***

* **All candidates must check out** with their catechist or designated staff member before leaving the premises.
* **Candidates may not leave on their own at the end of class or an event.** If a student needs to leave before class or an event end, a parent/guardian must provide written notice in advance or speak directly with the Confirmation team.
* **We ask parents to be prompt when picking up candidates after sessions, retreats, or events.**

**CODE OF CONDUCT**

**All students in the Confirmation Program are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that reflects the values of our Catholic faith. This includes showing respect for others, participating fully, and maintaining a safe and welcoming environment. The following guidelines help ensure a positive and faith-filled experience for everyone involved.**

***Learning Environment & In Class Behavior***

**Candidates are expected to:**

* **Complete all assignments in a timely manner. *Missed Assignments will require writing 2-page paper on missed topic*** *(due two weeks from missed class).*
* **Come on time, prepared, and ready to engage within their class,** respectfully participating in conversations with leaders and classmates.
* **Respect themselves, others, and their environment.**
* **Dress appropriately.** Please no pajamas, beach attire, or other clothing that does not match a church community environment.

**Unacceptable behavior and lack of cooperation will not be tolerated and will be addressed appropriately.**Any instances of bullying, disruption, disrespect, or even harm will result in parents being contacted immediately and may result in expulsion depending on the severity and frequency of the behavior. Warnings will be issued, and if inappropriate behavior persists, absences may be given, followed with conversations with parents/guardians and the Confirmation team and/or Pastor.

***Examples of unacceptable behavior are as follows, though not limited to:***

* **Disrespect for adults, peers, or the environment**
* **Damaging of property**
* **Use of inappropriate language, gestures and use of racial slurs**
* **Wearing clothing with derogatory language or images**
* **Fighting or intent to injure others.**
* **Possession of weapons, alcohol or drugs.**
* **No Bullying.** No child or youth has the right to treat another in any manner that will cause physical or emotional pain. Therefore, harassment of any kind is unacceptable.
* **Disruptive behavior, including distracting themselves and others - whether verbally or using electronics** during class sessions.

***Restrooms***

**Candidates are encouraged to use the restroom before class begins.** During class, bathroom breaks should be limited and only taken when necessary, to minimize disruptions. Candidates must ask for permission before leaving the classroom and must return promptly. For safety, **only one student will be allowed to be dismissed from class at a time**. Please note that phone use or intentionally spending excessive amount of time in the restroom may result in consequences.

***Electronic Devices***

* ***The use of any electronic device (phones, headphones, tablets, etc.) is strictly prohibited during class - unless granted permission by catechists or Nelson for in-class activities.***

***Public Displays of Affection (PDA)***

* Confirmation candidates are expected to conduct themselves in a way that respects their peers, adult leaders, and the sacred nature of our program**. Public displays of affection – such as kissing, cuddling, or handholding in an intimate or romantic manner - are not permitted at any Confirmation sessions, retreats, or parish events.** This expectation is in place to maintain a focused, respectful, and spiritually centered environment where all teens feel comfortable. Our goal is to foster healthy friendships and a sense of community rooted in mutual respect and dignity

***Discipline Policy***

Our Confirmation program strives to provide a welcoming and spiritually enriching environment where each student can grow in faith, knowledge, and community. To protect that environment, all candidates are expected to act respectfully and responsibly during every session, retreat, and parish activity.

***Should behavioral concerns arise, a progressive disciplinary approach will be followed:***

1. **Reminder**: A verbal reminder may be given first, followed by direct communication with the student’s parent or guardian.
2. **Meeting with appropriate personnel**: If the issue persists or is more serious in nature, a meeting with the Confirmation Coordinator and/or parish clergy may be required.
3. **Possible probation or dismissal**: In some cases, students may be placed on probation, asked to miss certain events, or—if necessary—dismissed from the program entirely. These decisions are made with prayerful consideration, always with the goal of guiding young people toward growth, accountability, and deeper formation.

**PARENT/GUARDIAN EXPECTATIONS**

Parents/guardians are expected to:

* Regularly attend weekly Mass
* Ensure their confirmation candidate arrives at gatherings on time and is picked up on time
* Support the efforts of the catechists & volunteer as they are able
* Play an active role in their candidate’s spiritual journey
* Write a note stating an early release time, if they must pick up their candidate early from a confirmation activity

**PARENT/GUARDIAN COMMUNICATION**

* **To ensure effective communication, all families must provide accurate and up-to-date contact information.**
* We primarily communicate through Realm or emails- please check them regularly. If your phone number or email address changes at any point during the year, you must notify the Faith Formation Staff as soon as possible.
* **if your child will be absent from class or an event, please report the absence at least a week before the scheduled start time** by contacting our office via phone 925-375-9608 or email ngonzales@ctkph.org. Timely communication helps us ensure the safety and proper tracking of all students.

**Confirmation Y1 Service Hours**

**SERVICE HOUR REQUIREMENT (Due April 26, 2026)**

Service projects are a way for you to use your gifts, talents and abilities to help others. To be a true service project neither you nor anyone in your immediate family can benefit, either directly or indirectly, from your service. The goal is to look beyond yourself and beyond those nearest to you and give of yourself to help someone else.

**Before making your decision and commitment to a service project**

❖ Pray to the Holy Spirit for guidance

❖ Talk to your parents and sponsor

❖ Find out the needs of people in your Church, school, neighborhood or community

**\*The target is 10 Hours for Year One.**

\*Suggestion: 5 school/community service hours, 5 Church service hours.

**Suggestions for Service Projects**

These suggestions are some of the ways a candidate may choose to serve:

* Visit the elderly of the parish at home or in a nursing home
* Assist the elderly or a needy family with their chores (Cut grass, yard work, cooking, cleaning, shopping, etc.)
* Baby-sit for someone who needs help.
* Organize or help with a recycling project.
* Initiate a cleanup campaign in the parish school or local park.
* Do volunteer work in a hospital or in a hospice.
* Write cards or letters to hospitalized children, teens or Military personnel
* Collect food for the underprivileged or work in a food bank.
* Collect, clean, and repair clothing for those in need.
* Raise money for charitable organizations, by washing cars, babysitting etc.
* Perform special services for the disabled (ex: read to the blind, help with groceries, etc.)
* Collect toys for underprivileged children (ex: Box of Joy initiative)
* Make gifts or favors for those in hospital/nursing homes.
* Bake for a bake sale, where proceeds go to a charitable organization
* Coach or assist with young children’s sports activities
* Help with any of the Christ the King-St. Stephen festivals and parish events

Community service can include: donating your time to a food bank,

volunteering at an assisted living, etc

Church service can include: altar serving, lectoring, setting up at an event, etc.

**Christ the King/St Stephen Catholic Church  
Service Hours  
(Due April 26, 2026)**

**Student’s Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Hours** | **Project/Activity** | **Name of Person in Charge** | **Cell Number** | **Signature** |
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* **Service is a way of life for disciples of Jesus Christ. There is joy in service!**
* **Target is 10 Hours for Year Two**
* **Suggestion: 5hrs schools/community service, 5hrs Church service.**
* **Person in charge of activity of Candidate’s Parent signs for each service act.**
* **Any questions, please contact Nelson Gonzales at ngonzales@ctkph.org**

A logo with a cross and rays of light

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Christ the king/st. stephen catholic church

Confirmation program covenant

**CANDIDATE COMMITMENT**  
I \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ agree to the following to participate in this Confirmation program:  
 Candidate’s Name (print)

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_I will arrive on time and come with an open mind and heart.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_I will be respectful of all staff, adult leaders, and my peers acting in a Christian manner and respecting the opinions of others.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_I will be respectful of all property and pick up after myself.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_I will follow directions and willingly participate in discussions and activities.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_I will not come to the gatherings under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_I will not bring any cigarettes, drugs, illegal substances, contraband, weapons, or pornography to   
 the gatherings.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_I will not threaten anyone, act violently or inappropriately, or use profane language.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_I will remain until the end of the gathering unless I have notified the leader in advance with a note   
 from my parent/guardian.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_I will complete all required assignments and service hours.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_I will attend all required Confirmation classes, retreats, events, and Masses.

If I violate any condition of this agreement, I understand that my parents/guardians will be contacted and asked to pick me up immediately. I will not be readmitted into future gatherings until my parents/guardians, catechists and/or Youth Ministry Coordinator, and I meet to discuss my future participation.

**PARENT/GUARDIAN COMMITMENT**

I \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ agree to the following to participate in this Confirmation program:  
  
\_\_\_\_\_\_\_I will discuss the above terms with my child.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_I will ensure that my child gets to gatherings on time and is picked up after gatherings on time.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_I will support the efforts of the catechists and volunteer as I am able to.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_I will pick my child up, if called to do so, immediately and agree to meet with the youth ministry leaders at a later time to discuss my child’s future participation.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_If my child must leave early, I will write a note stating the time for pick up and come to the door of the meeting place to meet them.

***\_\_\_\_\_\_*** I will play an active role in being an encouraging spiritual role model throughout my child’s Confirmation program and faith journey.

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Candidate’s Signature Parent/Guardian Signature  
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Date Date

**Confirmation Y1 Sponsor**

**While Confirmation Candidates won’t need to declare their sponsors until their 2nd year of the confirmation program, it is wise to select their sponsor as soon as possible to aid in preparing candidates for Confirmation.   
  
The Role of a Confirmation Sponsor**  
A sponsor must be a person who knows the candidate and can help him/her on his/her spiritual journey and can share his/her own faith. This selection should be indicated at the beginning of the candidate’s immediate preparation so that the sponsor can play an active part in the preparation process. Ideally, it should be someone who has been involved already in the candidate’s spiritual formation, such as a godparent, a family member, or a member of the local parish.

**Eligibility of a Confirmation Sponsor**

**A sponsor must:**

* Be a practicing Catholic in good standing with the Church (Canon 874.3)
* Good standing includes being in a marital state that is blessed by the Church
* Be at least 16 years old (Canon 874.2)
* Belong to the Catholic Church and have been fully initiated (have received the Sacraments of   
   Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist) (Canon 874.3)
* Not be the biological parent of the candidate (Canon 874.5)

***Suggestions for Sponsors***

* **Be a good Catholic role model.** The primary job of a sponsor is to

show a candidate how to live the faith as an adult. This includes going to Mass every Sunday (or Saturday evening) and Holy Days, going to Confession regularly, and praying daily. It also means bringing your faith into ordinary situations in daily living: being a model of forgiveness, compassion, and personal sacrifice. When you actively seek spiritual growth, you provide a guide for your candidate’s own growth in their faith journey.

* **Offer prayer support.** Remember to pray for your candidate every

day for the rest of your life. It can be as simple as saying a quick prayer or establishing a complex prayer routine, offering a memorized prayer like the Hail Mary or creating an original prayer. Remember your candidate in your Mass intention each Sunday and Holy Day. And let your candidate know that you are praying for them.

* **Show visible spiritual support.** Make it a point to ask your candidate about their prayer life   
   on a regular basis. Are they getting to Mass every Sunday and Holy Day? If not, how can you

help (offer a ride to Mass, talk to their parents about going as a family, etc)? Is your candidate   
 getting to Confession regularly? If not, how can you help?

* **Mark the Confirmation Anniversary**. Remember the date that your candidate is confirmed and celebrate it each year. Send a card, make a phone call, or go out to dinner. Do something to remind your candidate (and yourself) that this is a major event in both of your lives.

**Safe Environment Training**

* As part of our commitment to the safety and well-being of every young person in our program, **Safe Environment Training is mandatory for all Confirmation candidates.**
* The specific training, **developed and mandated by the Diocese of Oakland,** is designed to equip teens with age-appropriate tools to recognize and respond to unsafe situations, understand healthy boundaries, and know how to speak up if they ever feel uncomfortable or threatened. It is one important way the Church safeguards the dignity and security of our children and youth.
* **Participation in this training is a required component of the Confirmation program.** Sessions are facilitated by RE Team in a respectful and sensitive manner, and parents will be notified in advance of when the training will take place
* **These sessions will be scheduled during Confirmation sessions - therefore, it is not necessary to participate or seek out these trainings elsewhere.** This is only necessary for those children who were unable to attend these sessions**.**
* **Exceptions will be made only for candidates whose parents choose to opt them out from the training completely.**
* **We are deeply committed to creating a safe and supportive environment for every teen entrusted to our care.** If you have any questions about the content or purpose of the Safe Environment Training, please don’t hesitate to reach our office.



**Confirmation Y1 Requirement Checklist**

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|  | * **Attend all nine (9) Mass/confirmation sessions from 4:00pm-6:30pm, missing no more than 2 sessions.** |
|  | * **Bring snacks or drinks on the assigned date.** |
|  | * **Complete 10 Service Hours & submit the form by April 26, 2026.** |
|  | * **Participate in a Safe Environment session.** |