



Family Preparation Guide to Confirmation 2026-2027



Family Name: _____

St. Mary Parish, Mokena
Religious Education Office
708-326-9350
re@stmarymokea.org

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents	2
Introductory Letter to Families	3
Family Responsibilities and Requirements	4
Confirmation Requirements for Students	5-6
Faith Formation and Mass Attendance	6
Sacramental Preparation Due Dates	7
Choosing Your Sponsor	8
Choosing a Saint Name for Your Confirmation Name	9
Saint Essay Directions	10
Letter to the Pastor Directions	11

FORMS FOR PARENTS & SPONSORS:

Dress Code/Code of Conduct (Description)	12
Dress Code/Code of Conduct Acknowledgement Form	13
Confirmation Robe Order Form	14
Confirmation Sponsor Testimony Form	15

FORMS FOR CANDIDATES:

Spiritual Growth Hours Tracker (Blank Form)	16
Mass Reflection (Blank Form)	17
Service Hour Details	18
Service Ideas	19
Confirmation Service Hour (Blank Form)	20



Dear Families of 8th grade students,

This Family Preparation Guide is meant to assist you and your student in preparing for the Sacrament of Confirmation. It contains important information and outlines important due dates, sponsor/parent/student responsibilities, and formational events that are required for Confirmation.

Please note that this Family Preparation Guide contains essential forms to be turned in that do not otherwise appear in the Student Preparation Guide. During the initial class session, the Catechist will provide each student with a Student Preparation Guide that contains much of the same necessary service hour and formation reflection forms required to be submitted via the specified due dates identified within this packet of materials.

Due to the importance of these topics, I ask that you take the time to carefully read these materials and discuss our faith with your teen as they prepare to be strengthened in God's grace through the Sacrament of Confirmation. Your support will go a long way as they embark upon their spiritual journey.

If you have any questions regarding Confirmation, please contact me.

Peace be with you.

In Christ,

Tami Brongiel

Mrs. Tami Brongiel
Director of Religious Education

Family Responsibilities

First and foremost, the Church teaches that parents are the *primary catechists* of their own children. As your teen prepares for Confirmation, there are opportunities for you to assume such a venerable responsibility:

- Attend Mass weekly and on Holy Days of Obligation
- Go to the Sacrament of Reconciliation frequently
- Pray with your child
- Witness your own faith in your words and actions
- Build an atmosphere of trust and understanding
- Nurture your child in their faith development
- Guide your child's choice of a name and a faith-filled sponsor
- Encourage and participate in service projects with your son or daughter and help them to understand that they are in the beginning of a life committed to Christian Service
- Support the School and Parish by helping your child participate in all sacramental preparation requirements
- Take part in ongoing formation in order to better guide your child

Confirmation Requirements for Parents

- Attend Sunday or Saturday mass with your children
- Ensure your child does not miss their Religious Ed classes
- Remind and drive your child to their chosen "service" events
- Complete Spiritual Growth exercises WITH your child whenever possible
- Keep a full account of Spiritual Growth hours on the tracking sheet
- Attend the Rehearsal IF their sponsor is not available to do so
- Submit necessary paperwork:
 - Dress Code and Conduct Acknowledgement Form
 - Robe Order Form
 - Sponsor Testimony Form **required by the Diocese of Joliet*

Confirmation Requirements for Students

- **Spiritual Growth Hours:** The “spiritual muscle” only gets stronger when it is used. To increase the Gifts of the Holy Spirit and to follow Bishop Spies request to teach our children to pray, we are requiring time spent in fellowship, prayer and/or meditation outside of Mass and RE classes.
 - For example: time spent praying the rosary with a parent, going to Adoration, listening to Catholic podcasts, watching online priests give homilies or teach about the bible (Bible in A Year) or the catechism (Catechism in A Year.)
 - Attending events offered at St. Mary Parish
- St. Mary’s parish has so much to offer. St. Mary’s parishioners love the Lord and live for the Lord. You can benefit by being mentored by them. The parish is where you can see the Gospel proclaimed through action and fellowship. By attending and participating in parish events you learn first hand what it means to be part of a faith community.
 - You, and your parents, will be required to track your time by using the attached Spiritual Growth Hours Tracker found on page 16 of this guide.
- **Service Hours:** St. Mary Parish has a rich tradition of service. Charitable works, such as those performed through direct service are an essential response to our faith. Service reminds us of our connection to those members of our human family who are most in need. Practice and exhibit your willingness to give of yourself and share your goodness with others.
 - Six (6) hours of service hours are required. These 6 hours of service can be done either at St. Mary Parish or in the community. This service should not be things you are expected to help with at home.
 - Volunteering at St. Mary examples: time spent with Youth Ministry, volunteering for “Children’s Liturgy of the Word”, helping set up, serve, and clean up at parish ministry events, helping CCW in the kitchen, serve at Donut Sundays, serving at mass, ushering at mass, helping collect St. Mary’s drives for the poor and the unborn, volunteering in the R.E. Office, volunteering at St. Mary’s Summer Camp.
 - See community examples on page 19 of this guide.
 - Fill out the service hour form for each time you volunteer.
 - Half of the 6 hours can be from one activity.
- **Mass Reflection Forms**
 - How often do you leave Mass and not recall the readings? At the end of Mass we are dismissed to go and spread the Good News. Using the Mass Reflection Forms helps you to engage with the Readings and the Homily. Hearing the message God has for each of us in the Scriptures is something we have to practice, for many of us this is not a natural skill. These forms will help in that process.
 - We ask that you turn in three completed forms each year.

Total number of hours required:

- 12 hours in 7th grade (3 Spiritual Growth hours, 6 Service Hours, 3 Mass Reflection forms)
- 12 hours in 8th grade (3 Spiritual Growth hours, 6 Service Hours, 3 Mass Reflection forms)

NOTE: *If you are a current 8th grader who was not able to complete your 7th grade service hours requirements, you will need to complete the new service requirements of 6 hours per year for a total of 12 hours.*

Faith Formation & Mass Attendance

Attending Sunday (or Saturday evening) mass is not only one of the precepts of the Catholic Church, it is the source and summit of our faith. Sunday mass must be required for the preparation of Confirmation.

Faith Formation is a lifelong process. Faith Formation informs our conscience, provides knowledge and understanding to produce wisdom, and exercises our “spiritual muscle.”

Faith Formation inspires and supports prayer. Prayer is the lifting of the mind and heart to God and plays an essential role in the life of a devout Catholic. Without it, we risk losing the very grace that comes to us first in Baptism and Confirmation.

The Eucharist is a communion sacrifice, which means we partake of Jesus in a way similar to how the ancient Israelites ate the flesh of the Old Covenant Passover lambs. However, the New Covenant Passover is much more profound, for there is only one Lamb—the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world (John 1:29, 35-36)—and eating Jesus’ body and drinking his blood provides eternal life, not simply emancipation from a mere human and earthly oppressor, i.e., Egypt (John 6:52-59).

For these reasons, the Eucharist is the source and summit of the Catholic faith. In 2022, the United States Bishops declared “A Eucharistic Revival.”

Our world is hurting. We all need healing, yet many of us are separated from the very source of our strength. Jesus Christ invites us to return to the source and summit of our faith in the celebration of the Eucharist. The National Eucharistic Revival is a movement to restore understanding and devotion to this great mystery here in the United States by helping us renew our worship of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist.

<https://www.eucharisticrevival.org/>

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION DUE DATES

December 15, 2026	DUE to the R.E. Office: Dress Code and Code of Conduct Acknowledgement Form Robe Order Form
January 9, 2027	8th grade Retreat: Known Middle School Retreat, approx. time 8:00am to 6:00 pm
January 15, 2027	DUE to the R.E. Office: Letter to the Pastor (to be reviewed at the Confirmation interview) Sponsor Testimony Saint Essay (prepared to reflect the Saint name the student is choosing)
February 25, 2027	DUE to the R.E. Office: Three Mass Reflection Forms Service Hour Forms (6 hours) Spiritual Growth Hours Tracker (3 hours)
Tuesday April 20 at 6:30 pm	Rehearsal with Sponsor
Friday April 23 at 6:00 pm	SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION MASS

CHOOSING YOUR SPONSOR

You are about to enter your final year of preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation. An important dimension of this year's program is the relationship you will have with your sponsor.

How to choose a sponsor:

- Be selective in choosing your sponsor.
- Choose a sponsor who will *accompany* you on your journey toward greater faith, hope and love.
- Your sponsor should be someone whom **you** admire, someone who has qualities in his/her life that you would like to emulate.
- Your sponsor will need to spend some quality time with you. Most importantly, your sponsor should be someone with whom you are comfortable, someone who will accept you and your questions about life, and with whom you can share your experiences of God.
- Your sponsor must be an active adult in the Catholic Faith.

Canon Law states that the sponsor must be:

1. Confirmed in the Catholic Faith
2. Actively practicing our **Catholic** faith
3. At least 16 years of age
4. A parent cannot be your Confirmation Sponsor

Choosing a Saint Name For Your Confirmation Name

Choose a saint for a Confirmation Name that has special **meaning or significance to you**. (It does **NOT** need to be in the following lists.) Find a saint that is like you in personality or skills. Look for a saint with a story that inspires you to be a better version of yourself. After all, **you are giving yourself a new name in Christ, and that should be the name of a saint**. Ask your family who might be a good saint for you. Consider more than a few before making the choice. Narrow your search to two or three, then read about these saints and pray to them daily until you decide.

When researching your saints, be sure to **adhere to Catholic websites**. You can sign in to Formed.org to find movies about the saints and any Word on Fire or Ascension Presents productions are good too. The following is a quick reference guide to help generate ideas and to help your search. The directions for your Saint essay follows on the next page. A few examples (not a comprehensive list) of saint names follows:

MALE SAINT NAME:

St. Carlo Acutis
Maximilion Kobe
St. Damien of Molokai
St. Padre Pio
St. John Paul II
St. Sebastian
St. Luke
St. Ignatius of Loyola
St. John Henry Newman
St. Thomas Aquinas
St. Cajetan (Cayetano)
St. Francis of Assisi
St. Jude of Thaddeus

FEMALE SAINT NAME:

St. Elizabeth Anne Seton
St. Dymphna
St. Katherine Drexel
St. Clare
St. Theresè of Lisieux
St. Theresa of Avila
St. Gemma Galgani
St. Joan of Arc
St. Jane Frances de Chantale
St. Elizabeth of Hungary
St. Rose-Philippine
St. Cecilia
St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross (Edith Stein)

PATRON SAINT OF:

the internet
drug addicts, journalists, prisoners, and the pro-life movement
people suffering from leprosy
adolescents, civil defense volunteers
World Youth Day
archers, athletes, soldiers, and for those who face martyrdom
physicians, surgeons and painters
soldiers
students
universities and scholars
gamers, bankers, job seekers, workers
animals
lost causes

PATRON SAINT OF:

Catholic schools, widows, and seafarers
those suffering from anxiety, depression, mental illness
racial justice and philanthropists
embroiderers, gilders, telephones, telegraphs, television, eye disease
florists, foreign missions, loss of parents, priests, and the sick
sufferers of headaches and those ridiculed for their faith
students, pharmacists, spinal injury, love, hope
France, soldiers, prisoners, courage, youth, those ridiculed for faith
mothers, wives, widows
beggars, brides, falsely accused people, hospitals
perseverance amid adversity
music and of musicians
Europe and for those who have lost parents

Saint Essay Directions

Every student getting confirmed is asked to write a reflection essay, one page double spaced in length, typed in size 12 Times New Roman font **explaining why you chose to give yourself this particular Saint's name.** This essay should be free of spelling and grammar errors and have no smudges. Feel free to use books on saints or Catholic websites to help you complete your work. **Please remember to proofread.** However, the following format ***must*** be followed while expressing your personal desires in your own words:

Title: Saint _____ Reflection By _____
(your saint name here) (your name here)

Introduction: Your opening/attention getter stating the importance of choosing a name for your Confirmation. Introduce your chosen saint with reasons for your selection.

Body of the Essay:

Paragraph 1: Report when and where was your saint born, and describe the geographical area. Mention something important about the time period: eg: politically, socially, or economically.

Paragraph 2: Explain what happened in your saint's life that made him or her an important figure in the church. (Example: they were martyred, they started a religious order, they wrote theological essays or books.)

Paragraph 3: Report miracles or miraculous events your saint inspired, while either alive on earth or in heaven.

Paragraph 4: Tell when and by whom your saint was canonized.

Paragraph 5: Explain what stood out to you most about your saint's life and why. What do you admire about your saint and their relationship with God?

Paragraph 6: Describe how your saint is like you and how your saint is different from you. How will you strive to be more like him or her?

Paragraph 7: Include a **strong personal reflection** explaining how your saint will help you grow in your Catholic faith.

Conclusion: Summarize your essay and include one of your saint's famous quotes or prayers. This should connect back to your opening for a full circle ending.

Please turn in your completed Saint Essay to your Catechist by
January 15, 2027

Letter to the Pastor Directions

Every student getting confirmed is asked to write a typed, one-page letter requesting to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation **due January 15, 2027**. This letter should be free of spelling and grammar errors and have no smudge. Your letter is to be written to Rev. Joe Gasta, Pastor of St. Mary Parish, Mokena. This format *must* be followed while expressing your personal desires in your own words:

Greeting Begin your letter as follows: *Dear Rev. Joe Gasta,*

Body of the Letter

Paragraph 1: Introduce yourself. Tell who you are, what you like to do, what is important to you (family, faith, etc.)

Paragraph 2: Request the Sacrament of Confirmation and explain why you are ready to be confirmed. Inform Father why being confirmed matters to you by giving several reasons. Indicate that you are freely choosing to receive the Sacrament.

Paragraph 3: Explain how you have prepared for the Sacrament. It is important that you detail your preparation using your reflection papers. Additionally, indicate who your sponsor is and why you chose that person and why you chose your particular Saint name. Express how your feelings about your faith have grown during your Confirmation Preparation years.

Paragraph 4: Explain how you will discern your gifts, talents and God's Will for your life? (for example: attending Mass, maintaining a commitment to daily prayer, Adoration, prayerfully reading Scripture, reading books about your faith, going on retreats, joining mission trips or whatever way you connect with God).

Paragraph 5: Write how you will strive to put your faith into action. Explain how you will continue your loving service to God and others through the power and grace of the Holy Spirit which you will receive at Confirmation. (For example: joining youth ministry, singing in the choir, participating at Mass on Sundays as a greeter, usher, Lector or Eucharistic Minister).

Conclusion: *Respectfully,*

write your complete signature

and type your full name

Please turn in your completed Pastor Letter to your Catechist by
January 15, 2027

Dress Code for Candidate and Sponsor

-Diocese of Joliet Guidelines

During the Confirmation Liturgy, our Confirmation candidates will be asked to wear robes. This is a fairly common practice across many dioceses in our nation. As the altar servers wear robes to highlight their unique role during the liturgy, these robes for our Confirmation students will highlight their special place and dignity in the Confirmation Liturgy.

Sponsors, family and Confirmands are encouraged to follow a dress code:

- Dresses and skirts should be knee-length or longer, and should not be tight-fitting or transparent.
- Tops should have sleeves and should not be low cut.
- Jeans, shorts, and tight-fitting pants are not permitted.
- Dress shoes are required.
- Hair should be neatly groomed, and the forehead should be uncovered for anointing.
- Suit jackets are recommended for boys, but not required.
- Ties are encouraged for boys, red tie is traditional.

Please sign and return the following Dress Code Acknowledgement to your Catechist by December 15, 2026.

Code of Conduct at Confirmation Mass

- Arrive early and stay until the Bishop exits.
- Follow signage and directions from the Ushers.
- **Silence and stow away all cell phones.**
- **No picture-taking** during the solemn Liturgy of the Mass - outside of the professional photographer hired by the Parish.
- **No disruption of the Mass of any kind** - waving or cheering (clapping only if invited by the Bishop/Pastor).
- **Maintain modesty** - Please cover shoulders and neckline.

DRESS CODE and CODE OF CONDUCT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Please complete and turn into the Religious Education Office by
December 15, 2026

This is to acknowledge that I have received and read a copy of the Dress Code guidelines and Code of Conduct and I understand that it contains important information regarding the Confirmation ceremony. I agree to abide by the policy.

Student Printed Name

Student Signature

Date

Parent Printed Name

Parent Signature

Date

Please turn in your completed Dress Code Form to your Catechist by
December 15, 2026

CONFIRMATION ROBE ORDER FORM

**Please complete and turn into the Religious Education Office by
December 15, 2026**

All students making their Confirmation in April will wear a robe similar to a graduation gown. Robe fee has been billed and paid at time of Registration. No fee is due. (Note: SMS will be billed to FACTS)

Student Name: _____

Please provide their actual height in feet and inches; measured from the top of their head to the floor. Half inches are OK. Do not have the girls add an inch for heels or the overall gown will be too big.

Actual Height: _____ (in feet and inches)

The gowns are pleated and roomy enough for most large builds. We do carry Full Fit Sizes for the few who need it:

Full Size Needed: Yes or No (please circle)

Name of Catechist/Teacher:

School of Sacramental formation:

_____ St. Mary Religious Ed

_____ St. Mary School

_____ Noonan Academy

_____ Other: (name) _____

If you have any questions, please call the St. Mary Religious Education Office at 708-326-9352

Confirmation Sponsor Testimony

This form is to be completed by the SPONSOR and returned
by January 15, 2027

Candidate for Confirmation: _____
Print Candidate's Name

Sponsor's Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Phone: _____ Email: _____

Parish where sponsor received the Sacraments of Initiation

Sacrament	Church	City/State
Baptism		
Holy Eucharist		
Confirmation		

Sponsor Testimony

I, _____, attest to the truth of the following statements:

Check below:

_____ that my faith is in Jesus Christ and His teachings and I am faithful to all teachings of the Catholic Church.

_____ that I practice my Catholic Faith by regularly joining in the celebration of Sunday Mass and Holy days and receive the Sacraments of Eucharist and Reconciliation.

_____ If married, my marriage has been celebrated in the Catholic Church.

_____ If I have children, that my children are being or have been educated in the Catholic Faith.

_____ that I am a registered member of _____ Parish and have fulfilled my obligation to my church to the best of my ability.

_____ that I have received the Sacraments of Baptism, Holy Eucharist and Confirmation.

_____ Sponsor Signature

St. Mary's Confirmation Spiritual Growth Hours

(3 hours completed by February 25, 2027)

The “spiritual muscle” only gets stronger when it is used. To increase the Gifts of the Holy Spirit and to follow Bishop Spies request to teach our children to pray, we are requiring time spent in prayer and/or meditation.

- For example: time spent praying the rosary with a parent, going to Adoration, listening to Catholic podcasts, watching online priests give homilies or teach about the bible (Bible in A Year) or the catechism (Catechism in A Year.)
- Parents will be required to track their student's time by using the attached Spiritual Growth Hours Tracker found here:

Student Name: _____ GRADE: _____

Date	Activity	Length of time	Parent Initial

MASS REFLECTION FORM



Date: _____

First & Last Name: _____

Gospel Reading: _____

Catholic Church: _____

SUMMARIZE THE GOSPEL READING

EXPLAIN YOUR TAKEAWAY FROM THE HOMILY

CONFIRMATION

“[the baptized] are more perfectly bound to the Church and are enriched with a special strength of the Holy Spirit. Hence they are, as true witnesses of Christ, more strictly obliged to spread and defend the faith by word and deed.”

--Catechism of the Catholic Church



SERVICE HOUR DETAILS

St. Mary Parish has a rich tradition of service. Charitable works, such as those performed through direct service are an essential response to our faith. As Catholics and as human beings we are called to live out the call of Confirmation to spread and proclaim the Catholic faith to all corners of the world. As John Paul II says, we are called to be “salt and light for the world.” This faith is shared with and expressed to others not only in our daily lives of prayer and virtue, but also in the way we love those around us through our actions, our service, our commitment to bringing the light of the Gospel to people through all we do. As St. Francis says, “preach the Gospel at all times, and if you have to use words.”

*****PRACTICAL TIP: Copy several service hour forms and put them in your car or someplace you’ll remember so that your child will have one when they arrive at their service location.*****

Remember the guidelines:

- Perform your service Free of Charge and with a helpful, **positive attitude**.
- **Get signatures** as soon as you perform the experience, don’t wait! Do not place an unnecessary burden on the supervisor.
- **Watch** for God’s presence during your experience!
- We ask for service opportunities which extend **outside of your home** because as part of a family, you have home responsibilities. We invite you to go beyond your normal call to serve.
- **All service hour forms are due February 25, 2027**



SERVICE IDEAS

- Volunteer at Parish events posted in the bulletin or on the parish website.
- Volunteer at a nursing home visiting the residents.
- Run errands for an elderly person.
- Cut grass, rake leaves, shovel snow for the elderly (free of charge).
- Participate in various drives or walks for the poor, underprivileged.
- Babysit for free.
- Volunteer at the food pantry.
- Make cards for the residents at the nursing homes.
- Adopt a mile of a street or neighborhood and keep it clean.
- Research and organize a drive collecting clean winter coats for the poor in Joliet.
- Research and organize a blanket drive for the homeless in Joliet.
- Tutor elementary school children
- Host a bake sale or hot chocolate stand and give the money to Catholic charities
- Go to “Feed My Starving Children” to learn and help make meals for the poor (locations: Aurora, Schaumburg, Libertyville)
<https://www.fmssc.org/>
- Assist in coaching for a children’s sports team free of charge
- Volunteer at donut Sunday at St. Mary Parish
- Volunteer for events through the Religious Ed Office
- Knights of Columbus Pancake Breakfast
- Parish Giving Tree Ministry
- Serve at Mass as an altar server or in the choir/music ministry



St. Mary Catholic Church, Religious Education
19515 115TH Ave, Mokena, IL 60448

CONFIRMATION SERVICE FORM Circle grade: **7th** or **8th**

Current Class: _____

Student's Name: _____

Supervisor's Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Date(s) of Service: _____ **Time(s) of Service :** _____

Total # of Hours: _____

Location of the service: _____

Explain in detail how you served:

How did you see God from the people/environment in which you worked?

What did you learn about yourself by this experience?

Remember the guidelines:

- Perform your service Free of Charge and with a helpful, **positive attitude**.
- **Get signatures** as soon as you perform the experience...don't wait!
- **Watch** for God's presence during your experience!
- Best to turn in your forms as you complete them so you don't lose them before the final deadline.
- If you have questions about service opportunities, **ask your teacher/Catechist**