



FAQs & Schedule for Confirmation 2026-27



What is Confirmation?

Confirmation is one of the three Sacraments of Initiation, completing our Baptism and bringing us ever closer to God through unity with the Body of Christ. It is a sacrament that can only be received once, forever claiming you as one of Christ’s witnesses (represented with a seal of oil at the liturgy). It gives you a sense of full belonging within the Church as you share in the “family mission.” Though often misunderstood as the sacrament of Christian adulthood, Confirmation is not a graduation from religious education, something that we “earn,” or a certificate that lays claim to a mature faith. As Christians, we constantly learn about and deepen our faith. No one can earn grace, which is a gift given to us by God simply because of His great love for us, not because of what we have done or not done. Plus, we have already personally accepted Jesus into our lives, most especially in the Eucharist. Confirmation, therefore, is about freely receiving and strengthening the gifts of the Holy Spirit in our lives so we can fully accept the Great Commission that Jesus gave to the apostles, proclaiming the Good News throughout the world and sharing in God’s life and love. The Church witnesses to our readiness to become anointed missionaries for Christ, and the Church bestows on us her God-given mission of bringing the light of Christ to all the nations. **God has chosen you to be His witness – respond by receiving His Spirit and transforming the world!**

*See [The Catechism of the Catholic Church](#), Paragraphs 1285-1321 for more information. *

Can my teen make his/her Confirmation this year?

In our Diocese of Richmond, your teen can start preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation when they are **both** at least 15 years of age **and** enrolled in at least the 10th grade.

Do Confirmation candidates take Religious Education AND Confirmation Prep Classes?

Yes, the diocese asks candidates to take 10th grade Religious Education concurrently with Confirmation preparation sessions. This is a great opportunity – your teen will grow in understanding and wisdom as well as have many opportunities to experience God. Luckily, our parish offers multiple options for each; you will need to choose one from Column A **and** one from Column B. **Explanations of each of the options are below**

Column A: Religious Education Options			Column B: Confirmation Preparation Session Options		
Life Nights <i>(Sunday evenings @St. Edward)</i>	Sept. 20, 27; Oct. 4, 18, 25; Nov. 15, 22; Dec. 6, 13; Jan. 10, 24, 31; Feb. 7, 28; March 7, 14, 21; April 4, 11, 18, 25; May 2	6:00 pm-8:00 pm Gym	Sunday Afternoon Prep	Aug. 16 or Sept. 8 – parents, too	12:45pm-2:15pm Bosco Center
Sunday Small Groups <i>(Grades 6-12 – twelve high school teens max)</i>	Sept. 13, 20, 27; Oct. 4, 18, 25; Nov. 8, 15, 22; Dec. 6, 13; Jan. 3, 10, 24, 31; Feb. 7, 21, 28; Mar. 7, 14, 21; Apr. 11, 25; May 2, 16, 23	10:00 am-11:00 am Bosco Center		September 27 October 18 November 6-8 Retreat November 22–sponsors, too December 13 January 24 February 28 March 14 April 11 <i>(nine 1.5-hour sessions + one weekend retreat)</i>	
Catholic School	Attending St. Gertrude, Benedictine, Cristo Rey, or Blessed Sacrament-Huguenot fulfills the Catholic School religious education requirement			Tuesday Evening Prep	

How do I sign up my teen for their required classes? *

Please go to the Confirmation Page at stedchurch.com

***CANDIDATES WHO REGISTER FIRST WILL RECEIVE PRIORITY PLACEMENT.** Due to space constraints, each option can only fit 50 teens. Due to capacity limits, we will only be able to prepare teens who are registered parishioners at St. Edward Church.

All Candidates must submit a copy of the candidate's baptismal certificate (IF NOT BAPTIZED AT ST. EDWARD) immediately after registration. Digital Registration is available on the website at www.stedchurch.com or by emailing andrew.mccarthy@stedwardch.org.

Other than Religious Education and Confirmation Prep, what are the other REQUIRED meetings?

⇒ Please note, registration forms for Confirmation and Religious Education should be submitted BEFORE the Parent & Teen Session!

1. **Confirmation Parent & Teen Session: Choose one session on either** Sunday, August 16th (12:45-2:15 pm) or Tuesday, September 8th (6:30 – 8:00 pm) in the Sanctuary. This is a time to find out more about this sacrament and kick off preparation as a family. At least 1 parent is required to attend with the Confirmation candidate (Even if you have had a teen in Confirmation Preparation before!)
2. **Sponsor & Candidate Session:** November 17th or November 22nd depending on your group. All sponsors are asked to join their candidate for this session. They will be given time to learn more about what it means to be a sponsor and to grow in relationship with their candidate. One parent is also asked to attend this session.
3. **Parent Sessions:** Parents are asked to attend several of the Confirmation Sessions (including the Parent & Teen Session). The dates for these will be given at the first Confirmation Session. These sessions will take place in the Sanctuary or Community Center.
4. **Confirmation Conversation:** traditionally referred to as the “interview.” This is a 15–20-minute conversation with Andrew in the pavilion, scheduled toward the end of the preparation process. One parent is asked to attend with each Confirmation candidate.
5. **Search Confirmation Retreat:** November 6-8 @ Watermarks Camp in Scottsville, VA
The Confirmation Retreat is the highlight of the Confirmation preparation process. A full weekend away may sound like a lot, but we promise you this will be one of the most transformative faith experiences of this journey. It may just be the most important! The Confirmation Retreat is not an optional part of the program. ** If you have a significant unavoidable conflict, please contact Andrew ASAP. If you find yourself in this situation, please do NOT wait until October or November to inform us**
6. **Confirmation Rehearsal & Liturgy:** TBD at St. Edward in the Sanctuary
Confirmation Liturgy dates are assigned to us by the Bishop's office in the late fall. This year, we expect to be assigned one weeknight between March & June. We ask the diocese not to give us dates during breaks.
7. **Confirmation Mystagogy:** Date & Time TBD depending on the scheduled Confirmation Liturgy.
Sponsors and Families are invited to attend with their newly confirmed teen. *What is mystagogy? The “interpretation of mystery.” We reflect on our Confirmation experience and connect it to Mission of the Church.*

Does my teen need to choose a Saint's name?

No, but you are encouraged to do so! Choosing a saint allows the candidate to adopt a patron who can journey with them throughout their confirmation journey! However, because of Confirmation's close connection to the sacrament of Baptism, it's also great to reaffirm your baptismal name. You can choose another saint's name or a mystery of the Lord to be pronounced by the bishop instead of the baptismal name. There is no restriction as to the gender (male or female) of the saint. The reason you might pick a saint's name would be because you find their story relatable, or you want to strive to be more like them. *We will talk about how to decide at the Parent & Teen Session! All candidates will get closer to the Saints.*

How does my teen pick a Sponsor?

The practice of sponsors serving as mentors to those preparing to receive the sacraments dates back to the earliest days of the Church. The sponsor serves as a witness of faith to the young person, and conversely as a witness to the community that the candidate is prepared to receive the sacrament. It is important that the candidate choose a sponsor who is prepared for this responsibility.

As a minimal expectation, according to Canon law, a sponsor must be at least 16 years old, must be a practicing Catholic in good standing with the Church, and fully initiated (has received Baptism, First Eucharist, and Confirmation). A godparent is a good choice for a sponsor. **Parents may not sponsor their own child.**

In these days of instant wireless communication, sponsors need not necessarily live in the immediate area (*though it is very helpful if they do*). They must, though, be in frequent contact with the candidate so that they can share this journey of faith together. With this understanding of the role of the sponsor, we can see the importance of the candidate choosing their sponsor at the beginning, not the end, of the process. *We ask that sponsors be chosen no later than the Sponsor & Candidate Sessions in November.*

Sponsors will also find the [Diocesan Sponsor Attestation Form for Confirmation](#). This can be found on the Confirmation webpage or by emailing andrew.mccarthy@stedwardch.org. **We will talk about this at the Parent & Teen Session!**

After each Confirmation preparation session, sponsors and parents will be emailed discussion points. Candidates and sponsors are asked to meet 1-2 times per month to pray and go through the discussion points by meeting in person, talking on the phone, FaceTime, etc. – whatever works for them!

As a parent/sponsor, how can I help?

We would LOVE to have you join your teen during this important journey in their faith! Our Confirmation preparation sessions use a large group-small group model, where the whole group is led through activities and talks, and then they process what they're learning in small groups of 5-9 teens. **We need great parents and sponsors to be the small group leaders!** We'll provide the questions and a short training – all you have to do is be willing to share your Catholic faith & witness with them at each of the Confirmation sessions.

"I was amazed at how much my own faith grew during the year. I had hoped my daughter would get a lot out of the classes, but I never expected to be renewed in my Catholic spirit as much as I am! Plus, it provided a great way for me to spend time with her and her friends."

- a dad of a Confirmation candidate in 2014

I have so many more questions!

Great! All questions can be directed to Andrew McCarthy at andrew.mccarthy@stedwardch.org or by phone at (804) 864-4715.