

St. Bernard Parish: 2018 Confirmation Preparation

Dear Parents and Confirmation Candidates,

We are excited to be journeying with you to the Sacrament of Confirmation! At times, the Sacrament of Confirmation can be viewed as a graduation from religious education. However, Confirmation is not that; the Sacrament of Confirmation strengthens the gifts of the Holy Spirit given at Baptism and gives candidates a mission to go forth and live a life worthy to enter Heaven and be a soldier for Christ.

Since this is an important time in a candidate's faith life, the Diocese of Green Bay and Bishop David Ricken asks parishes to dedicate a separate process and time period, outside of religious education classes, specifically for Confirmation preparation. This process is fairly new to the parish but we saw great results from it last year!

For immediate Confirmation prep, we will be offering a 6-week process from April to Mid-May of 2018 for 11th grade students in both public school and Catholic school. Candidates will go through the process in the spring of 2018 with anticipation to receive the Sacrament in the October of 2018—senior year.

The requirements to receive Confirmation at St. Bernard Parish are as follows:

1. **Sacraments of Initiation**: Candidates must have already received the two Sacraments of Initiation prior to Confirmation preparation: Baptism and Eucharist. Proof of reception of both Sacraments is required upon registering for Confirmation preparation. If students haven't received these 2 Sacraments, we will help students towards this.
2. **Religious Ed Background**: Beginning after the candidate's 1st Communion year, students are asked to take Wednesday Night R.E. Classes at St. Bernard Parish every year in order to follow the requirements set out by the Diocese: to be educated and ready to be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit through Confirmation.
 - a. Public school students are asked to take Wednesday night religion classes at St. Bernard Parish from September to March, prior to Confirmation preparation classes.
 - b. Notre Dame Academy students receive religion classes through their school and are not required to attend Wednesday night R.E. prior to Confirmation preparation classes.
3. **Mass Attendance**: Candidates are to attend Mass every Sunday. Mass is where we get the spiritual nourishment we need to have a relationship with God. It is so important in our faith that we have included Mass in all of our preparation classes. Students are asked to attend Mass with the class, unless they attend a previous time with their family. This attendance needs to be communicated by the parents to the coordinator.
4. **Class Attendance**: Candidates will need to complete the entire 6-week preparation process. Attendance is mandatory, including Mass, and will be taken into consideration prior to the reception of the Sacrament. If there are scheduling conflicts with the class dates, please contact the Parish Office to arrange for a different form of preparation.
5. **Sponsors**: Candidates will be asked to choose a Sponsor that will guide them in this journey. Sponsors, by Canon Law, cannot be parents. Sponsors need to be practicing Catholics, having received Confirmation, attending Mass every Sunday and believing in the full teachings of the Catholic Church. Sponsors are asked to play a HUGE role in forming their candidate, particularly over the summer months. Candidates are asked to pick a sponsor who they look up to in the faith.
6. **Saint Name**: The process of Confirmation allows candidates to be transformed by the Holy Spirit—to become a new creation. To signify this, candidates are asked to choose a Saint they admire. This Saint's name will become their Confirmation name and will be presented to the Bishop.
7. **Bishop's Letter**: Before receiving the Sacrament, the Bishop asks all students to submit a letter of intention to receive the Sacrament. More details will be provided as the 6-week process is completed.
8. **Final Interview**: Candidates will be asked to participate in a final interview with the pastor and/or a member of the parish staff. The interviews allow our staff to assess each student and determine their readiness and seriousness of receiving the Sacrament.

This list isn't meant to intimidate or turn away candidates—we want to work with every student to build them up as Disciples of Christ. We encourage open communication. These guidelines are in place as general requirements to assure that students receive the right formation to grow deeper as a disciple. As people continue to turn away from faith, our Catholic presence in the world is more important than ever. A relationship with the Holy Spirit, strengthened through the Sacrament of Confirmation, allows candidates to enter the world of darkness as a bright beacon of hope.

Our classes are based on the Charismatic Renewal's "Life in the Spirit Seminar." However, the classes have been tweaked to include Bishop David Ricken's Confirmation requirements. Each week builds off of the week prior, and since we have a limited number of meetings, attending every class is EXTREMELY important. These classes will be less of a classroom-style teaching and more of personal witness stories, lessons, and small group sharing. Alongside the coordinator, we will have a team of young adults leading the students in the lessons.

We will begin and end the preparation process with retreat-style formation days. This allows us to step away from our busy lives for a time specifically focused on growing closer to God. Below is the calendar for the preparation classes—for Wednesday Night R.E., please view the other document which lists a separate calendar.

- **Sunday, April 8th** – *Opening Retreat* – 10 AM to 4 PM. Location: Bishop Hall
Focus: The Basics Assignment: Start researching saint names and sponsors
- **Sunday, April 15th** – *Class 1* – 4:30-6:30 with Mass at 6:30 PM. Location: Bishop Hall
Focus: Salvation
- **Sunday, April 22nd** – *Class 2* – 4:30-6:30 with Mass at 6:30 PM. Location: Bishop Hall
Focus: New and Abundant Life
- **Sunday, April 29th** – *Class 3* – 4:30-6:30 with Mass at 6:30 PM. Location: Bishop Hall
Focus: Receiving God's Gifts
- **Sunday, May 6th** – *Class 4* – 4:30-6:30 with Mass at 6:30 PM. Location: Bishop Hall
Focus: Release of the Holy Spirit Prayer Experience
- **Sunday, May 20th** – *Commissioning Retreat* – 10 AM to 2:30 PM. Location: Bishop Hall
Focus: On-Going Conversion/Growth Due: Saint name & Sponsor

To register for Wednesday Night R.E., Confirmation preparation or both, please fill out a registration form. Tuition for the 6-week Confirmation preparation is \$40 per student, and \$110 for Wednesday night classes.

You can stay up to date on information, including Sponsor information, by visiting our website:
www.stbernardconfirmation.weebly.com

Please contact me with any questions or comments you may have—I am here to serve you and your Confirmation candidate. I am looking forward to seeing how the Holy Spirit moves in the upcoming year!

Sincerely in Christ,

Callie Kowalski
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Diocese of
Green Bay

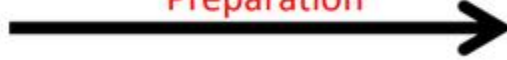
Sample Outline using Confirmation Curriculum

Quotes taken from the Sacrament of Confirmation Guidelines for the Diocese of Green Bay. This is not an exhaustive formation outline, but proves to be an outline for information that should be covered in the Confirmation preparation.

Remote High School Confirmation Preparation: 6 Semesters

Semester 1	Semester 2	Semester 3	Semester 4	Semester 5	Semester 6
Freshman	Freshman	Sophomore	Sophomore	Junior	Junior
15-17 hours	15-17 hours	15-17 hours	15-17 hours	15-17 hours	15-17 hours

**Immediate Confirmation
Preparation**



Separate Classes for Immediate Confirmation Preparation – A minimum of 12 hours. These 12 hours must be separate from their regular junior year classes.

Confirmation Day Long (Minimum of 6 hours) or overnight retreat