

Confirmation Program
St. John the Baptist Catholic Church

At St. John's we currently have a 2 year Confirmation Preparation Program, which supplements our Generations of Faith and Catholic School Curriculum. In the Diocese of Winona, Confirmation is celebrated in adolescence; at St. John's we confirm in the spring of the 10th grade year. We follow the Bishops' guidelines, and offer a program that places Confirmation within the framework of a total youth ministry program. These guidelines reflect the norms of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, the **General Directory for Catechesis**, and **Renewing the Vision: A framework for Catholic Youth Ministry**. Our goal as a parish is to help our candidates accept the gift of faith, become comfortable within the St. John's Parish Family, and experience their faith in perhaps some new ways.

Our expectation is that students entering the preparation program have been consistent in attending religion classes at the Catholic Schools, or the Generations of Faith sessions in the parish, and will continue this attendance after celebrating the sacrament. The formation from 1st – 8th grade is essential in forming students in their faith so they are prepared as 9th graders to enter into preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation. The formation AFTER grade 10 is essential to continued growth in the faith as fully initiated Catholics. Our role as a parish is to make sure there are a variety of faith growth opportunities for our young adults who are already confirmed.

9th Grade Year – Focus on Formation and Parish Participation

Loyola Students: continue with daily Religion Classes

Public School Students: continue Family attendance at Generations of Faith

Attend monthly classes on "Living Catholic Values"

Attend mass weekly, participate in parish activities and service opportunities,

Develop or enhance personal prayer life.

Keep track of Service provided through church, school, and home.

"Together on the Journey" Learning Centers for parents and students

Parent/Student Orientation takes place in September of the 10th grade year, in the form of a Parent/Student retreat that incorporates information about requirements and dates.

10th Grade Year – Focus on preparation for reception of the Sacrament and participation in the Confirmation Liturgy

Loyola Students: continue with daily Religion Classes

Public School Students: Continue family attendance at Generations of Faith

All students:

Meet monthly for Confirmation Sessions. The curriculum used for these sessions is Called to Celebrate: Confirmation by Harcourt Religion Publishers. The ritual, faith, and liturgical focus of the sessions guides students in preparation for

receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation, and for a vibrant and active faith life afterwards.

Participate in at least one retreat during the year.

Participate in mentoring sessions with Confirmation Sponsor, on the Wednesdays of January. Sessions vary: Speakers, faith sharing sessions, or Praise and Worship are all possibilities for mentoring sessions.

Participate in Learning Centers with Sponsor

Interview with Pastor

Participate in two Rituals during the weekend Liturgy. These rituals introduce candidates to the St. John's community, and remind the community of their responsibility to support the candidates both now and after their confirmation.

Attend a Retreat/Practice and, of course, the Confirmation Liturgy.

In addition, we equip both parents and sponsors with resources for engaging in small group faith sharing with their students and schedule opportunities for service. We also encourage prayer through Adoration, Sacrament of Reconciliation, various prayer suggestions in the parent/sponsor resources, daily personal prayer and attendance at weekend Mass.

Confirmation is a sacrament with a fluid theology. We are always attentive to changes in Diocesan policy, and indeed to the fact that Confirmation may be celebrated very differently in other places. It is not unusual for newcomers to the parish to have already been confirmed at a much younger age, or to feel unprepared at the age of 15. Our Bishop suggests that we may offer confirmation to a variety of ages of youth at the same time (14 – 18), so they may choose the time of greatest readiness for them personally. While we have not yet incorporated this at St. John's, it makes sense to recognize that not all 10th graders are at the same point of spiritual maturity, and to make provisions for this in our preparation process.

These are our general guidelines for participating in the Confirmation Preparation process at St. John the Baptist Catholic Church. Please let us know if you have questions, unusual circumstances, or would like to be involved in the preparation process, either as a student or a leader.