



Confirmation Family Guide

Purpose of This Guide

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This guide supports families as they accompany their child through the Diocese of Des Moines eleven-month Confirmation journey. It explains the sacrament, outlines expectations, and provides clarity on the shared roles of confirmandi, parents, and sponsors.

Sacrament of Confirmation Defined by the Catechism of the Catholic Church

The Catechism of the Catholic Church #1285 teaches that Confirmation, together with Baptism and the Eucharist, completes Christian initiation. It strengthens baptismal grace and enriches the faithful with the gifts of the Holy Spirit so they may spread and defend the faith by word and deed.

Key teachings:

- **Spiritual Strengthening:** A special outpouring of the Holy Spirit, like Pentecost.
- **Indelible Mark:** A permanent spiritual character is imprinted on the soul.
- **Mission:** The confirmed person is empowered to witness publicly to Christ.

Confirmation Overview

Confirmation completes the initiation begun at Baptism. Parents nurture their child's faith from Baptism onward, and during Confirmation preparation they partner with the parish to help their child grow in Belonging, Identity, Encounter, and Mission. The program includes prayer, Scripture, service, sponsor conversations, and parish life.

A Message from Bishop William Joensen

"Confirmation is a sacrament that's meant to strengthen baptismal grace and anchor a young person's identity in Christ. By celebrating the sacrament in sixth grade, we continue to build a solid faith foundation upon which our young people will sow God's spirit as they enter adolescence. It is our firm belief and hope that they will be emboldened with the gifts of wisdom, understanding, knowledge, counsel, courage, and a devoted love for Jesus and his father, along with all God's saints. We infer that earlier confirmation better serves families and equips young people to see themselves as on mission to live as Jesus did and to share his love with others."

Diocese of Des Moines Confirmation Monthly Program Structure Overview

The Confirmation journey follows eleven monthly movements:

1. **Preparation:** Orientation, expectations, baptismal identity.
2. **Identity:** Rediscovering one's identity as a beloved child of God.
3. **Belonging:** Living belonging through service and Works of Mercy.
4. **Encounter with Jesus:** Recognizing Christ in Scripture, Eucharist, and daily life.
5. **Encounter with Scripture:** Learning to pray with Scripture.
6. **Encounter with the Holy Spirit:** Understanding gifts and fruits of the Spirit.
7. **Retreat:** Deep personal encounter with Jesus through prayer and reflection.
8. **Called to Mission:** Making Works of Mercy part of daily life.
9. **Life in the Spirit:** Living as missionary disciples.

10. **Disciples at Home and Parish:** Practicing discipleship in daily life.
11. **Confirmation:** Completing initiation through the sacrament.

Diocese of Des Moines Confirmation Standards

Families must meet the following standards:

- Registered in a parish within the Diocese.
- Confirmandi must be a baptized Catholic Christian.
- Enrollment in Faith Formation, Catholic School, or Home School.
- Participation in monthly Confirmation sessions.
- Selection of a saint (if part of parish culture).
- Selection of a sponsor in good standing.
- Completion of At-Home Conversations.
- Completion of Sponsor Chats.
- Attendance at a retreat.
- Completion of family service activities.

Defining Standards

Registered and Baptized: Families must be registered; proof of baptism provided if needed.

Enrollment in Formation: Confirmandi must participate in parish Faith Formation, Catholic School, or Home School.

Saint Selection: If part of parish culture, confirmandi choose a saint whose life inspires their own discipleship.

Sponsor Selection: Sponsor must be a practicing Catholic in good standing, at least 16 years old, and able to model a faithful Catholic life.

At-Home Conversations: Monthly guided conversations completed with parents.

Sponsor Chats: Five required conversations with the sponsor.

Instructional Program: Attendance at monthly parish sessions.

Family Service Hours: Three service activities completed as a family.

Statement of Understanding of Roles

Confirmandi Responsibilities

- Attend parish formation sessions.
- Complete monthly at-home formation with parents.
- Engage in Scripture, prayer, and service activities.
- Participate in Sponsor Chats.
- Attend a retreat.
- Participate in parish life (Mass, Reconciliation).

Parent Responsibilities

- Attend monthly formation sessions.
- Lead and support at-home conversations.
- Document family service activities.
- Model prayer and discipleship.
- Engage in parish life.

Sponsor Responsibilities

- Complete Sponsor Chats.
- Attend the Confirmation Mass.

- Support the candidate's ongoing discipleship.
- Complete the Diocesan Sponsor in Good Standing Form.

This guide equips families to walk confidently and faithfully through the Confirmation year, supporting their child's growth as a missionary disciple of Christ.