



Diocese of Des Moines Confirmation Program Guide

Goal of this Guide

This adaptable guide provides a variety of resources to help pastors and parish formation leaders implement an eleven-month Confirmation journey. Your parish program will reflect your parish culture, and we hope these materials will help you craft a transformative process not only the confirmandi, but also parents. The language and structure are designed to be practical, family-friendly, and adaptable to parish culture.

Diocese of Des Moines Confirmation Standards:

- Family registered in a parish, or in residence, within the Diocese of Des Moines.
- Baptized Catholic Christian or already received into the Catholic Church. Baptized Protestant Christians go through an adapted Becoming Catholic process for children.
- Enrollment in a parish Faith Formation Program, Catholic School, or Home School.
- Enrollment and participation in the parish Sacrament of Confirmation Program Instructional Formation Sessions with a standard of nine formation sessions within eleven months. (The eleven-month process anticipates a parent/confirmandi meeting at the beginning of the process and ends with Confirmation.)
- Selection of a Saint for the Confirmation preparation process and liturgy.
- Selection of a Sponsor for the Confirmation preparation and beyond.
- Completion of At Home Conversations for the Confirmation Program.
- Completion of Sponsor Chats.
- Attending a Retreat that is substantive and appropriate in duration during the Confirmation Program Year.

The standards represent the essential diocesan requirements that must be included in every parish Confirmation program. These standards establish a common foundation for sacramental preparation throughout the Diocese of Des Moines and ensure that all confirmandi receive consistent formation leading toward the Sacrament of Confirmation.

While these standards remain constant, there are many effective ways to achieve them. Each parish is encouraged to utilize methodologies, instructional resources, schedules, activities, and delivery models that best reflect their local culture, community, staffing, and pastoral needs. Family-based programs are strongly encouraged. There are also small-group models, retreats, service opportunities, and a variety of approved formation resources can all be used to fulfill the required standards. More resources will be added, including for older adolescents.

Sacrament of Confirmation Defined by the Catechism of the Catholic Church

THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION

CCC1285: Baptism, the Eucharist, and the Sacrament of Confirmation together constitute the “sacraments of Christian initiation,” whose unity must be safeguarded. It must be explained to the faithful that the reception of is necessary for the completion of baptismal grace. For “by the Sacrament of 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.”

Spiritual Strengthening: It provides a special outpouring of the Holy Spirit, like that given to the Apostles at Pentecost, to empower the faithful to spread and defend the faith by word and deed.

Indelible Mark: Like Baptism, it imprints a permanent spiritual character on the soul. It can only be received once, empowering the confirmed person to officially profess their faith publicly.

Confirmation Overview

The Confirmation Sacrament completes the Christian Initiation which began when the parents chose the Sacrament of Baptism for their child. From baptism, the parents have nurtured the child’s faith life through exposure, teachings and practices of the faith. The parents will continue to form their child’s discipleship through the preparations to the Sacrament of Confirmation with the assistance of their parish formation team and the larger church. Through the preparation of Confirmation, the child and parents will journey through the faith on a mission of Belonging and Identity, with Encounters to Christ and the Holy Spirit, become a Missionary Disciple of Christ.

A Message from the Bishop of the Diocese of Des Moines, Most Reverend 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.”

U.S. Bishop’s Statement on Families with Disabilities:

- [The U.S. Bishop’s statement affirming the dignity of every family](#)
- Confirmandi with disabilities should be presumed capable of receiving catechesis, participating in parish life, and receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation unless a specific pastoral concern requires further discernment. Preparation should focus on helping the individual encounter Jesus Christ and grow in faith rather than measuring academic achievement or memorization. See appendix for practices and adaptations.
- [A link to diocesan disability resources](#)
- Instructions for requesting accommodations (work with Diocesan Evangelization and Mission Team)
 - Notify the parish early
 - Schedule a planning meeting with the pastor and parish formation leader
 - Determine appropriate accommodations
 - Document the accommodation plan
 - Review throughout the formation year

- Parishes should begin with the understanding that persons with disabilities possess the same dignity, baptismal rights, and call to discipleship as every other member of the Church. The Church's responsibility is not simply to provide access, but to foster belonging, participation, and opportunities for spiritual growth

Sacrament of Confirmation Program Instructional Formation Sessions:

The Confirmation programming follows the movements of understanding Belonging and Identity which lead to an Encounter enabling one to live the life of the Mission of the Catholic Church in the world.

The Diocese of Des Moines developed an adaptable Confirmation Program utilizing connections to the Catechism of the Catholic Church and Scripture with a focus on fostering discipleship through personal experiences found in At-Home Discussions, Sponsor Chats and Service. The sample session includes a variety of immersive prayer opportunities and developmental age-appropriate activities, youth formation, parent formation, family engagement, and sponsor conversations which are found in the appendix.

The following is a condensed objective sample summary of the monthly sessions as a template for parishes to use in their Confirmation Programming.

Diocese of Des Moines Confirmation Monthly Program Structure Overview:

<u>Month One:</u> <u>Parent/Confirmandi</u> <u>Meeting</u>	<u>Month Two: Identity</u>	<u>Month Three: Belonging</u>
Session Objective: The baptized confirmandi and parents register through the church for the Confirmation Program realizing that as a baptized child of God they are called to be Confirmed with the Holy Spirit to complete the Initiation to the Catholic Church.	Session Objective: The baptized confirmandi and family through their baptismal identity will rediscover they are strengthened by God because they are a loved child of His, the Church, and all of God's creation.	Session Objective: The baptized confirmandi and family discover belonging is expressed through service within the church and community by actively living out the Works of Mercy.
Foundational Connection: Catechism of the Catholic Church: 1267	Foundational Connection: Catechism of the Catholic Church: 1691 & 1700	Foundational Connection: Catechism of the Catholic Church: 2447
Scripture: 1 Cor 12:12-14	Scripture: Isaiah 43:1 & John 1:35-51	Scripture: Matthew 25:35-40

<u>Month Four: Encounter with Jesus</u> Session Objective: The baptized confirmandi and family will recognize Jesus' presence in Scripture, Eucharist, daily life and community through the Paschal Mystery. Foundational Connection: Catechism of the Catholic Church: 426 Scripture: Luke 24:13-35	<u>Month Five: Encounter with Scripture</u> Session Objective: The baptized confirmandi and family will discover the richness of praying with scripture outside of the Holy Mass. Foundational Connection: Catechism of the Catholic Church: 683 Scripture: Acts 2:1-13	<u>Month Six: Encounter with the Holy Spirit</u> Session Objective: The baptized confirmandi and family embrace the Holy Spirit dwelling within them as a living presence to walk with them in life. Foundational Connection: Catechism of the Catholic Church: 1830-1832 Scripture: Galatians 5:22-23
<u>Month Seven: Retreat</u> Session Objective: The baptized confirmandi will attend a retreat for an opportunity to encounter Jesus deeply and personally through silence, adoration and reflection during their Confirmation preparations. Foundational Connection: Catechism of the Catholic Church: 1309 Scripture: Mark 9:2-8A	<u>Month Eight: Called to Mission</u> Session Objective: The baptized confirmandi and family focus on making Works of Mercy part of their lives by giving to others through family service activities in their parish and community. Foundational Connection: Catechism of the Catholic Church: 1303 Scripture: Matthew 28:19-20	<u>Month Nine: Life in the Spirit</u> Session Objective: The baptized confirmandi and family understand through the sacramental graces of Confirmation they are transformed into missionary disciples for Christ. Foundational Connection: Catechism of the Catholic Church: 2472 Scripture: James 1:22
<u>Month Ten: Disciples at Home and at Parish</u> Session Objective: The baptized confirmandi and family discover ways to live as disciples of Christ in one's home, parish, and daily life. Foundational Connection: Catechism of the Catholic Church: 1285 Scripture: John 20:22-23	<u>Month Eleven: Confirmation</u> Session Objective: The baptized confirmandi is ready and prepared to complete the Initiation into the Church through the receiving of the Sacrament of Confirmation. Foundational Connection: Catechism of the Catholic Church: 1316 Scripture: Acts 1:8	

Diocesan of Des Moines Approved Programs for Instructional Confirmation Programming:

- Augustine Institute: Signs of Grace – You Are Sent
- R.E.A.L. Formation: Belong & Believe (Programming not used for Confirmation can be used in Faith Formation programming.)
- Pflaum: Gifted With the Spirit
- Parents Online Videos from Formed, Real+True

Confirmation Programming Delivery Models:

Parishes have the opportunity to individualize one of these Confirmation Delivery Models.

<i>TYPE</i>	<i>EXPLAINED</i>	<i># of Catechists Needed</i>
Family Based	Monthly In Person Sessions at the parish with confirmandi and parent(s) <u>participating in the Confirmation Program as a group</u> with home-based objectives to be met before gathering next month.	Group size: • Under 20 families → 2 to 3 catechists are usually sufficient. • 20–40 families → 3 to 4 catechists ensures smooth facilitation. • 40+ families → 4 to 6 catechists or more, depending on space and logistics. Pastor involvement: If the pastor leads the teaching portion, catechists shift into support roles (discussion facilitation, hospitality, logistics), reducing the number needed. Session format: If sessions include multiple small-group breakouts, you need more catechists. If sessions stay mostly in large-group teaching + family discussion, fewer catechists are required. Recommended staffing for most parishes:

		• Lead catechist/coordinator: oversees sessions, communicates with families • Assistant catechist: supports teaching, manages materials • Family-group facilitator(s): 2-4 people who help guide discussions, assist families, and manage flow • Total: 2–6 catechists, with flexibility for pastor discretion.
Parent & Child Based	Monthly In-Person Sessions at the parish with fellowship before <u>separating into a parent group and a confirmandi group</u> for individual formation for their role in the Confirmation Preparations. There are home-based objectives to be met before gathering next month.	Group size • Under 20 families → 3 to 4 catechists are usually sufficient. (Two catechists are needed because parents and confirmandi separate into <i>two formation groups</i>, plus 1–2 additional facilitators.) • 20–40 families → 4 to 6 catechists ensure smooth facilitation. (Larger groups require more small-group support, especially during parent formation.) • 40+ families → 6 to 8 catechists or more, depending on space and logistics. (Both parent and youth groups need multiple facilitators to

		maintain quality formation.) Pastor involvement: If the pastor leads the teaching portion for either the parent group or the confirmandi group, catechists shift into support roles such as discussion facilitation, hospitality, and logistics. This can reduce the total number needed. Session format: If sessions include multiple small-group breakouts (especially for parents), more catechists are required. If sessions stay mostly in large-group teaching with guided discussion, fewer catechists are needed. Recommended staffing for most parishes • Lead catechist/coordinator: oversees sessions, communicates with families • Parent-group catechist: leads formation for parents • Youth catechist: leads formation for confirmandi • Group facilitators (2–4 people): assist with discussions, help families, manage flow • Total: 3–8 catechists, with flexibility for pastor discretion.
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Family Small Group	A Family Small Group Confirmation model blends the strengths of family-based formation with the intimacy and accountability of small-group discipleship. It creates a rhythm where families journey together—not just as individual households, but as a small community of 3–5 families who support one another throughout the Confirmation year.	Group size • Under 24 families → 2 to 4 catechists are usually sufficient. (This typically means 2 to 3 small groups of families, two sets of three families facilitated by a catechist or trained volunteer.) • 24–42 families → 4 to 7 catechists ensures smooth facilitation. (More small groups require additional facilitators to maintain intimacy and accountability.) • 42+ families → 7 to 10 catechists or more, depending on space and logistics. (Large cohorts need multiple small-group facilitators plus support for coordination and flow.) Pastor involvement: If the pastor leads the teaching portion or the monthly spiritual reflection, catechists shift into support roles (small-group facilitation, hospitality, logistics). This can reduce the total number needed. Session format: If sessions include multiple small-group breakouts (the norm in this model), more catechists or trained
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		facilitators are required. If sessions stay mostly in large-group teaching with limited breakout time, fewer catechists are needed. Recommended staffing for most parishes: • Lead catechist/coordinator oversees sessions, communicates with families • Assistant catechist: supports teaching, manages materials • Family-group facilitators (2–4 people): guide small-group discussions, assist families, manage flow Total: 2–7 catechists, with flexibility for pastor discretion.
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Statement of Understanding of Roles for Confirmandi, Parent and Sponsor

The confirmandi, parent and sponsor all have valuable roles in the preparations of Confirmation. In the Appendix is a *Confirmation Journey Understanding & Promise* that can be used to ensure all involved know and understand their role in the Confirmation preparations.

	RESPONSIBILITIES
Confirmandi	• Attend parish formation sessions • Monthly at-home formation with parent(s), or another family member • Selection of a saint • Scripture engagement • Prayer practices • Service activities • Sponsor conversations in months with sponsor chats • Retreat participation • Participation in parish life (Mass, Reconciliation)

Parent(s)	• Engage in monthly formation • Participate in family conversations • Support and lead at-home programming • Help document family service to share about it at the next parish session • Model prayer and discipleship • Engage in parish life
Sponsor	• Complete Sponsor Chats (3 required + 1 optional) • Participate in the Confirmation Mass • Support the candidate's ongoing discipleship • Complete the Diocesan Sponsor in Good Standing Form (<i>found in appendix</i>)

Sample Annual Confirmation Progression Timelines

Sample Year: <i>August to June</i>
• ONGOING YEARLY: Obligation Masses & Active Participation in the Church Events • JULY: No formation sessions but could begin registration • AUGUST-JUNE: Participation in the parish Sacrament of Confirmation Program Instructional Formation Sessions (monthly) • AUGUST Enrollment in a parish Faith Formation Program, in a Catholic School, or actively Home Schooled • SEPTEMBER – APRIL/MAY: attend Faith Formation Programming • THOUGHTOUT THE YEAR: Completion of the Monthly At Home Conversations for the Confirmation Program • THROUGHOUT THE YEAR: Completion of the Sponsor Chats (3 required + 1 optional) • THOUGHTOUT THE YEAR: Family Service Activities (3 required) • DECEMBER - MARCH: Attendance of a Retreat during the Confirmation Program Year • JUNE: Mass for the Sacrament of Confirmation

Sample Year: *November to September*

- **ONGOING YEARLY:** Obligation Masses & Active Participation in the Church Events
- **OCTOBER:** No formation sessions but could begin registration
- **NOVEMBER-SEPTEMBER:** Participation in the parish Sacrament of Confirmation Program Instructional Formation Sessions (monthly)
- **AUGUST** Enrollment in a parish Faith Formation Program, in a Catholic School, or actively Home Schooled
- **SEPTEMBER – APRIL/MAY:** attend Faith Formation Programming
- **THOUGHTOUT THE YEAR:** Completion of the Monthly At Home Conversations for the Confirmation Program
- **THROUGHOUT THE YEAR:** Completion of the Sponsor Chats (3 required + 1 optional)
- **THOUGHTOUT THE YEAR:** Family Service Activities (3 required)
- **MARCH - JUNE:** Attendance of a Retreat during the Confirmation Program Year
- **SEPTEMBER:** Mass for the Sacrament of Confirmation

Sample Year: *March to January*

- **ONGOING YEARLY:** Obligation Masses & Active Participation in the Church Events
- **FEBRUARY:** No formation sessions but could begin registration
- **MARCH-JANUARY:** Participation in the parish Sacrament of Confirmation Program Instructional Formation Sessions (monthly)
- **AUGUST** Enrollment in a parish Faith Formation Program, in a Catholic School, or actively Home Schooled
- **SEPTEMBER – APRIL/MAY:** attend Faith Formation Programming
- **THOUGHTOUT THE YEAR:** Completion of the Monthly At Home Conversations for the Confirmation Program
- **THROUGHOUT THE YEAR:** Completion of the Sponsor Chats (3 required + 1 optional)
- **THOUGHTOUT THE YEAR:** Family Service Activities (3 required)
- **JULY - OCTOBER:** Attendance of a Retreat during the Confirmation Program Year
- **JANUARY:** Mass for the Sacrament of Confirmation

Sample Year: *June to April*

- **ONGOING YEARLY:** Obligation Masses & Active Participation in the Church Events
- **MAY:** No formation sessions but could begin registration
- **JUNE-APRIL:** Participation in the parish Sacrament of Confirmation Program Instructional Formation Sessions (monthly)
- **AUGUST** Enrollment in a parish Faith Formation Program, in a Catholic School, or actively Home Schooled
- **SEPTEMBER – APRIL/MAY:** attend Faith Formation Programming
- **THOUGHTOUT THE YEAR:** Completion of the Monthly At Home Conversations for the Confirmation Program
- **THROUGHOUT THE YEAR:** Completion of the Sponsor Chats (3 required + 1 optional)
- **THOUGHTOUT THE YEAR:** Family Service Activities (3 required)
- **OCTOBER-JANUARY:** Attendance of a Retreat during the Confirmation Program Year
- **JANUARY:** Mass for the Sacrament of Confirmation

Confirmation Alignment of Approved Resources (also includes parent resources):

Objectives Aligned with Diocese of Des Moines Current Approved Publisher Confirmation Programs/Curriculums: The following aligns the approved Confirmation Programs chapter/lesson/session/videos with the Confirmation Objective to allow parishes to use the publisher programs to deliver the Diocese of Des Moines monthly session objectives. More resources will be added, especially those for older adolescents.

	Augustine Institute: Signs of Grace: You are Sent (5th & 6th Grade Specific)	R.E.A.L. Formation: Belong & Believe (Geared for Multicultural Parishes)	Pflaum: Gifted With the Spirit	Video Platform: Formed (Parents)	Video Platform: Real+True (Parents)
	<i>Chapter, Lesson or Session Aligned with Diocese of Des Moines Monthly Session Objective</i>	<i>Chapter, Lesson or Session Aligned with Diocese of Des Moines Monthly Session Objective</i>	<i>Chapter, Lesson or Session Aligned with Diocese of Des Moines Monthly Session Objective</i>	<i>Video titles and links on Formed aligned with Diocese of Des Moines Monthly Session Objective</i>	<i>Video titles and links on Real+True aligned with Diocese of Des Moines Monthly Session Objective</i>
Month One: Preparations Session Objective: The baptized candidate and parents register through the church for the Confirmation Program realizing that as a baptized child of God they are called to be Confirmed with the Holy Spirit to complete the Initiation to the Catholic Church. Foundational Connection: Catechism of the Catholic Church: 1267 Scripture: 1 Cor 12: 12-14	Parent Session 1: Overview of your parish sacramental process (<i>parent sessions found in the back of student activity book</i>)	Supplemental Material on the App	Lesson 1: Called by the Holy Spirit	Reborn: Nurturing the Life of Grace Connects Baptism to lifelong identity in Christ 25 minutes	Is Confirmation a graduation from our faith? - Real+True
Month Two: Identity Session Objective: The baptized candidate and their family through their baptismal identity will rediscover they are strengthened by God because they are a loved child of His, the church, and all of God creation. Foundational Connection: Catechism of the	Family Session: Supplemental Session on Sacraments and your child's Baptism Family Session: <i>Signs of Grace Session 3 "The Sacrament of Confirmation"</i> (continues in month 3)	Session 1: Community-You Are Not Alone Session 3: Dignity & Purpose- Worthy Session 10: The REAL You	Lesson 1: Called by the Holy Spirit (continued)	Reborn: Entering the Mystery Helps parents recall their child's baptismal calling 25 minutes	What is Baptism? What is Baptism? - Real+True

Catholic Church: 1691 & 1700 Scripture: Isaiah 43:1 & John 1: 35-51					
Month Three: Belonging Session Objective: The baptized candidate and their family discover belonging is expressed through service within the church and community by actively living out the Works of Mercy. Foundational Connection: Catechism of the Catholic Church: 2447 Scripture: Matthew 25: 35-40	Family Session: <i>Signs of Grace</i> Session 3 “The Sacrament of Confirmation” (continued)	Session 8: Origin is Your Family Session 9: Siblings, Wombmates	Lesson 2: Accepting God’s Call	<u>Call to Family, Community, and Participation</u> We are called to live in community 4 minutes	<u>The Desire of the Human Heart</u>
Month Four: Encounter with Jesus Session Objective: The baptized candidate and their family will recognize Jesus’ presence in Scripture, Eucharist, daily life and community through the Paschal Mystery. Foundational Connection: Catechism of the Catholic Church: 426	Parent Session 2: The grace of Pentecost (<i>parent sessions found in the back of student activity book</i>)	Session 5: Who Do You Say That I Am Session 14: Jesus Christ Session 15: Conceived by the Holy Spirit... Session 16: Suffered Under Pontious... Session 17: Descended Into Hell Session 18: Ascended	Lesson 3: Building a Friendship with God	<u>Presence: God is with us</u> Encountering Jesus in the Sacrament of Eucharist 35 minutes <u>The Road to Emmaus</u> The story of Jesus’ encounter with the disciples 3 minutes	<u>Meeting Jesus in Prayer: Guided by the Holy Spirit and the Church - Real+True</u> <u>God’s Invitation to a Deeper Relationship Through Prayer - Real+True</u> <u>https://www.realtrue.org/videos/how-to-experience-a-deep-personal-</u>

Scripture: Luke 24: 13-35		Session 19: Come Again In Glory			relationship-with-god-through-prayer/
Month Five: Encounter with Scripture Session Objective: The baptized candidate and their family will discover the richness of praying with scripture outside of the Holy Mass. Foundational Connection: Catechism of the Catholic Church: 683 Scripture: Acts 2: 1-13		Supplemental Session with another platform (Bible focused) Use the Bible	Supplemental Session with another platform (Bible focused) Use the Bible	What Catholics Believe about Scripture A session answering some of the most popular questions about Sacred Scripture 8 minutes	The Big 3: Scripture, Tradition, and the Magisterium - Real+True Is it possible to live the beatitudes in real life? - Real+True The Ten Commandments: God's Law of Love - Real+True
Month Six: Encounter with the Holy Spirit Session Objective: The baptized candidate and their family embrace the Holy Spirit dwelling within them as a living presence to walk with them in life. Foundational Connection: Catechism of the Catholic Church: 1830-1832 Scripture: Galatians 5: 22-23	Family Session: <i>Signs of Grace Session 2 "The Gifts & Fruits of the Holy Spirit"</i>	Session 20: I Believe in the Holy Spirit	Lesson 4: Recognizing the Holy Spirit	The Wild Goose: God's Love Poured Out Introduction to the Holy Spirit 23 Minutes The Wild Goose: Gifts of the Holy Spirit The greatest gift of the Holy Spirit is the Holy Spirit. The living God gives the gift of himself to those who are baptized. 27 minutes	What does the Catechism say about the Holy Spirit? - Real+True What does is mean to be transformed by the Holy Spirit? - Real+True

Month Seven: Retreat Session Objective: The baptized candidate will attend a retreat to have the opportunity to encounter Jesus deeply and personally through silence, adoration and reflection during their Confirmation preparations. Foundational Connection: Catechism of the Catholic Church: 1309 Scripture: Mark 9: 2-8	Parent Session 3: The Rite of Confirmation <i>(parent sessions found in the back of student activity book)</i> Use Retreat Guide	Use Retreat Guide	Use Retreat Guide		<u>How silence can change your life - Real+True</u>
Month Eight: Called to Mission Session Objective: The baptized candidate and their family focus on making Works of Mercy part of their lives by giving to others through family service activities in their parish and community. Foundational Connection: Catechism of the Catholic Church: 1303 Scripture: Matthew 28: 19-20	Family Session: Signs of Grace Session 5 "Sent on a Mission"	Session 4: Service	Lesson 6: Experiencing God's Love in the Church	<u>A Catholic Moral Vision: Virtue, Grace and the path to happiness</u> How the Church leads us to live a life well. 45 minutes	Use another platform, nothing found on R&T

Month Nine: Life in the Spirit Session Objective: The baptized candidate and their family understand through the sacramental graces of Confirmation they are transformed into missionary disciples for Christ. Foundational Connection: Catechism of the Catholic Church: 2472 Scripture: James 1: 22	Family Session: <i>Signs of Grace</i> <i>Session 1 "Jesus Sends the Holy Spirit"</i>	Session 6: Prayer 101	Session 5: Receiving the Gifts of the Holy Spirit	<u>The Wild Goose: The Spirit Remembers</u> A program that reminds us that the Holy Spirit reminds of us what Jesus has done for us. 25 minutes	<u>The Catechism's Guide to Prayer led by the Holy Spirit - Real+True</u>
Month Ten: Disciples at Home and at Parish <i>Session Objective:</i> The baptized candidate and their family find ways to live as disciples of Christ in their home, the parish and daily life. Foundational Connection: Catechism of the Catholic Church: 1285 Scripture: John 20: 22-23	Family Session: <i>Signs of Grace</i> <i>Session 4 "Receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation"</i>	Supplemental Session on another platform	Lesson 8: Making a difference	<u>The Catholic Parent: Handing on the Faith</u> Parents sharing the ups and downs of making disciples of their children. 15 minutes	<u>The Catholic Mass, Explained by the Catechism - Real+True</u>
Month Eleven: Confirmation Session Objective: The baptized candidate is ready and prepared to complete the Initiation into the Church through the receiving of the Sacrament of Confirmation.			Lesson 7: Celebrating the Sacrament of Confirmation	<u>The Wild Goose: The Breath of God</u> Beautiful presentation for receiving the Holy Spirit. 24 minutes	<u>Signed, sealed, and confirmed - Real+True</u> <u>What happens at Confirmation? - Real+True</u>

Foundational Connection: Catechism of the Catholic Church: 1316 Scripture: Acts 1: 8					
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APPENDIX ONE: Sample Confirmation Structure Plans for the Year: _____

Month One: Gathering Social to - Confirm Parish Registration - Confirm Confirmandi is Baptized Catholic Christian - Enrollment in Confirmation Program - Give Expectations of the Confirmation Program - Confirmation Objection 1 Session - At Home Conversation	Month Two: - Confirmation Objection 2 Session - At Home Conversation	Month Three: - Confirmation Objection 3 Session - At Home Conversation - Sponsor Chat 1 - Saint selection complete
Month Four: - Confirmation Objection 4 Session - At Home Conversation - Family Service Project	Month Five: - Confirmation Objection 5 Session - At Home Conversation - Sponsor Chat 2	Month Six: - Confirmation Objection 6 Session - At Home Conversation - Family Service Project
Month Seven: - Confirmation Objection 7 Session - At Home Conversation - Sponsor Chat 3	Month Eight: - Retreat	Month Nine: - Confirmation Objection 9 Session - At Home Conversation - Family Service Project
Month Ten:	Month Eleven:	

- Confirmation Objection 10 Session - At Home Conversation - Sponsor Chat 4	- Confirmation Conversation with Bishop - Confirmation Mass	
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APPENDIX TWO: Adaptable Confirmation Program Record - a checklist of items completed for Confirmation Preparation

Confirmandi Name										
Item to be Checked/Completed										
Family Parish Registration										
Baptismal Document										
Sponsor Essay										
Saint Selection Paper										
Confirmandi Attendance at In-Person Session with a Parent or Family Member										
Session 1										
Session 2										
Session 3										
Session 4										
Session 5										
Session 6										
Session 7										
Session 8										
Session 9										
Session 10										
Session 11										
At Home Session Completion										

Session 2										
Session 3										
Session 4										
Session 5										
Session 6										
Session 7										
Session 8										
Session 9										
Session 10										
Retreat Attendance Report										
Sponsor Chat Completion Pages										
Parish Mass Attendance & Readiness Letter (By Priest & Coordinator)										
Enrollment & Attendance in Parish Faith Formation Program, Catholic School, or Home School										
Family Service Paper (minimum of 3)										

APPENDIX THREE:

Diocesan Sponsor in Good Standing Form

Diocese of Des Moines

Confirmation Sponsor

We would like your recommendation of this potential sponsor:

Please complete this form by checking any and all of the following phrases that apply to the person being considered as sponsor:

- € is a registered member of a Catholic parish
- € attends Mass each Sunday
- € is a confirmed and practicing Catholic in good standing with the Catholic Church
- € is at least 16 years old
- € (if married) is in a marriage recognized by the Catholic Church

Statement of the Sponsor:

I recognize that in accepting the role of sacramental sponsorship I become responsible to be a model and example to my Confirmation recipient as a committed and active Catholic and to be a support to his/her life-long spiritual growth. I am committed to my Catholic faith, that I, myself have received all three sacraments of initiation (Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Eucharist), and I am not living in a situation which keeps me from properly receiving the sacraments. I try to lead a life in harmony with the faith and the role I am undertaking, by witnessing to the values of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and by seeking to be of service to others for love of Him.

Sponsor's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Sponsor's Pastor: _____ Date: _____

Parish City/Town: _____

APPENDIX FOUR: Sample Session

Month 3: Belonging -- Whole Group Delivery Method

Length: 90 Minutes

Audience: Confirmandi and Parent(s) together

Theme: "Belonging Through Service"

Scripture: Matthew 25:35-40

Catechism: CCC 2447

Session Objective: The baptized confirmandi and their family discover belonging is expressed through service within the Church and community by actively living out the Works of Mercy.

Session Flow (90 Minutes)

Welcome & Community Building (10 Minutes)

Activity: "Where Do I Belong?" As families arrive, have them answer on a sticky note:

- A place where I feel I belong
- A person who helps me feel included

Post answers on a wall or bulletin board.

Leader Connection: Explain that God created us for relationship and community. The Church is not simply a building; it is a family where everyone belongs and everyone has a role.

Opening Prayer (5 Minutes)

Prayer Leader

Loving Father, You call each of us by name and make us part of Your family. Help us recognize Jesus in the people around us. Open our hearts to serve others with love and mercy. May the Holy Spirit guide us to become disciples who help others feel welcomed and valued. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Scripture Proclamation & Reflection (15 Minutes)

Read Matthew 25:35-40

After the reading ask:

1. Who is Jesus talking about in this Gospel?
2. What surprised you about His message?
3. How are serving others and serving Jesus connected?
4. What might this look like for youth today?

Key Teaching Point

Jesus teaches that belonging to Him means caring for others. Christians show they belong to Christ by recognizing His presence in those who are hungry, lonely, sick, or in need.

Large Group Teaching: The Works of Mercy (15 Minutes)

Introduce the concept of the Works of Mercy from CCC 2447.

Corporal Works of Mercy

- Feed the hungry
- Give drink to the thirsty
- Clothe the naked
- Shelter the homeless
- Visit the sick
- Visit the imprisoned
- Bury the dead

Spiritual Works of Mercy

- Counsel the doubtful
- Instruct the ignorant
- Admonish sinners
- Comfort the afflicted
- Forgive offenses
- Bear wrongs patiently
- Pray for the living and the dead

Discussion Prompt

Ask: Which of these Works of Mercy could you do this month?

Family Activity: Mercy Mapping (15 Minutes)

Provide each family with a worksheet divided into three circles:

Home

How can we serve people in our family?

Parish

How can we help at church?

School and Community

How can we serve beyond the parish?

Families write practical examples in each section.

Examples:

- Help younger siblings with homework
- Participate in parish hospitality
- Donate food to a pantry
- Help an elderly neighbor

Invite several families to share one idea from each category.

Interactive Activity: Service Challenge Stations (15 Minutes)

Set up four stations around the room.

Station 1: Food Pantry

Discuss local hunger needs.

Station 2: Parish Hospitality

Identify ways youth can welcome others.

Station 3: Community Cleanup

Brainstorm stewardship of creation.

Station 4: Encouragement Ministry

Write cards for nursing home residents, homebound parishioners, or parish volunteers.

Families spend about 3-4 minutes at each station.

Commitment & Family Service Planning (10 Minutes)

Explain that belonging grows through participation and service. Families choose a service activity to complete before the next session.

Possible options include:

- Food pantry service
- Meal ministry
- Community cleanup
- Parish hospitality ministry

These examples align with suggested family service opportunities within the diocesan guide.

Each family completes:

Our Family Service Commitment

- Activity:
- Date:
- Who will participate:
- How we will share about it next month:

Closing Prayer & Sending Forth (5 Minutes)

Invite families to stand.

Leader

Jesus, thank You for inviting us to belong to Your Church. Help us recognize You in those we serve. Give us the courage to live the Works of Mercy this month. May our families become signs of Your love in our homes, parish, and community.

Amen.

Closing Challenge:

This month, look for one person each day who may need kindness, encouragement, or help. Ask yourself: "How can I show them they belong?"

Take-Home Components

Family Conversation

Discuss:

1. When do you feel most connected to the Church?
2. What service experience has impacted you the most?
3. How does serving others help us belong to Christ?

Sponsor Chat #1 Assignment

Share with your sponsor:

- One way you experienced belonging in the Church.
- One service project you plan to complete.
- How Matthew 25:35-40 speaks to you personally.

Evidence of Completion

Families bring:

- Service Commitment Sheet
- Reflection from their completed service experience (to be shared during a future session)

Sample Session – Month Three Parent & Child Based Delivery Model

Length: 90 Minutes

Session Objective: The baptized confirmandi and their family discover belonging is expressed through service within the Church and community by actively living out the Works of Mercy.

Foundational Connection: CCC 2447

Scripture: Matthew 25:35-40

Opening Gathering (10 Minutes)

Welcome Activity: "Where Do I Belong?"

As families arrive, provide index cards.

Parents Answer:

- Where do you most feel connected to your parish?
- Who helped you feel welcomed in the Church?

Confirmandi Answer:

- Where do you feel you belong?
- Who makes you feel included?

Invite a few volunteers to share.

Leader Introduction

Explain: Every person desires to belong. God created us for relationship with Him and with others. The Church is more than a building. It is God's family where we are welcomed, loved, and called to serve.

Opening Prayer and Scripture (5 Minutes)

Read Matthew 25:35-40.

After the reading ask:

- What stands out?
- How is serving others connected to following Jesus?

Prayer: Lord Jesus, open our eyes to see You in others. Teach us to serve with joyful hearts. Help our families become signs of Your love in our parish and community.

Amen.

Confirmandi Formation Session (40 Minutes)

Theme: "I Belong to the Church"

Activity 1: Human Connection Web (10 Minutes)

Have youth stand in a circle.

Using a ball of yarn:

- One person shares a parish experience.
- They hold the string and toss it to another youth.
- Continue until a web forms.

Discussion:

- What happens if one person lets go?
- How is this like the Church?

Teaching Point: Each person is important within the Body of Christ.

Activity 2: Mercy in Action (15 Minutes)

Place signs around the room:

- Feed the hungry
- Visit the sick
- Comfort the sad
- Pray for others
- Forgive someone
- Welcome strangers

For each station youth identify:

1. What does this mean?
2. How can you do this?
3. Where have you seen this happen?

Explain the Works of Mercy and connect them to CCC 2447.

Activity 3: Service Scenario Challenge (10 Minutes)

Small groups receive scenarios:

- New student sitting alone.
- Neighbor recovering from surgery.
- Family using a food pantry.
- Elderly parishioner unable to attend Mass.

Ask:

- Which Work of Mercy applies?
- What would Jesus do?
- What could you do?

Groups report back.

Confirmandi Reflection (5 Minutes)

Journal Question:

How can I help someone know they belong this month?

Parent Formation Session (40 Minutes)

Theme: "Building Belonging Through Family Discipleship"

Opening Discussion (10 Minutes)

Ask parents:

- When did you first feel you belonged in the Catholic Church?
- Who encouraged your faith?
- What keeps families connected to parish life?

Parent Input: The Importance of Belonging (10 Minutes)

Facilitator shares:

- Children develop faith primarily through relationships.
- Parish participation strengthens family faith.
- Service teaches children that faith is active.

Discuss how belonging comes from:

- Worship
- Community
- Service
- Shared mission

This aligns with the Month Three objective of expressing belonging through service and community.

Small Group Discussion (15 Minutes)

Questions:

1. What prevents families from feeling connected?
2. What parish ministries have blessed your family?
3. Where could your family serve together?
4. How can service become a regular family habit?

Record ideas on chart paper.

Parent Reflection (5 Minutes)

Write down: One way our family can become more engaged in parish life before next month.

Confirmandi and Parent Reunion Activity (20 Minutes)

Bring parents and children back together.

Family Service Planning Sheet

Families discuss:

At Home: How can we serve one another?

Parish: How can we participate more fully?

School or Community: Who needs our help?

Complete: Our Family Service Commitment

- Service Project:
- Date:
- Family Members Involved:
- Work of Mercy Demonstrated:
- What We Hope to Learn:

Suggested projects include food pantry support, community cleanups, parish hospitality, and meal ministries.

Sharing and Commitment (10 Minutes)

Invite families to share:

- One idea they learned tonight.
- Their chosen service project.

Leader reminds everyone:

Belonging to Christ means participating in His mission. We encounter Jesus when we serve others.

Closing Prayer & Sending Forth (5 Minutes)

Invite everyone to pray together.

Jesus, Thank You for making us members of Your Church. Help us recognize Your presence in people who are hurting, lonely, and in need. Give us hearts willing to serve. Help our families grow in faith, community, and love. Amen.

Take-Home Components

Family Conversation

Discuss during the month:

1. Where have we experienced belonging in our parish?
2. Which Work of Mercy comes most naturally to our family?
3. Which Work of Mercy challenges us the most?
4. Where did we see Jesus in another person this week?

Sponsor Chat #1

Discuss with the sponsor:

- A place where you feel you belong in the Church.
- A Work of Mercy you would like to practice this month.
- How Matthew 25:35-40 helps you understand discipleship.

Family Service Assignment

Complete one family service activity and prepare to share:

- What you did
- Who you served
- Where you saw Christ in the experience

Small Group Delivery Method

Sample Session Month Three

What Stays the Same

- Matthew 25:35-40 Scripture reflection.
- Teaching on CCC 2447 and the Works of Mercy.
- Focus on service as an expression of belonging
- Family service challenge.
- Sponsor Chat #1 assignment.

What Changes

1. Less Teaching, More Discussion

Instead of a 15-minute lecture on the Works of Mercy, you might shorten it to 5-7 minutes and allow families to discuss:

"When has someone helped your family feel like you belong?"

"What parish ministries have impacted your family?"

Three families together will often generate richer conversations than a catechist presentation.

2. Families Learn From Each Other

In the Parent & Child Separated model, parents only hear from other parents and youth only hear from youth.

In the Family Small Group model:

- Parents share their experiences and service traditions.
- Youth hear faith stories from other adults.
- Families begin building parish friendships.

This directly reinforces the belonging objective.

3. A Shared Service Project Could Be Planned

Rather than each family choosing a separate project:

Option A

- Family A works at food pantry.
- Family B cleans parish grounds.
- Family C visits nursing home.

Option B (preferred) All three families choose one project:

- Parish hospitality Sunday
- Food pantry collection
- Community cleanup
- Advent giving tree project

The shared experience builds relationships between families.

4. Discussion Questions Become More Relational

Instead of: "How can your family serve?"

Ask: "How can our small group of families serve together?"

Or "What needs do we see in our parish right now?"

5. End With Intercessory Prayer

A beautiful ending would be:

Each family shares:

- One blessing
- One challenge
- One service commitment

Then the other families pray for them. This helps create the discipleship community envisioned by the Family Small Group model.

APPENDIX FIVE: Terms

Confirmandi

Confirmation

Sponsor

Saint Name

Holy Spirit

Works of Mercy

Discipleship

DRAFT

APPENDIX SIX: Prayer Services

Lectio Divina

Rosary

Prayer Walk

Adoration

Evening Prayer

DRAFT

APPENDIX SEVEN: Activities for Younger Adolescents

Faith scavenger hunt

Saint research

Prayer journal

Bible challenge

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APPENDIX EIGHT: Activities for Older Adolescents

Service leadership

Testimony night

Small groups

Retreat leadership

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APPENDIX NINE: Sponsor Chat Questions

Sponsor Chat 1

Theme: Discovering God's voice through Scripture

Older adolescents

God's hopes in Scripture — "What do you think God hopes we discover when we spend time with Scripture?" (Requires theological reflection and abstraction.)

Biblical person you relate to — "Which biblical person do you most relate to and why?" (Involves self-understanding and symbolic thinking.)

Praying vs. reading Scripture — "How might praying with Scripture be different from simply reading it?" (Invites deeper spiritual insight.)

Asking Jesus about Scripture — "If Jesus sat down with you to explain a passage, what would you ask Him?" (Requires imagination, personal faith reflection, and abstract reasoning.)

Scripture guiding decisions — "How can Scripture guide decisions you make in everyday life?" (Connects moral reasoning to real-world choices.)

Younger Adolescents

Favorite Bible story — "Do you have a favorite Bible story or passage? Why does it stand out to you?" (Simple, personal, and accessible.)

Comfort reading Scripture — "How comfortable do you feel reading Scripture on your own?" (Helps them express confidence level without requiring deep abstraction.)

Bible verse in real life — "Have you ever experienced a Bible verse speaking directly to something happening in your life?" (Encourages storytelling and concrete connections.)

Questions about the Bible — "What questions do you have about the Bible?" (Open-ended but still grounded in curiosity.)

Paying attention at Mass — "When you hear Scripture at Mass, what helps you pay attention and connect with it?" (Relates directly to their lived experience.)

Sponsor Chat 2

Theme: Encountering Jesus personally through prayer, reflection, and silence

Older adolescents

Learning about yourself — "What did you learn about yourself during the retreat?" (Requires introspection and self-evaluation.)

Faith challenged — "Did anything challenge your understanding of faith during the retreat?" (Invites deeper theological or personal reflection.)

Jesus inviting growth — "How do you think Jesus is inviting you to grow after this experience?" (Abstract, forward-looking spiritual discernment.)

Relationship with Jesus — "How has your relationship with Jesus changed, if at all, through this retreat?" (Requires reflection on interior spiritual movement.)

Younger adolescents

Most meaningful part — "What was the most meaningful part of your retreat experience?" (Straightforward, experience-based.)

Feeling close to God — “Where did you feel closest to God during the retreat?” (Helps them identify simple emotional or sensory moments.)

Talk or activity that stayed with you — “Was there a talk, prayer, Scripture passage, or activity that stayed with you? Why?” (Encourages storytelling without requiring deep abstraction.)

Comfort with silence — “How comfortable are you with silence and personal prayer?” (Concrete self-assessment.)

Distractions — “What distractions make it difficult for you to hear God’s voice?” (Easy for younger teens to identify.)

Practices to continue — “What practices from the retreat would you like to continue in your daily life?” (Helps them connect retreat habits to everyday life.)

Sponsor Chat 3

Theme: Living as a disciple in everyday life

Older Adolescents

Discipleship today — “What do you think being a disciple of Jesus looks like in today’s world?” (Requires broader cultural and spiritual reflection.)

Opportunities to serve or lead — “Where do you see opportunities to serve or lead within your parish?” (Invites vocational thinking and leadership awareness.)

Understanding of discipleship changing — “How has your understanding of discipleship changed during the Confirmation process?” (Reflective and developmental.)

Using God-given gifts — “What gifts has God given you that can be used to strengthen your school, team, or parish community?” (Requires self-assessment and application.)

Future Catholic adult — “What kind of Catholic adult do you hope to become in the future?” (Abstract, forward-looking, and identity-based.)

Younger adolescents

Practicing faith at home — “How can you practice your faith more intentionally at home?” (Straightforward and rooted in daily habits.)

Parish’s role — “What role does your parish play in your faith journey?” (Helps them identify familiar supports.)

Showing Christ’s love — “How do you show Christ’s love to your family and friends?” (Concrete actions they can name easily.)

Challenges living faith openly — “What challenges make it difficult to live your faith openly?” (Younger teens can identify simple obstacles: peer pressure, busyness.)

Habits that connect to God — “What habits help you stay connected to God throughout the week?” (Fits their developmental stage and daily routines.)

Family support — “How can your family support one another in faith?” (Relatable and grounded in home life.)

Optional Questions for the Weeks after Confirmation

Older adolescents

Learning about yourself — “What did you learn about yourself through this experience?” (Requires introspection and self-evaluation.)

Challenged to live differently — “How has Confirmation challenged you to live differently?” (Invites deeper moral and spiritual reflection.)

Called to serve — “Where do you feel called to serve others?” (Connects identity to mission.)

Growing as a disciple — “How do you hope to continue growing as a disciple of Jesus?” (Forward-looking and reflective.)

Younger adolescents

Most memorable part — “What was the most memorable part of your Confirmation day?” (Straightforward and rooted in experience.)

Emotions during Mass — “What emotions did you experience during the Mass and anointing?” (Helps them name feelings without deep abstraction.)

Moment that stayed with you — “What moment from the celebration has stayed with you the most?” (Encourages simple storytelling.)

Explaining Confirmation — “How would you explain Confirmation to a friend who has never received it?” (Concrete and accessible.)

Meaning of being confirmed — “What does being ‘confirmed’ mean to you now?” (Allows basic expression of understanding.)

Gratitude — “What are you most grateful for from this experience?” (Relatable and grounded in emotion.)

APPENDIX TEN: Family Service Opportunities

Food pantry

Meal ministry

Community cleanup

Parish hospitality

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