

Confirmation Preparation at Risen Savior Catholic Community

Mission Statement:

Risen Savior's Confirmation Preparation Program readies those 13-18 years of age to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation as part of their ongoing faith journey. Opportunities are provided for service, fellowship, and faith building which allow candidates to connect with the community, use the gifts of the Spirit in witnessing to their faith, and demonstrate sincerity in their desire to be confirmed.

Confirmation at Risen Savior: A Three-Year Journey

Why does Risen Savior have a three-year program? is an oft-asked question. Simply put, it is for the convenience of our candidates. A shorter, more concentrated program would require weekly meetings and force participants to choose between church and other valuable activities. Instead, our program is spread over three years, culminating in the celebration of the sacrament at the end of preparation.

Confirmation Preparation usually begins in 8th grade. In this first year of Confirmation Preparation, candidates participate in 6 home classes, 2 church classes, a mini-retreat, a class service project, a class social, and an Archdiocesan function. Typically, 9th graders are enrolled in Year II, and 10th graders in Year III. However, everyone, whether in public, private, or parochial (Catholic) school, must successfully complete both Year II and Year III, regardless of grade in school. So there may be both 8th and 9th graders in Year I, 9th, 10th, and 11th graders in Confirmation Year II, and 10th, 11th, and 12th graders in Confirmation Year III.

St. Pius Students

Those who attend the school participate in the Confirmation Preparation Program offered at the parish where their family is registered in order to connect with their parish community. At Risen Savior, they are expected to attend for two years (Years II and III). Service hours earned at Risen Savior may be counted toward service hours at St. Pius.

Expectations:

Those who seek to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation are expected to demonstrate their readiness by attending Mass regularly; attending the preparation classes as set forth at orientation; being responsible regarding their service projects and ministries; attending the Confirmation Retreat; and showing their willingness to use the gifts of the Spirit in all these endeavors.

It is important to keep in mind always that this process does not involve simply an individual being prepared, but is family-centered. Support from the community, parents, siblings, and other family members is crucial.

Although this program is structured, the coordinator is flexible and is willing to adapt the program to the individual candidate's needs. If you have concerns about the program and your ability to complete the requirements as stated, please contact the coordinator **before** enrolling in the program.

Participation in sports, music, debate, dance, driver's education, and other academic and extra-curricular activities is considered important by students, parents, and those of us who work in the church. Feeding the mind and body in this way is important. However, feeding the soul is vital. Risen Savior considers living one's faith to be an integrated priority: living your faith should be part of who you are, whether student, artist, dancer, athlete, politician, or dedicated couch potato! Even so, it is imperative that potential Confirmation candidates and their families understand and accept the responsibilities of participating in a Confirmation preparation program. If a candidate fails to live up to the responsibilities set forth in Risen Savior's Confirmation program, that candidate is choosing to delay Confirmation.

Cost:

As of August 2007, cost of the three-year Confirmation Preparation program is \$120.00. If you begin in Confirmation Year I, the breakdown is \$40 a year; if you begin in Year II, it is \$60 a year; if you enter the program in Year III, it's \$120. This fee goes toward actual costs, including books, retreats, and class materials, as well as refreshments at certain events and the Confirmation reception. The costs above the fee are covered by Risen Savior. (The retreat in Confirmation Year III alone is between \$60-75 per person.) If, however, the fee is a burden, please let us know. No one will be denied entry into the Confirmation Program for monetary reasons.

Structure of the Confirmation Program

For each of the three years of Confirmation preparation:

Registration is accomplished by mail or in person, from March through August;

Orientation for candidates and parents is in September, usually the 2nd or 3rd Sunday;

The **Service** requirement varies, depending on the year of preparation;

All candidates are expected to participate in an ongoing **Social Justice** project of their choosing;

Classes, both in homes and at church, run from October through May.

The remaining structure of each year of Confirmation Preparation is as follows:

Confirmation Year I:

Retreat – November

All-class Service Project – December

Social – January

Archdiocesan Event (or other community event) – February

Confirmation Year II:

Retreat - January

Service Projects – August through May

Exit Interviews – April/May

Confirmation Year III:

Retreat - October

Ministry – normally September through May

Exit Interviews – March/April

Candidate/Sponsor Morning of Reflection – April

Confirmation Mass (TBD by the Archbishop) – April/May/June

Out-of-Parish

If you are enrolling in Risen Savior's Confirmation program but are registered at another parish – or are registered here as "Religious Ed Only" – you need to understand Risen Savior's expectations. You are expected to fully participate in the program here. You may not "piecemeal" your Confirmation preparation by attending classes here and doing service at your registered parish to count toward a Confirmation requirement. When you register at Risen Savior, you are expected to fulfill the same requirements as every other candidate in the program, including service at or through this parish. (Likewise, if you are a Risen Savior parishioner and you opt to prepare for Confirmation at another parish, you are expected to follow their procedures.)

Classes:

Candidates gather in both large and small faith-sharing groups. In order to honor the busy schedules of our youth and families, these classes are offered at different times and are held approximately once a month. Two (2) of the classes are for candidates and parents (large-group setting) and are held on-site on Sunday mornings or evenings. Six (6) of these classes are for candidates (small-group setting) and are held off-site in the homes of the facilitators. The texts used in all three years of preparation are the Catholic Youth Bible and the Catechism of the Catholic Church is added. Additional activities from other approved sources and guest speakers are also utilized. *Attendance at all classes is expected.*

Parent Involvement & a Safe Environment for our Youth

Parents and families are an integral part of the Confirmation Preparation process. All parents are considered volunteers, and must complete the 3-hour Safe Environment Workshop offered by the Archdiocese of Santa Fe. The workshop only needs to be taken once, and parents may sign up by calling the Archdiocese at 831-8159. (Also, although occurrences of this are rare, any participant who is 18 years old must also attend the Safe Environment Workshop.) As volunteers, parents help with Home Classes, group projects, retreats, and other events. They are encouraged to seek the Sacrament of Confirmation themselves if they have not yet done so, and continue in their own faith formation.

Confirmation Paperwork

During the Confirmation Preparation process, there is paperwork that must be completed. This includes the following items which are due during **Confirmation Year III**:

- **Saint Report:** a one-page report on a saint whose name the candidate has chosen for a Confirmation name. *Due in October of Year III.*
- **Ministry Reflection:** A one-page summary of the ministry in which the candidate served as part of Confirmation Year III. *Due at exit interview. (February or March)*
- **Social Justice Poster:** Poster with pictures and information highlighting the candidate's Social Justice project, including one of the 7 themes of Social Justice and the work done in this area over the 3-year Confirmation program. *Due the end of January in Year III*
- **Official Confirmation Registry Form:** This document requires information which will be entered in the official records of the Church following the Confirmation Mass. It includes the candidate's full name (including the Confirmation name), parents' names as they appear on the baptismal certificate, the name and address of the baptizing parish, and the Confirmation sponsor's name and parish. *Due in October of Year III.*
- **Letter to the Archbishop:** This one-page typed letter, addressed to Archbishop Michael Sheehan and signed by hand by the candidate, addresses three questions: What do I like about being Catholic? Why do I want to be confirmed? How do I plan to stay involved in the Church and continue growing in faith following Confirmation? *Due at exit interview (February or March)* Must be grammatically perfect! (Help is available for the spelling-impaired!)

Suggested format for letter:

Today's Date

Dear Most Reverend Archbishop Michael Sheehan:

Introductory paragraph: Name, grade, school, interests

Paragraph #1: What I like about being Catholic is...

Paragraph #2: I want to be confirmed because... (might want to mention your Confirmation name)

Paragraph #3: In order to continue growing in my Catholic Faith, I plan to... or I plan to stay involved in my Church by...

Concluding Paragraph: I look forward to being confirmed/seeing you on _____.

Sincerely, or In Faith, or In God's Love, or Yours Truly

Sign your name

Type your name