

CONFIRMATION for YOUTH

“Young people grow in their Catholic faith by falling in love with the person and message of Jesus Christ, and mature in faith when they let that love form and transform them within the Church, a community of disciples. Adolescent catechesis is one stage of a lifelong process of embracing the Catholic way of life that forms young disciples by empowering them to know and follow Christ in their daily lives, thus becoming leaven for the Kingdom of God in the world.” (NATIONAL INITIATIVE ON ADOLESCENT CATECHESIS, VISION AND OUTCOMES STATEMENT, 2009)

“The most effective catechetical programs for adolescents are integrated into a comprehensive program of pastoral ministry for youth that includes catechesis, community life, evangelization, justice and service, leadership development, pastoral care and prayer and worship. (NATIONAL DIRECTORY FOR CATECHESIS 48.4.D.)

*It is with this understanding of catechesis for adolescents that the **Pastoral Plan** for the Archdiocese called forth parishes to “have an on-going, age-appropriate, comprehensive youth ministry program” that incorporates the elements noted above. This model embraces and invites the youth to become disciples in Christ and to become part of an active Catholic community.*

The Archdiocese of Santa Fe has a Comprehensive Model for Youth Ministry which journeys with our young people through High School and their preparation for Confirmation. . . . The purpose of the model [is] to ensure that young people [are] not only receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation but also continuing their faith formation and staying active in the Catholic faith.”¹

Those who have been baptized continue on the path of Christian initiation through the Sacrament of Confirmation. In this sacrament, they receive the Holy Spirit whom the Lord sent upon the apostles on Pentecost. (ORDER OF CONFIRMATION #1)

- 1 Pastors are to encourage youth (high school aged – grades 9th thru 12th) in their parish who have not received the Sacrament of Confirmation to receive it.
- 2 The ordinary age for Confirmation in the Archdiocese of Santa Fe is during High School years (grades 9th through 12th). The Confirmation name chosen by the candidate must be the name of a Saint or a Blessed. The candidate may choose his/her Baptismal name as long as said name is the name of a Saint or Blessed.
 - 2.1 Catechumens are to participate in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults and Children and receive the Sacrament of Confirmation at the Easter Vigil. (GUIDELINES FOR THE RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION FOR ADULTS, ARCHDIOCESE OF SANTA FE AND FAQs.)
 - 2.2 For those who are 18 years of age and older, out of high school and who have delayed the reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation: See the *Guidelines for Adult Confirmation Archdiocese of Santa Fe*.
- 3 According to Canon 852 §1, children with the use of reason who are seeking Baptism or full communion have the same rights as adults. Therefore, if children are unbaptized, they are normally to be fully initiated at the Easter Vigil; that is, they are to celebrate Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist. This is required, except for grave reason, by Canon 866 and the *RITE OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF ADULTS, National Statutes of the Catechumenate #18 and #35*. If children (*baptized, non-Catholic*) are received into the faith, whether at the Easter Vigil or a Sunday Eucharist, they are to celebrate both Confirmation and Eucharist. No special permission or delegation is needed.

¹ Letter from Archbishop John C. Wester on Adolescent Catechesis, September 19, 2015.

- 4 Request for the Sacrament of Confirmation to be celebrated in a parish is made through the Archbishop's Office.
 - 4.1 Confirmation is mainly to be celebrated during the Easter Season (Paschaltide).
- 5 Pastors and parents are to ascertain that the person to be confirmed has chosen freely to receive this Sacrament. In the latter stages of preparation each candidate should indicate by letter to the Archbishop, his or her desire to receive the sacrament on the occasion offered. Instructions on preparing and sending the letters will be provided to the parish by the Archbishop's office.
 - 5.1 No person shall be coerced into reception of the sacrament.
 - 5.2 A discernment process, not a written quantifying test, should be used to determine readiness to receive the sacrament.²
- 6 Pastors are to make sure that proof of Baptism is established for all candidates to be confirmed.
- 7 Pastors shall urge those to be confirmed to approach the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation prior to the celebration of Confirmation, unless the candidate is a catechumen.³
- 8 Each candidate to be confirmed shall have an individual sponsor. To be admitted as a sponsor the following prescriptions must be met (*CIC 893; 874, §1*):
 - 8.1 be designated by the one to be confirmed, by the parents or the one who takes their place or, in their absence, by the pastor or minister and have the qualifications and intention of performing this role;
 - 8.2 be at least 16 years of age, unless the pastor or minister judges that an exception is to be made for a just cause;
 - 8.3 be a Catholic who has been confirmed and has already received the Sacrament of the Most Holy Eucharist and leads a life in harmony with the faith and the role to be undertaken;⁴
 - 8.4 not be bound by any canonical penalty legitimately imposed or declared;⁵
 - 8.5 not be the father or the mother of the one to be confirmed.

² "Interview Questions," *Comprehensive Model of Youth Ministry, Helping Young People Become Disciples of Jesus: The Parish Response*, Archdiocese of Santa Fe, January 12, 2017, pp. 16 & 26.

³ A catechumen is an unbaptized person. If the person was baptized in another Christian communion, he/she is not a catechumen.

⁴ Care must be taken in the interpretation of "leads a life in harmony with the faith and the role to be undertaken." It should not be interpreted too strictly. Under no circumstances are the ministers to use the celebration of the sacrament of Confirmation as a means to force godparents to enter into a sacramental marriage. However, in those cases where their marital status can be rectified, they should be encouraged to do so. Married sponsors should be in a valid marriage. Rare exceptions may be made by the pastor. Use of the form "Affidavit of Eligibility for the Ministry of Baptism or Confirmation Sponsor" assists pastors with their responsibility in this regard.

⁵ These are legitimately imposed penalties by a Tribunal of the Church. No one may impose his own penalties. Penalties in the Church must be imposed or declared by a judicial process (e.g. excommunications, suspensions, interdicts).

- 9 Each candidate shall have only one Confirmation Sponsor, unless the candidate chooses his/her Baptismal Sponsors. It is desirable that the one(s) who undertook the role of sponsor at Baptism be sponsor for Confirmation. (CIC 893, §2)
- 10 Preparation for candidates for Confirmation should ordinarily be offered in parishes each year that there are youth who have discerned and are ready to embrace in the *Disciple in Training* Phase of the Comprehensive Model for Youth Ministry.⁶
- 11 A pastor may not present a member of another parish for Confirmation without the permission of the proper pastor.
- 12 Confirmation preparation is one of many opportunities for ongoing faith formation in the life of young people. It is the obligation of parents to see that their children continue to participate in the catechesis and other faith formation offered by the parish throughout their high school years, even after the celebration of Confirmation. The norm in the Archdiocese of Santa Fe is for Confirmation preparation to be a minimum two-year formation program that is made up of three phases⁷ and will include the following:
 - 12.1 Prior to entrance into the final preparation period for Confirmation, young people should have recently completed at least one year of catechesis or religious formation at the parish. Known as the *Learner Phase* of the Comprehensive Model for Youth Ministry, this first year may take place for adolescents in 8th grade.
 - 12.2 A final period of Confirmation preparation is the *Disciple in Training Phase*, it is one year long, and is held at the local parish for all candidates, including those attending Catholic high schools (9th thru 12th grade). This preparation is to include orientation, catechesis on the Sacrament of Confirmation, spiritual and community outreach activities, retreats⁸, and the practical and liturgical arrangements for the celebration.
 - 12.3 During the final period of preparation for Confirmation, sessions will be included, using faith sharing and other adult formation methods,⁹ for parents and sponsors; thereby enabling parents and sponsors to better fulfill their mentoring roles.
 - 12.4 Catechesis for Catholic youth across the four years of high school before and after Confirmation is to be based on the doctrinal content described in the 2008 USCCB curriculum framework. The topics include: 1) The Revelation of Jesus Christ in Scripture; 2) Who is Jesus Christ?; 3) The Mission of Jesus Christ (The Paschal Mystery); 4) Jesus Christ's Mission Continues in the Church; 5) Sacraments as Privileged Encounters with Jesus Christ; and 6) Life in Jesus Christ. For a complete outline of the content, see *Adaptation of the Doctrinal Elements of a Curriculum Framework for the Development of Catechetical Materials for Young People of High School Age for Use in Parish and Youth Ministry Programs*. (RENEWING THE VISION: A FRAMEWORK FOR CATHOLIC YOUTH MINISTRY [USCCB] AND NATIONAL DIRECTORY FOR CATECHESIS [USCCB])

⁶ *National Directory for Catechesis*: "Catechesis for Confirmation/Chrismation," pp. 122-123 and "Section D: Catechesis of Adolescents," pp. 199-201.

⁷ *Comprehensive Model of Youth Ministry*

⁸ Retreats involving youth must follow the *Archdiocese of Santa Fe Guideline for Youth Retreats*. Orientations and copies can be obtained from the Office of Youth, Young Adult and Campus Ministry.

⁹ *General Directory for Catechesis*, #87 and *National Directory for Catechesis*, pp.191-193.

- 13 Whenever possible a parish community is to have a Coordinator of Youth Ministry who assists the pastor and others on the parish staff in designing and coordinating the parish's Comprehensive Model of Youth Ministry. Proper selection of catechists and youth ministers who are trained in the documents of the Second Vatican Council, Church documents related to youth ministry¹⁰ and the Archdiocesan Comprehensive Model of Youth Ministry¹¹ is of importance.
- 14 Those who have received the Sacraments of Initiation or have come through the Rite of Christian Initiation, entering into full communion with the Catholic Church, who have been validly confirmed in their church (a true particular Church), are not to be confirmed again.¹²
 - 14.1 These youth, who have already received the Sacrament of Confirmation, should begin their life-long-formation in the *Disciple in Ministry* phase of their parish's Comprehensive Model of Youth Ministry. (Formation sessions continue covering Advocacy, Catechesis, Community Life, Evangelization, Justice and Service, Leadership, and Pastoral Care with the focus on the importance of serving as active participants in the Mission of Jesus.)
- 15 No fee or offering in connection with the administration of the Sacrament of Confirmation may be required from those who are to be confirmed or from their parents or sponsors.
- 16 The following norms apply to the faculty of the pastor, parochial vicar, dean (vicar forane) or the presbyter who legitimately takes their place, to confirm.¹³
 - 16.1 The minister described above who baptizes one who is no longer an infant, has by universal law the faculty to confirm. (*cf. CIC 852, 866, 883, §2*)
 - 16.2 The minister described above who receives into full communion one who is no longer an infant and was baptized in a non-Catholic community, employs by universal law the faculty to confirm. (*CIC 883, §2*)
- 17 The pastor, parochial vicar, dean (vicar forane) or the presbyter who legitimately takes their place needs special delegation to confirm formerly uncatechized Catholics either at the Easter Vigil or at any other time of the year. The request for delegation for the minister of the sacrament must be submitted in writing by the pastor of the parish to the Archbishop of Santa Fe.

¹⁰ *Renewing the Vision: A Framework for Catholic Youth Ministry* (August 2010); *National Initiative on Adolescent Catechesis Volume 1* (2008); *National Initiative on Adolescent Catechesis Volume 2* (2009); *Archdiocese of Santa Fe Pastoral Plan* (2006).

¹¹ *Comprehensive Model of Youth Ministry Helping Young People Become Disciples of Jesus: The Parish Response*, (January 12, 2017).

¹² A true particular Church, according to the *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church* of the Second Vatican Council, *Lumen Gentium*, paragraph 15, and the declaration of the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith, *Dominus Iesus*, paragraph 17, must have a valid Apostolic Succession and thus a valid Eucharist. Examples of true Churches are all Eastern Orthodox, Assyrian Church of the East, Polish National Church, and the Old Catholic Church. Anglican, Episcopalian, Lutheran, or other non-Orthodox Confirmations are not recognized as valid. To make sure that the confirmation is recognized as valid it is best to contact the Archdiocese of Santa Fe Tribunal Office at 505-831-8177.

¹³ Other presbyters need explicit delegation from the Archbishop for the validity of the sacrament. Please note that the same priest who baptizes, or welcomes someone into full communion with the Church, is the one that enjoys the faculty to confirm. The two actions must be celebrated by the same priest; otherwise, the confirmation is invalid.

- 18 For uncatechized Catholics, after proper formation, to complete their initiation at the Easter Vigil, or any other time of year, the presider needs special delegation to confirm them at the Easter Vigil. The pastor is to ask for permission in writing from the Archbishop of Santa Fe.
- 19 Any presbyter may confirm in case of danger of death. (*CIC 883, §3*)
- 20 Deacons may not confirm under any circumstances.
- 21 In preparing the liturgical celebration, the directives of the liturgical books¹⁴ are to be followed.
- 22 As soon as possible, the pastor is to see that the proper information is entered into the parish Register of Confirmation according to the *Sacramental Records Policy (2008)* of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe. The following information must be entered:
 - 22.1 Name of the confirmed
 - 22.2 Name of parents
 - 22.3 Date and place of Baptism
 - 22.4 Name of sponsors
 - 22.5 Name of the minister
 - 22.6 Date and place of conferral of Confirmation.
- 23 The pastor is also to see that the proper information is sent to the church of record (i.e. parish of Baptism) so that the proper entry may be made in the Baptismal Register in accord with the norms of canon 535, §2. (*cf. CIC 895*)
- 24 Sacramental records for those who are confirmed at an Archdiocesan Adult Confirmation Liturgy must be entered in the Confirmation register of the parish where they were prepared for the Sacrament of Confirmation, not the parish where Confirmation took place.
- 25 When parishes combine to celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation, sacramental records for those who are confirmed must be entered in the Confirmation register of the parish where they were prepared, not the parish where Confirmation took place.

¹⁴ *Order of Confirmation and Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults.*