STUDENT HANDBOOK

Confirmation Process

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ST. LOUIS DE MONTFORT CHURCH
STUDENT HANDBOOK
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PREFACE

Archbishop Jose H. Gomez, from the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, has bestowed one of many important tasks to the Department of Religious Education of St Louis de Montfort Church: and that is to give the best Sacramental preparation possible to its faithful. This preparation is not possible without a well-organized and detail scheme of its programs. Therefore, at St Louis de Montfort, we believe that this handbook, written with the candidate, parent and sponsor in mind, serves as a guide to understand how this process works and it addresses many important concerns and answers key questions for those adolescents preparing to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. In it you will find a well detailed description of the program, its Mission statement and philosophy, its requirements and rules, important information from the Archdiocese of Los Angeles guidelines pertaining the role and expectations of the parents and sponsors, the different stages of the process and the importance of retreats and the spiritual growth. Discipleship, which is the definition of Christian service or faith in action, is also an important element in our Confirmation process. In this handbook, you will find a detail explanation of the service experience. Furthermore, we as a church cannot ignore that in today’s technological world, people communicate through social media. We feel a responsibility to bring the Church’s teachings into what Pope Benedict XVI called “the digital continent”. Therefore, you will also find information regarding our SLDM social media. In addition, you will find in the Appendix information regarding our faith and where in the bible or Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) can you find it, in case you run into questions pertaining to our faith. In conclusion, this document is not meant to be use as a preparation guide, rather, an informative instruction concerning our Confirmation process. We pray that you will find this useful. We are so eager to walk with you in this journey of faith.

“Let no one look down on you because of your youth, but be a continuing example of love, faith and purity to believers”
-1 Timothy 4:12
WELCOME TO CONFIRMATION

Dear parents and Candidates,

The Archdiocese of Los Angles, Archbishop José Gómez, our pastor Rev. Aidan Rossiter CJ, all the associate priests and the community of St. Louis de Montfort, want to welcome you to the _________________ Teen Confirmation preparation program. We are happy to have you with us this year. It promises to be an exciting time of growing in faith and strengthening our relationship with friends and family. Most importantly, this preparation will be a challenging time for us to examine the place of Jesus and the Holy Spirit in our lives. This program is for those who have received the sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion and who desire to be confirmed.

Pope St. John Paul II called the youth his hope. We, the community of St. Louis de Montfort, are putting our hope in you. We are counting on you to participate fully in the program and to become strong Christian leaders in our community; your community. The Confirmation Program could be a very long process, full of many challenges. Therefore, we ask all the parents for your unconditional support. Along with the entire Archdiocese of Los Angeles, we invite you to be open to the Holy Spirit, to be open to the call and love of Christ and to see what difference the Sacrament of Confirmation can make in your personal life.

We have entered into a new era in the Church and a new Confirmation program. This is a unique and special time for you to be preparing for Confirmation. Christ our Lord has high hopes for you, and we do too.

God bless you on your journey,

Luis Oros
Confirmation and Youth Ministry

Rev. Aidan Rossiter CJ
Pastor
UNDERSTANDING THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION

The New Testament shows how the Holy Spirit was with Christ to bring the Messiah’s mission to fulfillment. On receiving the baptism of John, Jesus saw the Spirit descend on him (see Mk 1:10), and remain with him. He was led by the Spirit to undertake his public ministry as the Messiah, relying on the Spirit’s presence and assistance. He later promised his disciples that the Holy Spirit would help them to bear fearless witness to their faith, even before persecutors (see Lk 4:17-21).

The day before he suffered, he assured his apostles that he would send them the Spirit of truth from his Father (see Jn 15:26) to stay with them “forever” (Jn 14:16) and help them to be his witnesses (see Jn 15:26). On the feast of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit did indeed come down in an extraordinary way on the apostles as they were gathered together with Mary the mother of Jesus and the group of disciples. They were so “filled with” the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:4) that by divine inspiration they began to proclaim “the mighty works of God.”

From that time on, the apostles, in fulfillment of Christ’s wish, imparted to the newly baptized by the laying on of hands (Act 8:14), (Acts 19: 1), the gift of the Spirit that completes the grace of baptism. This laying on of hands is rightly recognized by reason of Catholic tradition as the beginning of the sacrament of Confirmation, which in a certain way perpetuates the grace of Pentecost in the Church.

Through the sacrament of Confirmation, those who have been born anew in baptism receive the inexpressible Gift, the Holy Spirit himself, by whom “they are endowed…with special strength” (LG 11). Moreover, having been signed with the character of this sacrament, they are “more closely bound to the Church” (ibid) and they are more strictly obliged to spread and defend the faith, both by word and by deed, as true witness of Christ” (ibid).

From ancient times, the conferring of the gift of the Holy Spirit has been carried out in the Church through various rites. These rites have undergone many changes in the East and the West, but always keeping as their meaning the conferring of the Holy Spirit. The Western Church retained the practice of reserving the celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation to the Bishop. This led to extended delay in administering the Sacrament to the candidate well into childhood and adolescence. Thus, Confirmation became pastorally separated from Baptism and the Eucharist.

In 1971, Pope Paul VI implemented the revision of the Confirmation Rite that was requested by the bishops at Vatican II. With this revision, he desired that “the intimate connection of the sacrament with the whole of Christian initiation may stand out more clearly.”

Since that time, the Latin Church uses the following formula to confer the sacrament of Confirmation: “The sacrament of Confirmation is conferred through the anointing with chrism on the forehead, which is done by the laying on of the hand, and through the words: Be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit.”

1 Taken from the Diocese of Oakland Confirmation Standards, summer 2010, pg. 4.
2 Taken from the Rite of Confirmation, Apostolic Constitution on the Sacrament of Confirmation. Paul VI, 1971.
St. Louis de Montfort Confirmation Program

Our Mission

“To be young is to be attracted to truth, freedom, peace, beauty and goodness. To be young means to be eager to live; to live joyfully, meaningfully.”
-Pope John Paul II

Confirmation is the re-strengthening and the completion of baptismal grace.

“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 the sacrament of Confirmation is necessary for the completion of baptismal grace. 88. 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’.” 89

-1285, Catechism of the Catholic Church

We, the Confirmation Program at St. Louis de Montfort, are committed to continue the Mission of Jesus Christ and his Apostles. Through catechetical study, faith formation, community building and action, we are called to form and prepare new leaders for our Church in a multicultural setting, and through the Church and leadership, they can become the new voice of the poor and social justice, while acting upon the words of God to Jeremiah: 'Do not say, 'I am too young.' You must go to everyone I send you to and say whatever I command you.” Jeremiah 1:7.

Luis Oros
Youth Minister/Confirmation Coordinator
YOUTH MINISTRY PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

The St. Louis de Montfort Youth Ministry, exists to serve and support high school aged young adults in their spiritual growth and profession of Gospel values. Our program strives to prepare each individual and family to be better Christian witnesses to the larger community, by strengthening their foundations in the sacraments, liturgy, and Catholic teachings based on a Vatican II philosophy. We acknowledge a call to every parishioner to share our God-given gifts with each other, through education, prayer, service, and celebration of Christ in our lives.

Important features of our program include:

├ Supporting parents in their role as the primary Christian witnesses and teachers of their children.
├ An emphasis on family, faith sharing, and community service.
├ Serving people diverse in age, stages of life, and special needs.
├ A strong commitment by our enthusiastic catechists.
├ Providing varied ministry formation programs.
├ Adaptability, responding to the rapidly changing needs of a growing parish.
├ Recognition that our faith development is an ongoing process.
├ Our life-long challenge and goal, as a Catholic community, is to create a welcoming spirit, to grow in our faith, and to go forth as sons and daughters of the Creator to share the message of God’s unconditional love through Christ Jesus.
Confirmation Program Requirements

1. Candidates must attend Mass every Sunday:
   3rd Commandment/ The Sabbath Day: “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work; but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God; in it you shall not do any work”.  
   *See the Catechism of the Catholic Church 2168 – 2176.

2. Registration forms, permission slips and any other paper work signed and turned in by deadline. Tuition paid at registration unless other arrangements have been made; Parent & Candidate statement form signed after orientation.

3. Candidates must be present at all Confirmation sessions.

4. Candidates must complete 10 service projects per year prior to Confirmation date. These service projects may be direct or social change. For example: 24 Hour Food Fast for Catholic Charities, Relay for Life, for the American Cancer Society, Break the Barrier, Parish Festival, Good Samaritan Shelter, Turkey Drive, and others.

5. Candidates are expected to be present during yearly retreats & Youth Day. *Failure to attend will result in additional year of confirmation.

6. Candidates must choose a confirmation name (a saint’s name) and do a written report.

7. Choose a Sponsor.

8. Candidates must go through and interview with either the Director of Confirmation or Pastor.

9. Candidates must write a letter to the Bishop asking to get confirmed and why they think they are ready to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation.

10. Candidates must complete all the requirements as stated in the handbook or he/she must repeat the Year.
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CONFIRMATION PREPARATION PROCESS

Year I

**Invitation**
(3-4 Months)

- Parent/Candidate Meeting - Orientation meeting
- Ritual – Beginning the Journey

**Community Building Stage**
(3-4 months)

- Interview
- Sponsor Chosen
- Parent/Sponsor/Candidate Meeting

**Activities**

- Spiritual Development
- Faith Themes/Catechesis
- Retreat/Spiritual Growth

Year II

**Continuing Catechesis Stage**
(Approx. 1 Yr)

- Ritual – Blessings of Sponsors & Candidates
- Ritual – Commitment to the Journey
- Ritual – Affirming Confirmation Candidates
- Spiritual Development
- Faith Themes/Catechesis
- Service

**Sacramental Preparation Stage**
(3-4 Months)

- Spiritual Development
- Retreat/Spiritual Growth

**Activities**

- Faith Themes/Catechesis
- Liturgical Celebrations and Rituals

**Rituals**

- Reconciliation Service
- Family Celebration
- Interview
- Rite of Confirmation
- (Time frame: Easter Season)

**Discipleship Stage** (Ongoing)

- Spiritual Development
- Liturgical Celebrations
- Retreats/Spiritual Growth Activities
- Service
- Faith Sharing
- Youth Ministry Involvement
Confirmation Preparation Process Introduction

Introduction

Maturing in Christian faith is a life-long journey. Confirmation preparation is a process in Christian growth based on the belief that adolescents are at a significant point in their faith journey where they are beginning to establish a personal faith identity. Through sharing their own journey and interaction with others, the candidates are assisted in identifying and understanding how God is working in their lives, and come to a new realization of faith within the context of the parish community.

The goal of the Confirmation Preparation Process is to prepare the high school-aged youth to receive the sacrament and to deepen the faith of the parish community. A justice perspective and sensitivity to the multi-cultural diversity of the Archdiocese are integrated into this program. This process is grounded in a vision of youth ministry in which the parish community responds to the needs of the youth and encourages them to return to share their unique gifts with the parish community (A Vision of Youth Ministry, USCC, 1976).

The following Confirmation Guidelines\(^3\) are molded on the components of Youth Ministry. The Catechetical component provides foundation for prayer and worship, service opportunities, retreat experiences and community building. This process encourages full and active participation of all involved, and calls on the community to celebrate significant moments in the candidates’ faith journey.

The Confirmation Preparation Process is a source of renewal for the whole parish community. The celebration of rituals and the involvement of so many members of the

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parish-priests, parents, sponsors, teams and youth – are sources for inspiration and spiritual renewal for the entire community.

With sensitivity to the various needs and resources of parishes throughout the Archdiocese, these guidelines provide a basic framework for the two-year Confirmation Preparations Process for high school-aged youth. Each parish is encouraged to implement this process by developing a model which responds to the specific needs of their youth.
Program Components

The Confirmation Preparation Process begins at the parish level with the selection of a Confirmation Coordinating Team. Diocesan confirmation workshops and in-service programs are held to assist the team with the implementation of the Guidelines.

Year I

INVITATION STAGE (3-4 months)
The preparation stage is a period during which the youth of the parish are invited to participate in the Confirmation Preparation Process. At this stage, it is important that the coordinator works closely with the local Catholic Schools.

Three to four months prior to the beginning of the Community Building Stage, the parish Confirmation coordinator invites […] non-confirmed high school youth to participate in the Confirmation Preparation Process. The coordinator contacts the local catholic high schools to invite their cooperation in encouraging their students to enter the process.

Parent/Candidate Meeting
The parish Confirmation coordinator meets with interested parents and youth to inform them of the process.

Ritual – Beginning the Journey
This ritual can be part of a prayer service at the end of the Parent/Candidate Orientation Meeting as both begin the confirmation Process.
COMMUNITY BUILDING STAGE (3-4 months)

The goal of the stage is to gradually awaken in the life of the candidate the reality of God and encourage the candidate to participate in the life of the parish community.

Interview
After the candidate accepts the invitation to participate in the Confirmation Preparation process, an interview is held. The purpose of the interview is for the team to meet and begin to establish a relationship with the candidate. The parents could be brought into this first interview.

Sponsor Chosen
The Sponsor is chosen at the beginning of the Community Building stage. The sponsor journeys with the candidate throughout the Confirmation Preparation Process. This relationship is one of faith-sharer, witness, guide and friend to the candidate.

Parent/Sponsor/Candidate Meeting
A meeting for parents, sponsors, and candidates is held to introduce the Confirmation Preparation Process to all three groups and to help each group to understand their respective role.

MEETING

Spiritual Development
Growth in the life of the Spirit within each candidate is essential to the Confirmation Preparation Process. Consequently, programs include components that encourage and promote spiritual growth and understanding. These components include the presentation of faith themes and the offering of retreats and day of recollection for candidates, parents, sponsors and team.

Faith Themes/Catechesis
The emphasis during this stage is on sharing the faith journey and growing as a faith community. This involves sharing in the following areas:

- Journey/Faith Story
- The Person of Jesus
- The Call to Follow Jesus
- Personal Giftedness
- Service

Retreat/Spiritual Growth Activities
The retreat or day of recollection is a concentrated time away from normal activities and environment dedicated to reflection on the experience of God in our lives.
Retreats are an important aspect of spiritual growth and instrumental in building community. At the same time, it is important to recognize that such reflection and inclusion into community must be entered into by choice. Retreats and days of recollection for Confirmation preparation are included along with other options for spiritual renewal so that the reflection is genuine and is a response in freedom to the invitation of our loving God. [Any candidate is required to attend the retreat or day of recollection with no exception.]

**ACTIVITIES**

**Ritual of Promise by Confirmation Candidates and Sponsors**  
(Suggested time: Advent Season)  
The Church through the parish community formally welcomes the candidates into the Confirmation Preparation Process.

**Ritual – Covenant Call to Conversion**  
This ritual can also be done at a Catechetical session allowing the candidates to reflect on their own conversion.

**Ritual – Renewal of Baptismal Promises**  
This ritual can be done at a Catechetical session or at a Eucharistic celebration. It possibly could follow a session where the subject may be the Creed, Commitment, or Baptism.
Year II

CONTINUING CATECHESIS STAGE  (Approximately 1 Year)
The Catechesis Stage is a period of more intense preparation for understanding and living the Catholic Christian faith. The candidates are led to a greater reverence for their Catholic faith, Scripture, and tradition.

Ritual – Blessing of Sponsors and Candidates
This ritual at the beginning of year two can be done at a sponsor meeting or catechetical session to bless the relationship between sponsor and candidate for the second year.

Ritual – Commitment to Journey  (Suggested time: beginning of Year II)
During the ritual, the Church through the parish community celebrates the candidate’s desire to continue the preparation to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Ritual – Affirming Confirmation Candidates
This ritual celebrates the Church community’s acceptance of the candidates as they enter into the final preparation for the sacrament of Confirmation.

Spiritual Development
The presentation of faith themes during the Catechesis Stage increases the candidate’s knowledge of the Christian lifestyle.

Faith Themes/Catechesis
The emphasis throughout the Continuing Catechesis Stage remains on preparation for living as disciples and the catechesis involves enriching the candidate’s knowledge in the following areas:

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<td>Catholic Belief and Practices</td>
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Service
Service is an integral component of the Confirmation Preparation process. During the Catechesis Stage, the candidates are:

- Guide in understanding service as a way to live out the Gospel values;
- Offer a variety of opportunities to participate in service projects;
- Guided in reflecting upon their service experiences.
**SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION STAGE** (3-4 months)

The Sacramental Preparation Stage is a time for spiritual preparation and formation in which the candidates are let to an appreciation and understanding of the Sacrament of Confirmation.

**Spiritual Development**
During the Sacramental Preparation Stage, the emphasis is on understanding and preparing for the celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation. Studying the Rite of Confirmation, retreats or day of recollection, liturgical and family celebrations provide opportunities for the candidates’ faith to be deepened as they make final preparation to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation.

**Retreat/Spiritual Growth**
During the Sacramental Preparation Stage, a second opportunity for retreat/spiritual preparation provides the candidates with time to reflect upon the growth that has occurred during their faith journey and to prepare in a special way to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. This gathering may include sponsors and parents.

**ACTIVITIES**

**Faith Themes**
The Emphasis during the Sacramental Preparation stage is on understanding and preparing for the Rite of Confirmation. During this stage, the Candidates study the Rite of Confirmation.

**Liturgical Celebrations**
The liturgical celebrations help the candidates to celebrate and deepen their experience and understanding of their faith.

**RITUALS**

**Reconciliation Service** The sacrament of Reconciliation is made available to the candidates at this time.

**Family Celebration** During the Sacramental Preparation Stage, the candidates and their parents are brought together for reflection, sharing and prayer.

**Interview** During the Sacramental Preparation Stage, the team interviews the candidates. This interview helps the team and candidate to discern the growth of the candidate as well as begin a closure process to the two year preparation.
**Rite of Confirmation** (Time Frame: Easter Season)
At the end of the Sacrament Preparation Stage, the Church through the parish community celebrates the candidates the Sacrament of Confirmation.

**DISCIPLESHIP STAGE** (Ongoing) The Discipleship Stage is a time of entering more deeply into the Christian Community. The living out of the sacramental life calls for involvement in the parish community and especially in the parish youth ministry program.

**Retreats/Spiritual Growth Activities** During the Discipleship Stage, participation in parish and diocesan retreats, days of recollection, and spiritual growth activities assists the catholic Christian to grow in the faith community and to deepen a personal relationship with God.

**Spiritual Development** During the Discipleship Stage, Spiritual growth and understanding continue to be part of year II with presentation of faith themes.

**Faith Sharing** The newly confirmed are encouraged to continue to share their faith with their sponsor as well as with others in the faith community.

**Liturical Celebrations** Participation in the liturgical life of the Church is necessary for the Catholic Christians to continue to deepen their experience and understanding of their faith.

**Service** As the newly confirmed grows in the Catholic Christian lifestyle, the faith commitment is evidence in an attitude of generosity in service to others.
ROLE OF THE PARENTS AS PRIMARY EDUCATORS

Education in the faith by the parents should begin in the child’s earliest years. This already happens when family members help one another to grow in faith by witness of a Christian life in keeping with the Gospel. Family catechesis precedes, accompanies, and enriches other forms of instruction in the faith. (CCC 2226)

INTRODUCTION

As the primary educators of their children, parents, along with sponsors, are to be intimately involved in catechesis for Confirmation. They will help them renew and strengthen their own faith, besides enabling them to set a better example for their children. The parental program is an important element in planning for Confirmation for young children. (Paragraph #119 Sharing the Light of Faith, National Catechetical Directory for Catholics of the United States) Parent sessions should be held both to inform parents of the practical aspects of the Confirmation process and to also encourage them to deepen their adult understanding of the Faith and the role of the sacraments in their own lives. By nurturing the faith of the parents/guardians, the faith of the whole family is strengthened.

The involvement of parents in the catechetical preparation of their teenager is an integral part of the Confirmation Process. Recent Church documents, especially those related to family and to catechetical ministry, consistently reinforce the role of parents as the primary religious educators of their children. The National Catechetical Directory emphasizes the important of parent participation in the catechetical process of preparation for Confirmation. The preparation process is intended to challenge the candidates to examine their faith life and at the same time it calls parents to conversion and to new growth in faith. [As stated in the Catechism of the Catholic Church^4 and Scripture]:

- 2221 The fecundity of conjugal love cannot be reduced solely to the procreation of children, but must extend to their moral education and their spiritual formation. “The role of parents in education is of such importance that is almost impossible to provide an adequate substitute.”^5 The right and the duty of parents to educate their children are primordial and inalienable.^6

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^5 GE 3. Gravissimum educationis
^6 Cf. FC 36. Familiaris consortio
• 2222 Parents must regard their children as children of God and respect them as human persons. Showing themselves obedient to the will of the Father in Heaven, they educate their children to fulfill God’s law.

• 2223 Parents have the first responsibility for the education of their children. They bear witness to this responsibility first by creating a home where tenderness, forgiveness, respect, fidelity, and disinterested (unselfish) service are the rule. The home is well suited for education in the virtues. This requires an apprenticeship in self-denial, sound judgment, and self-mastery—the preconditions of all true freedom. Parents should teach their children to subordinate the “material and instinctual dimensions to interior and spiritual ones.” Parents have a grave responsibility to give good example to their children. By knowing how to acknowledge their own failings to their children, parents will be better able to guide and correct them:

“He who loves his son will not spare the rod….He who disciplines his son will profit by him.”

“Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.”

PARISH/PARENTS AND THE PARISH

[Parents, as primary educators of their children (CCC 2221), are encouraged to be actively involved in a young person’s preparation for Confirmation. Parents are expected to lead by example in sacramental participation including attendance at Sunday Mass each week and participation in the Sacrament of Penance. The parish can assist parents by:

† Inviting parents to attend an orientation session with their children.

† Providing preparation information regarding diocesan and parish requirements.

† Presenting parents with an understanding of the sacrament, its history, the rite and its meaning for Christian living.

† Encouraging parents to engage in family prayer, especially in regular family prayer with the Sacred Scriptures and the rosary.

7 Sir 30:1-2
8 Eph 6:4
Providing prayer experiences during meetings.

Inviting parents to a deeper conversion to Christ which is necessary for living out their vocation as mothers and fathers.

THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS/GUARDIANS INCLUDE:

Living out the commitment they made at the child’s Baptism, when they accepted the “responsibility of training them in the practice of the faith.” (Rite of Baptism for Children)

Being open to continued growth in their own faith through participation in the sacramental life of the Church, especially in regular Sunday celebration of the Eucharist, daily prayer, and reading of Scripture.

Giving prayerful support and encouragement to the candidate in matters pertaining to the practice of the Catholic faith.

Supporting the candidate through Confirmation preparation and continuing that support after Confirmation by modeling and encouraging lifelong faith development.\(^9\)

During the course of the two-year preparation period, parents are invited to participate in certain meetings which the parish Confirmation coordinates. The following are examples of meetings. Teams need to select the meetings which are aligned to their program.

Participation is intended to help parents:

- Understand their role as models in the Christian development of their son/daughter.
- Deepen their own faith lives by involvement in sessions that relate to specific faith themes and major liturgical rites.
- Strengthen their family relationships and together grow in their relationship with God.

\(^9\) Taken from the Diocese of Oakland Confirmation Standards, summer 2010, pg10.
THE ROLE OF THE SPONSOR

The candidate should be accompanied by a sponsor when he or she asks to be admitted as a candidate. The sponsor should be someone who knows the candidate, helps the candidate, and witnesses to the candidate’s morals, faith and intention. (*The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, #42*).

In the early Church, most new members were adult converts. Each candidate had a sponsor who was a guide, spiritual companion and witness to the faith of the candidate before the community.

In the Confirmation Preparation Process, the sponsor has a significant role in the faith development of the candidate. It is a call to be:

- A model of how a person of faith lives in today’s world.
- A friend who knows the candidate and can witness to the maturing faith of the community.
- A guide, confidant and listener.
- A leader who is interested in his/her own growth as he/she walks the faith journey with the candidate.
- A companion who will continue after Confirmation to walk the faith journey with the candidate and invite him/her into fuller participation in parish life and service.
- A practicing, confirmed Catholic.

EXPECTATIONS OF THE SPONSOR

Sponsorship in the Confirmation Process is a two-year commitment. Sponsors are Invited to:

- Attend sessions with the candidate.
- Attend meetings, workshops or training sessions for sponsors.
- Participate in liturgical rites of the Confirmation process.
- Meet monthly with the candidate, outside of class time, to encourage and assist the candidate to grow in knowledge, in prayer, in service, in worship and in participation in the parish Community […].
- Participate in the activities of the two-year Confirmation Process with the candidate.
QUALIFICATIONS OF THE SPONSOR

[10] Requirement Summary: The Archdiocese of Los Angeles requires that the sponsor be an active, practicing Catholic; must reflect values in word, worship and service. Sponsor must be at least 18 years of age, has already received the sacrament of Confirmation; is not a parent of the candidate, and, if married, is married in the Catholic Church. The Church recognizes that a person cannot transmit what the person does not have.

The Code of Canon Law (Church Law) specifies the requirements for serving as a sponsor at Confirmation (Canon 893) are the same as those for godparents at Baptism (Canon 874).

Baptismal Sponsor. “It is desirable that the one who undertook the role of sponsor at baptism be sponsor for Confirmation” (CCL 893.2). However, another qualified sponsor may be chosen.

Relationship. The sponsor should be a person who already has a trusting relationship of some sort with the candidate, an older friend or relative (not a parent) in whom the candidate can confide. The sponsor is expected to maintain an ongoing relationship with the candidate in order to support the candidate’s lifelong spiritual growth.

Maturity. It is important that the sponsor be more mature, more informed, and more experienced in the ways of our faith and culture than the candidate is. It is recommended that the sponsor be an older person who has some experience with his or her own faith, hence a clearer perspective from which to speak.

General Characteristics. The sponsor needs to be a trustworthy open, honest, caring, committed and encouraging person who will help the candidate grow in his or her understanding of the faith as the young person comes to a deeper appreciation of God in his or her life. The sponsor must participate in activities of the two-year Confirmation Process with the candidate and must meet personally with his/her candidate on a regular basis to discuss candidate’s prayer life, to share faith and to answer questions. It is helpful and advisable that sponsors are active members of the parish.

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10 Taken from the Diocese of Oakland Confirmation Standards, summer 2010, pg11.
Knowledge of Readiness. The sponsor should have good knowledge of the candidate’s readiness for reception of the Sacrament so as to testify on the candidate’s behalf.

CHOOSING AND TRAINING SPONSORS

During the initial meeting with the candidates and parents, expectations and qualifications of sponsors are explained and materials distributed to help the candidate choose a sponsor. These materials may include a form letter of invitation to the sponsor, and/or an explanation of sponsorship. Candidates then contacts the sponsor and invites the sponsor to a workshop for candidates, parents and sponsor.

SAMPLE SPONSOR SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>Sponsor information meeting.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>Sponsor adult religious education-for all new sponsors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>Sponsor adult religious education-second session.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>Sponsor and candidates meeting with parents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>Candidate/ sponsor evening of prayer; Rite of welcome</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
RETREAT/SPRITUAL GROWTH ACTIVITES

Rationale

Total youth ministry includes catechetical activities in which the message is proclaimed, community is fostered, service is offered, and worship is celebrated. The need for a variety of approaches should be taken into consideration in preparation social, recreational and apostolic programs as well as retreats and other spiritual development activities. (NCD #228)

The retreat or day of recollection is a concentrated time away from normal activities and environmental dedicated to reflection on the movement of God in our lives. These days can be an important aspect of spiritual growth and can instrumental in building community.

At the same time, it is important to recognize that such reflection and inclusion into community must be entered by choice.

Retreats and days of recollection are included in the confirmation preparation process along with other options for spiritual renewal so that reflection is genuine and is a response in freedom to the invitation of our loving God.

Retreat Experiences

Retreat Experiences can be varied, such as a day of recollection or an overnight experience.

The candidates are given the opportunity to experience two retreats during two-year Confirmation Preparation Process.

The following are suggestions for retreats within the Confirmation Process and may be adapted for individual settings.

The first provides the candidates with the opportunity to prayerfully reflect on their relationship with God as well as their own faith journey. At the same time, the candidates are provided the opportunity to grow as a faith community. (See retreat example #1)

The second retreat focuses on the Sacrament of Confirmation, the gifts of the Spirit and ongoing discipleship.
SERVICE

Rationale

The greatest commandment of the law is to love God with one’s whole heart and one’s neighbor as oneself. (Nt. 22:37-40) Christ has made this love of the neighbor his personal commandment and has enriched it with a new meaning when he willed himself, along with his brothers and sisters, to be the object of this charity saying: “When you showed it to one of the least of my brother/sister here, you showed it to me” (Mt. 25:40)… He made charity the distinguishing mark of his disciples, in the words; “By this will all people know you for my disciples, by the love you bear one another” (Jn: 13:35). [Decree on the Apostolate of Lay People, Chapter II, #8, Vatican Council II Documents.]

During the September 1987 visit of Pope John Paul II to Southern California, he spoke in the spirit of the Second Vatican Council when he urged the followers of Jesus to consider ways to serve the world through selfless deeds. Pope John Paul II reminded the Christian community that as we render services to others, we grow in unity.

As followers of Jesus, we are continually called to grow in our understanding of the needs of others and to generously respond using our time, talents, and resources.

Services Experiences

Service is an integral component of the Confirmation Preparation Process. Through the process, candidates are introduced to the role of service in the life of the faith community and are offered a variety of opportunities to participate in service projects. After participating in these services projects, the candidates are guided in reflecting on these experiences. (See Service Project - Examples and Service Project Questions)

Options for these service opportunities may include parish-based liturgical ministries and/or services activities within or outside of the parish community. They may also be done in collaboration with the service program. Ideally, service catechesis and action takes place in collaboration with the stages of the Confirmation Preparation.

Service is introduced during the welcoming stage through the faith themes.

Because the Catechesis Stage is a period of more intense preparation for understanding and living the Catholic Christian Faith, the candidates are guided in understanding of services as a way to live out the Gospel values. To assist them in learning how to integrate this into their lives, they are offered a variety of opportunities to participate in service. After these experiences, the candidates are guided in reflection on the service experience.

The Sacramental Preparation Stage is a time for spiritual preparation and formation in which the candidates are led to an appreciation and understanding of the sacrament of Confirmation. During this stage, the candidates continue to participate in and reflect on their service projects.

The Discipleship Stage is a time when the newly confirmed enters more deeply into the life of the Catholic Community. As the newly confirmed person grows in the Catholic Christian lifestyle,
the faith commitment is evidenced in an attitude of generosity in service to others.

**Service Opportunities**

There are two types of service: direct service and social change. Direct service addresses the immediate need while social change addresses the cause. (See examples on the following page.)

**Existing High School Programs**

Service may be done in collaboration with the service program of the local high schools, scouting groups, charity leagues and with the Parish Youth Ministry Program.

**Catechetical and Liturgical Ministries**

Catechetical Ministries include Aide in Religious Education or Pre-school teachers Liturgical Ministries included Lector, Usher, and Choir. When involving the youth in catechetical and liturgical ministries within the parish, it is recommended that an adult liaison coordinate this Program.

**The Adult Liaison:**

a. Informs the youth about the available ministries
b. Trains the youth in the ministry they have chosen
c. Sets up the schedule
d. Oversee the candidates’ involvement on an on-going basis
e. Encourages the candidates.
f. Continues to explore more options for youth service opportunities.
The following activity may be helpful in discerning service opportunities for youth.

The Two Feet of Christian Service
YOU NEED BOTH FEET TO WALK AND KEEP YOUR BALANCE
Adapted from Access Guides to Youth Ministry by John Roberto.

Examples of Direct Service

1. Meet or write to those confined to convalescent hospital
2. Write letters for or read to those confined to home or convalescent hospitals.
3. Raise money and/ or food for the homeless and the needy.
4. Volunteer to work on a soup kitchen.
5. Collect and distribute toys for needy children.
6. Coordinate a clothes drives for the needy.
7. Visit children in institutions, hospital, or orphanages.
8. Participate in a Big Sisters or Big Brothers program.
9. Coordinate or participate in a graffiti clean0up program.
10. Do the yard work for needy persons of your neighborhood.
Examples of Social Change

1. Participate in the “Walk for Life”
2. Participate in a voter registration drive.
3. Work with PLUS (literacy program).
4. Begin an environmental awareness program.

Choosing Service Opportunities

Social issues and needs may vary depending on your community. Therefore, listen to the concerns of the youth and try to set up services projects that address their experiences. Service opportunities are as endless as the social injustices which face humanity.

If Christian service is interesting and challenging, then youth will want to serve. Realizing that they can indeed make a difference, the project can be life changing for the candidate and for those whom they are serving.

In The Access Guide to Justice, John Roberto illustrates the importance for both direct service and for social change as well as some guidelines to follow in setting up service projects.

1. **Involve** the youth in a social issue they can identify with and claim as their own. They will be more likely to stay involved and to work hard for change if the issue impacts them personally— they may want to begin by choosing an experience within their local community (makes sure it’s their choice).

2. **Explore** the why question. Why does this injustice exist? What are some of the causes?

3. **Reflect** on what our faith says about this social issue in reference to Scripture, Church teaching and activity within our Church community.

4. **Action** - The process of exploring and reflecting should lead us to the final step which is action. Identifying the role we can play in weakening and eventually destroying injustice.
SOCIAL MEDIA

From the United State Conference of Bishops on “Social Media”:

“Communication is a means of expressing the missionary vocation of the entire Church; today the social networks are one way to experience this call to discover the beauty of faith, the beauty of encountering Christ. In the area of communications too, we need a Church capable of bringing warmth and of stirring hearts” (Pope Francis' Message for the 48th World Communications Day [WCD] 2014).

Social media is fundamentally changing how people communicate. Our Church cannot ignore it; in fact, it is our responsibility as Catholics to bring the Church's teachings into what Pope Benedict XVI called the “digital continent.”

As Pope Francis wrote in the 48th World Communications Day message . . . , “The revolution taking place in communications media and in information technologies represents a great and thrilling challenge; may we respond to that challenge with fresh energy and imagination as we seek to share with others the beauty of God.”

The Church can use social media to encourage respect, dialogue, and honest relationships—in other words, "true friendship" (Pope Benedict XVI's Message for the 43rd World Communications Day, 2009 . . . ). To do so requires us to approach social media as a powerful means of evangelization and to consider the Church's role in providing a Christian perspective on digital literacy.

It is imperative to understand the importance of using “social media” responsibly. You have to “[be] sure to have permission from a minor’s parent or guardian before contacting the minor via social media or before posting pictures, video, and other information that may identify that minor. [For our SLDM official social media pages, everyone involved in the program is required to sign a Model Release Statement Form which grants SLDM Youth Ministry/Confirmation program permission to be photographed and/or videotaped during activities. Participants can decline. We cannot post pictures, videos, etc., of minors without parental consent. SLDM official sites will never post any full, one on one profile pictures of a minor. Any pictures, videos published in such sites will be as a group, never individually].

Parents must have access to everything provided to their children. For example, parents should be made aware of how social media is being used, be told how to access the sites, and be given the opportunity to be copied on all material sent to their children via social networking (including text messages). While parents should be provided with the same material as their children, it does not have to be via the same technology (that is, if children receive a reminder via Twitter, parents can receive it in a printed form or by an e-mail list).
Make sure everyone is aware of the Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act... which is federal legislation that oversees how websites interact with children under age 13.”

The SLDM Youth Ministry/Confirmation Program uses Social Media as a tool for evangelization. The program has an official Twitter, Instagram and Facebook page. We encourage everyone that’s on social media to “Follow” or “Like” the following pages:

- Twitter: @SLDMCONFIRM
- Facebook: St. Louis de Montfort Youth Ministry Page
- Instagram: SLDMCONFIRM

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12 "The Youth Ministry/Confirmation program at St. Louis de Montfort is subjected to use social media responsibly under the code of conduct in accordance with the Archdiocese of Los Angeles’ regulations, The United State Conference of Bishops’ regulations and the law."
CONFIRMATION ATTENDANCE & RULES

Confirmation sessions are about one hour and a half minutes long.

Year 1 - One Monday a month from 7:00pm – 8:30pm
Year 2 – One Monday a month from 7:00pm – 8:30pm

Candidates must attend Mass every weekend. Attendance will be taken.

We invite families to be active in the liturgy by participating in Mass as ushers or greeters on a weekly basis.

Parents must attend a Parent or Family Session at least once a year- Parent sessions are opportunities to continue to grow in the Catholic Faith and enhance your role as the main catechist for your child.

Candidates are required to participate fully during Retreats, Youth Day, Prayer services, Community Building events, and Discipleship-Service Projects.

*Please, check your Calendar for dates of sessions and other activities.

Since we will only have once a month sessions, absences will not be allowed. If there are absences due to sickness, either a doctor’s note will be needed for an excuse, or notify the Director of Confirmation. Absences due to sports are not an excused. If a candidate misses the first 1 sessions of the program, he/she will be dropped from the program.

Role will be taken during group time, or candidates must sign in legibly.

Candidates must be picked up as soon as possible after the sessions ends. Leaders may not leave until all candidates have been picked up.

DISCIPLINE

1. We have a zero tolerance policy for threats, fighting, weapons, alcohol and drugs.
2. No gang colors or attire that could be construed as such. Young men and women dress appropriate for Mass.
3. No disrupting the sessions.
4. No improper language.
5. Respect one another including the leaders.
6. No gum, iPods/iPads or any electronic device during the Sessions or Mass.
7. Cell phones cannot be use during sessions otherwise stated
   Failure to comply with the above will result in a phone call to the parents and/or asked to leave the program.

For more information or questions please contact Luis Oros at 805-937-0701 or email orosnadab@sldm.org.
Knowledge of the Faith

REFERENCE LIST
Abbreviations:
CCC -- Catechism of the Catholic Church
CCL -- Code of Canon Law
NDC -- National Directory for Catechesis
GDC -- General Directory for Catechesis
RTV -- Renewing the Vision: A Framework for Catholic Youth Ministry
ATA -- From Age to Age: The Challenge of Worship with Adolescents
NAB -- New American Bible
CF -- Curriculum Framework
CCE -- Congregation for Catholic Education

† The Church’s creeds are expressions of faith with their foundation in the belief of the early Church, developed in the early centuries in response to new doctrinal questions.

† There are three persons in the Blessed Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

† Nothing exists that does not owe its existence to God. The Father made himself known in creation and in his eternal Word, Jesus Christ.

† All of creation is the result of God’s unconditional love.

† Happiness depends upon understanding who God created us to be.

† Jesus is the Son of God, our brother, teacher, and redeemer. He was sent by God, the Father, to save us and to show us how the Father wants us to live.

† Jesus Christ possesses two natures, one divine and the other human, not confused, but united in one Person of God’s Son.

† Jesus’ ministry had three aspects: priest, prophet and king.

† Jesus died and rose from the dead. Through His death and resurrection, he conquered both sin and death and redeemed the world.

† The Holy Spirit, third person of the Blessed Trinity, was sent by the Father and the Son to live within us and unite us.

13 Taken from the Diocese of Oakland Confirmation Standards, summer 2010, pg13-18.
The Holy Spirit, whom Christ the head pours out on his members, builds, animates and sanctifies the Church. The moral life of Christians is sustained by the gifts of the Holy Spirit. The theological virtues (faith, hope and charity) dispose Christians to live in relationship with the Holy Trinity.

The Holy Spirit enlightens our choices so that we come to recognize the will of God in our lives.

The marks of the Church are one, holy, catholic, and apostolic.

God is the author of Sacred Scripture.

There are three criteria for interpreting Scripture in accordance with the Spirit who inspired it:
- Be attentive “to the content and unity of the whole Scripture.
- Read Scripture within the “living Tradition of the whole Church.”
- Be attentive to the analogy of the faith.

Liturgical and the Sacraments

Liturgy is a celebration of the community whose life and faith are nurtured by the Word, the Eucharist, and the presence of each individual.

Sacraments are sacred rites giving expression to initiation, healing, and service.

Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist are the Sacraments of Initiation; Penance and Anointing of the Sick are the Sacraments of Healing; Matrimony and Holy Orders are the Sacraments of Commitment and Service.

Baptism is immersion into the life of Christ.

In the Eucharist, we receive the real presence of Christ: Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity.

The reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation is necessary for the completion of baptismal grace.

In the Sacrament of Confirmation, the confirmed are given special strength of the Holy Spirit to spread and defend the faith by word and action as true witnesses of Christ, to confess the name of Christ boldly, and never to be ashamed of the Cross.
Moral Formation

 salarié God created humanity “In His Image”, The dignity of the human person is rooted in this reality.  
CCC 356-361; Gen. 1:1, 27; Mt. 19:4-5

 salarié God desires that we participate in the glory of the life of the Trinity for all eternity.  
CCC 260, 1024; 1 Cor. 2:9; Rom. 8:22-23

 salarié The hope for heaven and eternal happiness inspire us to live a moral life.  
CCC 1817-1821, 1965-1974; GDC 23; NDC 42.A, 42.C, 44

 salarié In sin human beings prefer themselves to God and fall short of the perfection they are called to, which is the glory of God.  
CCC 398, 1487, 309-310; Rom. 3:23

 salarié Our ability to choose good is empowered by the Holy Spirit.  
CCC 1788, 1811; NDC 36.B.1, 42.D

 salarié The Beatitudes are a guide to the values of God’s Kingdom  
CCC 1716-1717; GDC 115: NDC 25.H, 44, 45.1

 salarié The dignity of the human person requires uprightness of moral conscience. Conscience enables one to assume responsibility for acts performed. In formation of conscience, the Word of God is a light for our path.  
CCC 1780, 1785

 salarié Human sexuality is a gift from God to establish an intimate and life-giving family bond, within a lifelong marriage between a man and a woman. This excludes masturbation, fornication, cohabitation, homosexual acts, and adultery.  
CCC 2331-2333, 2350-2353, 2360, 2380-2381, 2390-2391, 2396, 2400

 salarié Pornography and prostitution do grave injury to the dignity of participants. Rape is always an intrinsically evil act.  
CCC 2354-2356, 2382-2385, 2396, 2400

 salarié Chastity is successful integration of sexuality within the person and thus inner unity of man in his bodily and spiritual being.  
CCC 2337, 2395

 salarié God designed marriage for the unity of the couple and the begetting and raising of children. Every act of married love must respect this design, and be open to the possibility of new life. Contraception is inherently opposed to God’s design, while methods such as natural family planning (NFP) respect the dignity of the couple and the plan of the Creator.  
CCC 2366, 2369, 2370, 2398-239

 salarié Purity requires modesty, which recognizes and protects the dignity of the person.  
CCC 2521-2522, 2533

 salarié Sexual acts outside of marriage are grave offenses against the dignity of marriage.  
CCC 2380, 2400
Prayer: GDC 85; NDC 20, 34

The Candidate should:

† Know that prayer is listening and talking with God and be knowledgeable of the four purposes of prayer; (ACTS) Adoration (praising God for Who He is), Contrition (acknowledging sin, repenting and asking God for forgiveness), Thanksgiving (thanking God for what He has done), Supplication or petition (interceding for self and others).

† Show reverence for the Bible.

† Participate in prayer at every gathering.

† Show reverence during all forms of prayer.

† Develop a habit of daily prayer to seek guidance and discern one’s vocation.

† Experience God’s presence through song, listening, reflections, and silence.

† Participate with all other Catholics in Sunday Mass where we hear God’s Word and share the Body and Blood of Jesus.

† Participate in the liturgies and activities of the liturgical seasons e.g., the lighting of the Advent wreath, Stations of the Cross or participation in the Easter Triduum.

Community Life: GDC 86, 106; NDC 20

The Candidate should:

† Be aware of God’s creation, recognizing individuals as unique and special parts of creation, with the desire to be with God eternally.

† Understand ways that God has shown us love.

† Appreciate the different groups to which we belong: Church, parish, community, family, school.

† Value our own family and extended family and show love and respect to each member and God.

† Know that through Baptism, the Church is a family of faith called to holiness, to offer support, guidance, and care for all.

† Know that Godparents and sponsors represent the Christian community and are models of faith.

† Identify traditional Catholic saints whose lives were dedicated to service.

Missionary Spirit: CCC 897, 1822-1829

† The Holy Spirit enables us to continue the mission of Christ by becoming His living presence in the world. CCC 521, 737, 768; Acts 1:8; 1 Cor. 3:16-17; Rom. 5:5

† The Spirit empowers us to proclaim Jesus, the person and message to all people. CCC 739; GDC 42-45; NDC 28, A.3
The seven gifts of the Holy Spirit are graces that are poured out in special abundance with the Sacrament of Confirmation and throughout the years of one’s life as a fully initiated follower of Christ. These graces empower us to apply our faith to the daily challenges and opportunities of life. The gifts of the Holy Spirit are: wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety and fear of the Lord. (CCC 1285; Isaiah 11:1-3)

The fruits of the Holy Spirit are virtues that result from our cooperation with His work in us. (CCC 736, 1832; Rom. 8:13-14; Gal. 5:22-23)

A vocation is God’s call to a specific way of life: single, married, ordained, or professed in a religious community. (NDC 48.D)

Through the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy, a person comes to the aid of his/her neighbor in his/her spiritual and bodily necessities. (CCC 1447; NDC 45.G)

Rite of Confirmation: NDC 36.A.2

Renewal of Baptismal Promises

The renewal of baptismal promises affirms the connection between the Sacraments of Initiation. (CCC 1298)

The Christian life is one of continual conversion from sin to a life of grace. (CCC 1426)

Extending hands over candidates

Since the time of the apostles, this gesture has signified the gift of the Spirit. (CCC 1288, 1298)

Each confirmed person is empowered by the gifts of the Holy Spirit which gives him/her a special strength to spread and defend the faith by word and action as true witnesses of Christ, to confess the name of Christ boldly, and never to be ashamed of the Cross. (CCC 1303)

Anointing with Oil

The anointing with oil with the laying on of hands, signify and imprint an indelible spiritual seal and a sign of consecration, on each candidate. (CCC 1293, 1294)

Through Confirmation, each person who is anointed, shares more completely in the mission of Christ and the fullness of the Holy Spirit. (CCC 1294)

Response of Candidate

The Amen is the candidate’s personal affirmation of their desire to be a spiritual witness of Christ in the world. (CCC 1062, 1064)
REFERENCE LIST


