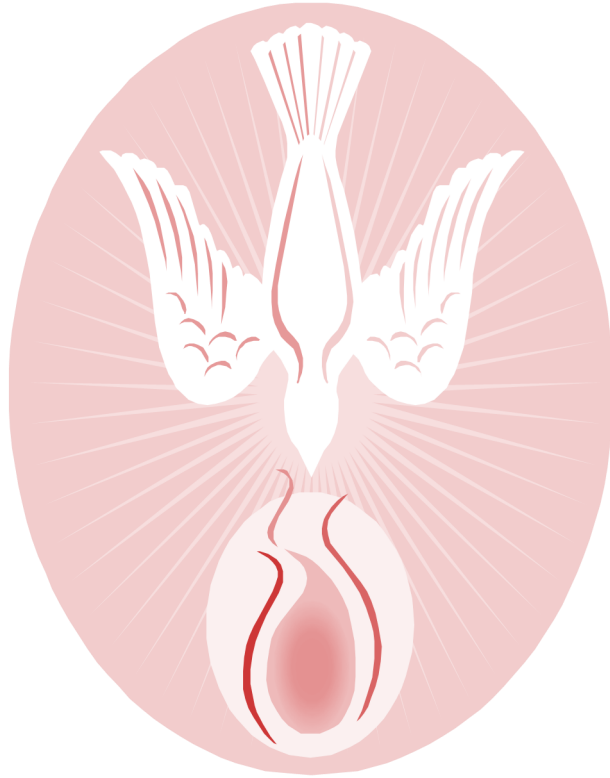


ST. MARY OF GOSTYN PARISH



2026-2027

CONFIRMATION HANDBOOK

GRADE 8

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome! We are looking forward to sharing with you this journey of faith as you prepare to receive the sacrament of Confirmation. As you will see, Confirmation preparation involves learning, sharing, serving, fellowship, spiritual growth and fun! You will be given the opportunity to learn more about your Catholic faith and what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ.

Confirmation is the Sacrament in which one is enriched by the gift of the Holy Spirit and bound more perfectly to the Church. It strengthens us and obliges us to be witnesses to Christ by word and deed and to defend the faith. It is the Sacrament in which one enters into full membership in the Catholic Church.

Confirmation perfects Baptismal grace; it is the Sacrament which gives us the Holy Spirit in order to root us more deeply as children of God, incorporate us more firmly into Christ, strengthen our bond with the Church, associate us more closely with her mission, and help us to bear witness to the Christian faith in words accompanied by deeds.

Confirmation, like Baptism, imprints a spiritual mark or indelible character on the Christian soul; for this reason one can receive this sacrament only once.

A Christian does not live as a child of God through his or her own efforts alone, but through the grace of God. We see this in a practical way when we look back on our own lives and the lives of others, even the lives of saints. Therefore, it is our duty to seek the grace that God offers us in order to live our lives as Christians in the way that God intends.

What is Confirmation?

Confirmation is the strengthening and fullness of the Holy Spirit already received in Baptism. As children of God we share the life of God, the life of three persons in one love. The Spirit is the love between Father and Son. The Spirit acts in us urging us to move beyond our individual selves into making the community on Earth like the community of love that is God. Confirmation calls us to a great participation in the mission of Jesus and the Church. Through Confirmation our relationship with God is deepened and we are incorporated more completely into the body of Christ. Confirmation obliges us, as true witnesses of Christ, to spread and defend the faith by word and deed.

Why be Confirmed?

Being confirmed is the Church's recognition that the Spirit is moving in a person. Thus the church "confirms" what is going on. To step forward and ask to be confirmed is for an individual to recognize that the Spirit is moving in them, and then ask the larger faith community if they too recognize that Spirit. If so, then someone is ready to be confirmed. It takes recognition from two directions—from within oneself and from the faith community as well.

GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

We say the Sacrament of Confirmation brings the gifts of the Spirit. Actually, the sacrament “confirms” that those gifts have already begun. If you wonder if you should be confirmed, look for those gifts beginning to blossom:

- Wisdom** A true knowledge of how to act & live based upon God’s viewpoint. Look for the ability to see things as they truly are in an open-minded manner.
- Understanding** A deeper insight into what we believe by faith. The ability to draw out consequences from the significance of events.
- Right Judgment** The ability to make good & wise decisions dealing with everyday problems.
- Courage** The strength to overcome fear when called to do what you sense is right and to stand up for one’s beliefs.
- Knowledge** The ability to comprehend the truths of the universe and being aware of that truth in one’s life.
- Reverence** A deep respect for God and all creation because one recognizes the presence of God in all that is.
- Wonder and Awe** The realization that our great and powerful God loves me and is close to me, and so also in all of God’s people and all of God’s creation.

When considering Patron Saints and Sponsors, it is good to apply these Gifts of the Holy Spirit. Choose people who emulate these gifts and inspire you to be in a better relationship with God and His people.



ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS

“As the primary educators of their children, parents are to be intimately involved in the catechesis for Confirmation. This will help them renew and strengthen their own faith, besides enabling them to set a better example for their children.” (NCD, no. 119)

Because parents:

- Are the primary educators of their children
- Are responsible for initiating their children into the sacramental life
- Serve as role models for their child by being committed Christians

Parents should expect to:

- Worship with their families regularly
- Be actively involved in the Confirmation preparation of the candidate
- Engage in discussions about the material being studied including sharing your understanding and perspective
- Pray for your child’s spiritual growth every day
- Support and encourage completion of assignments, activities and expectations
- Emphasize the importance of the sacrament of Confirmation by taking an active part in the celebration of Confirmation
- Faithfully bring your teen (and when necessary yourself) to meetings, programs and prayer services that are planned to help your child prepare for the sacrament of Confirmation

GRADE 8 ENROLLMENT PAPER WORK

Parents introduce you to the Church at baptism when you receive your name. Parents and godparents agree to share their faith with you, to support you in learning about Christian beliefs, and to help you develop spiritually. Confirmation completes your initiation into the full life of Christians.

At confirmation, you can choose a name or affirm the name given to you at baptism. Every candidate should have a saint’s name. If you wish to choose a name other than your baptismal name, here are some ideas to help you choose a confirmation name:

- Choose the name of a saint who represents a cause you find important.
- Choose the name of someone in the bible whom you admire.
- Choose the name of someone in your life who has influenced your faith or has been a living witness of the Spirit to you (it must be a saint’s name).
- Affirm the name your parents gave you at baptism.

GRADE 8 ENROLLMENT PAPER WORK CONTINUED

1. **Patron Saint Reflection:**

If a student has a Saint name from Baptism, he/she may choose that Saint. If the Baptismal name is not that of a Saint, he/she must choose a Saint for Confirmation. The reflection paper begins the journey of learning more about the particular role model. The Reflection will be passed out at the beginning of the RE/school year and will **be due October 29, 2026.**

2. **Sponsor Information Form**

All candidates must also choose a sponsor for the Sacrament of Confirmation. The Church encourages candidates to choose one of their baptismal godparents as their sponsor because the confirmation sponsor continues the godparent's role of helping young people fulfill their baptismal promises.

Who makes an acceptable Confirmation Sponsor; *From the Catholic Church's Code of Canon Law: Can. 892: Insofar as possible, there is to be a sponsor for the person to be confirmed; the sponsor is to take care that the confirmed person behaves as a true witness of Christ and faithfully fulfills the obligations inherent in this sacrament.*

Can. 893 §1. To perform the function of sponsor, a person must fulfill the conditions mentioned in Can. 874. It is desirable to choose as sponsor the one who undertook the same function in baptism. (if the conditions still apply.)

Can. 874 §1.

To be permitted to take on the function of sponsor a person must:

1. *be designated by the one to be baptized, by the parents or the person who takes their place, or in their absence by the pastor or minister and have the aptitude and intention of fulfilling this function;*
2. *have completed the sixteenth year of age, unless the diocesan bishop has established another age, or the pastor or minister has granted an exception for a just cause;*
3. *be a Catholic who has been confirmed and has already received the most holy sacrament of the Eucharist and who leads a life of faith in keeping with the function to be taken on;*
4. *not be bound by any canonical penalty legitimately imposed or declared;*
5. *not be the father or mother of the one to be baptized.*
6. *A baptized person who belongs to a non-Catholic ecclesial community is not to participate except together with a Catholic sponsor and then only as a witness of the baptism.*

Sponsor Information Forms will be given out at the beginning of the RE year and **due October 29th.**



DISCIPLESHIP JOURNAL

One of the key concepts of preparing for the Sacrament of Confirmation is to learn what it means to be Catholic. It definitely includes Mass attendance, prayers, and practices of our faith, but to make these concepts more real to our students, we require them to complete a Discipleship Journal each year of their preparation. Discipleship encompasses experiencing practices of the faith that might be new to him/her as well as completing some service time to the parish and the outside community. Each student must complete:

- A minimum of 2 experiences spent in a Holy Encounter. There are suggestions in the journal to help with ideas.
- A minimum of 2 experiences spent in Service **for** St. Mary of Gostyn Parish - In Parish Service.
- A minimum of 2 experiences spent in Service for organizations **outside** of the parish. Again there are suggestions in the journal to help with ideas - Outside the Parish Service.

Sponsors and Parents are always invited and encouraged to participate in these activities with your student to show the example you want them to inherit.

THE JOURNAL MUST BE TURNED IN BY: March 5, 2026

***The journal can be turned in to your student's teacher/catechist
or dropped off or mailed to:***

St. Mary of Gostyn Parish
Office of Religious Education
445 Prairie Ave.
Downers Grove, IL 60515

***To drop off at the Parish Center,
there is a mailbox on the front porch of the Parish Center.***

Additional copies of the journal can be obtained from your teacher or RE office