

Confirmation 2010

“Will you let me be your servant”



The Process of Preparation and Discernment for Young People at Church of the Magdalen



Parent

Throughout the candidate's life it is the parents who shape and mold the candidates to be responsible and committed young Catholics.

What are the responsibilities of parents?

It is extremely important that parents develop and maintain a dialog with the candidate throughout the preparation process. During this time candidates will be invited and encouraged to make a long term commitment in the use of their time and talent. Many candidates will need assistance as they discern how they will respond to their call to discipleship.

It is important that family and friends keep candidates in their prayers and pursue opportunities to pray for and with the candidate. Parental guidance and assurance that the Holy Spirit is actively working in their daily activities is very important.

SPONSOR

A friend or family member with whom the candidate has a strong spiritual relationship based on prayer and Catholic teaching.

Who can be a Confirmation sponsor?

The candidate's baptismal sponsor is the appropriate person to also be the Confirmation sponsor. However, it is most important that the sponsor be an individual with whom the candidate has a strong spiritual relationship. It should be someone with whom the candidate can talk openly, pray frequently and share his or her faith life.

Only Confirmed Catholics, in good standing with the church, who are at least sixteen years of age may serve as sponsors. The sponsor should be of sufficient maturity to provide guidance based on experience of faith. There is no stipulation that candidate and sponsor be of the same sex. A parent may not serve as a sponsor for his or her own child nor may a parent stand in for an absentee sponsor.

It is required that the sponsor be fully involved with the candidate throughout the process. A sponsor must be chosen and recorded before the scheduled sponsor meeting. **The person whom you choose to be a sponsor must be able to attend the meeting and accompany the candidate for the communal sessions and for the retreat of discernment.**

Catechist

Individuals who have committed their time and talent to facilitate small group discussions and lead faith-building activities.

What does the catechist do?

Through the process of preparation the candidates will be meeting in small groups as well as in communal sessions. During both times they will be led through their process by Magdalen parishioners who have been prepared to present challenging Confirmation materials.

The candidate sessions are not intended to be instructional. The theology of Confirmation is about fulfillment of baptismal promises and completion of the sacraments of initiation. The focus of preparation is guidance and leadership to making a lifetime commitment to discipleship among God's people.

Through a mix of prayer, discussion, music and activities each candidate will be challenged to affirm the presence of the Holy Spirit in his or her life. As a result of that affirmation each candidate will be asked to discern God's call to Confirmation.

The Process

A carefully planned journey intended to Invite, Form, Engage, Reflect and Commit to a life of faith, enriched through the practice of stewardship.

What happens during the process?

As indicated on the calendar of activities, we will begin our process with a retreat on October 11th. Small groups will be formed as catechists and candidates get to know one another. During the process each candidate will be required to meet with Ted Cook for spiritual direction. In addition to that, one of the other pastoral staff members will meet one time individually with each candidate.

Candidates are required to attend all small group sessions, communal sessions and the retreat to complete their preparation. While we know that this can create conflicts with other activities it is important that sacramental preparation be of primary importance during this period of time.

There will be small group sessions as well as communal sessions throughout the process. Communal sessions give an opportunity for the candidates to hear guest speakers and share in group activities. The small group sessions will take place in the catechist's home or other place designated by the leader. All meetings are scheduled to take place on Sunday evenings. The communal sessions and retreats will be held in the Parish Hall.

The final retreat will be a prayerful time in which candidates will be discerning what God is calling them to do with their faith life. Catechists and members of the Magdalen pastoral staff will be available to counsel and pray with individuals as they discern. Sponsors will also be asked to pray with their candidates and assist them in their spiritual journey. Once that discernment is complete those who are ready to receive Confirmation will then be asked to write a letter to the pastor telling him about their experience of preparation, and how they plan to live their lives as servants and stewards of Christ.

Preparation Schedule

09/13/09	Parent / Candidate Mtg.	Parish Hall	6:00 PM — 7:00 PM
10/11/09	Communal Session & Sponsor Meeting	Parish Hall	5:00 PM — 8:00 PM
10/25/09	Small Group	Catechist's Home	6:00 PM — 8:00 PM
11/08/09	Small Group	Catechist's Home	6:00 PM — 8:00 PM
11/15/09	Communal Session	Parish Hall	5:00 PM — 8:00 PM
12/06/09	Small Group	Catechist's Home	6:00 PM — 8:00 PM
12/13/09	Small Group	Catechist's Home	6:00 PM — 8:00 PM
01/10/10	Small Group	Catechist's Home	6:00 PM — 8:00 PM
01/24/10	Small Group	Catechist's Home	6:00 PM — 8:00 PM
02/21/10	Communal Session	Parish Hall	6:00 PM — 8:00 PM
02/28/10	Discernment Retreat	Parish Hall	1:00 PM — 5:00 PM
04/27/10	Confirmation Mass	Church of the Magdalen	7:00 PM

Prayer to the Holy Spirit

Come Holy Spirit,
fill the hearts of your faithful,
and kindle in them the fire of your love.
Send forth your Spirit
and they shall be created,
and you will renew the face of the earth.

Lord, by the light of the Holy Spirit
you have taught the hearts of your faithful.
In the same Spirit
help us to discern what is right
and always rejoice in your consolation.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The pastoral staff of the Church of the Magdalen will be praying for our Confirmation candidates, sponsors, parents and catechists during the preparation period. It is very important to us that each candidate has a enjoyable, challenging and thoughtful experience over the next several months. Please keep them in your prayers as well.

If you have questions or comments about our Confirmation preparation program please call me. I am available by phone at the church office at 634-2315 ext. 117 or tcook@magdalenwichita.com

Ted Cook,
Pastoral Minister