

**Religious Education Office**  
**Our Lady of Hope Catholic Church**  
46639 Algonkian Parkway  
Potomac Falls, VA 20165  
(703) 433-6777

April 26, 2009

Dear Parents and Confirmation Candidates,

During the upcoming 2009-2010 school year, your child will be preparing to receive the sacrament of Confirmation, which will be conferred by the bishop in the fall of 2010. When an individual is confirmed he or she will receive a special outpouring of the Holy Spirit, as once granted to the apostles on the day of Pentecost. Confirmation brings an increase and deepening of baptismal grace, it unites us more firmly to Christ, it increases the gifts of the Holy Spirit in us, it renders our bond with the Church more perfect, and it gives us a special strength of the Holy Spirit to spread and defend the faith by word and action as true witnesses of Christ (Catechism 1303).

This red folder contains information about the process of preparing your child to receive the sacrament of Confirmation at Our Lady of Hope. All the necessary preparations are to be completed as demonstration of one's readiness to receive the sacrament. Please review this information carefully, contact the Religious Education Office with any questions, and make sure to complete and return all requirements by their due dates. *If your child has any special learning needs please contact us so that we can accommodate him or her.*

As parents, **you** are the primary educators of your children (Catechism 1653). The parish Religious Education Office cannot replace you but it does bear a special responsibility for the preparation of candidates for Confirmation (Catechism 1309). Therefore, your child needs to complete the requirements in order to demonstrate his or her readiness and understanding. We encourage you, along with the sponsor, to be intimately involved with your child as he or she is preparing this year. By doing so, this time of preparation can also renew and strengthen your own faith, thereby enabling us all to better "confess the name of Christ boldly, and never to be ashamed of the Cross" (Catechism 1303).

In Christ,



Cathy Plummer  
Director of Religious Education

# Explanation of Requirements

*“Preparation for Confirmation should aim at leading the Christian toward a more intimate union with Christ and a more lively familiarity with the Holy Spirit-his actions, his gifts and his biddings.” (CCC 1309)*

## ***Due Today:***

### **Preparation Policy for Confirmation**

All parents and candidates for the sacrament of Confirmation are asked to sign a preparation policy. By signing this policy you affirm that you will comply with the guidelines set forth as regards Mass attendance, class attendance, a passing grade, etc...

## ***Due to your first RE Class in September, 2009:***

### **Confirmation Preparation Summer Workbook**

This summer workbook is designed to help the students prepare for their Confirmation Exam. To assist each candidate in completing this workbook, the red folder contains a summer study guide entitled, *“Everything a Confirmed Catholic Should Know.”* Candidates are to study and learn all the material (prayers, terms, definitions, etc.) listed in this packet in order to be prepared to receive the sacrament of Confirmation.

## ***Due October 27<sup>th</sup> / 28<sup>th</sup>, 2009, (the class before All Saints Day) to your RE Class:***

### **Confirmation Saint Report**

A two-page double-spaced report on the life of the saint whose name you choose as your Confirmation name. Please include in this report your reason for choosing this particular saint, a biography of the saint’s life, and a **bibliography** with three sources or more. The Religious Education Library has books on saints that you can check out to help you with your report. ***Do not copy or plagiarize*** directly from the internet or any other source; rather, take the facts you find and put them in your own words as you would for any other school report.

## ***Due December 1, 2009, to the Religious Education Office:***

### **Application for the Reception of Confirmation Form**

This form is your way of indicating your desire to have your child confirmed, and it must be filled out with all the vital information we need in order for your child to receive the sacrament.

### **Baptismal Certificate**

Each candidate must submit a copy of his/her Baptismal Certificate. If baptized outside of the USA, please allow ample time to retrieve a copy of the certificate from the parish of the Baptism.

### **Sponsor Certificate of Eligibility Form**

The candidate is required to select a person to be his or her sponsor. The sponsor must meet the criteria listed on the “Sponsor Eligibility” page in this packet. The sponsor must fill out the Certificate of Eligibility Form and the pastor from his/her parish must sign it.

### **Service Hours**

Jesus came "not to be served, but to serve" (Matthew 20:28). These service hours are meant to represent the candidates' intentions of becoming full members of the Church, which is a servant community in imitation of our Lord. Each candidate is required to perform a minimum of 20 hours of community service as part of his or her Confirmation preparation. There is a Service Hour Form in this packet where all hours are to be recorded and the parent and supervisor should sign. Consider **using the summer months** to complete these hours, before school starts up again.

### **\$125 Fee**

This helps cover the cost of the retreat, reception, rental of Confirmation robe, DVD of the Mass, group picture, and memento. Please make check payable to *Our Lady of Hope*.

# Other Important Information

## **Religious Education Classes**

It is imperative that every child involved in a sacramental preparation program attend Religious Education (RE) classes regularly and achieve a final passing grade of 70% or better. The student may not have more than five total absences in the RE Program; a sixth absence will result in removal from the 2009-2010 Confirmation class.

## **Mass Attendance**

This year Mass Attendance Forms will no longer be used to verify Mass attendance. Instead, all parents and candidates will sign the Preparation Policy Agreement, thereby affirming their intention to attend Mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation. *“The Sunday Eucharist is the foundation and confirmation of all Christian practice (Catechism 2182).”* Missing Sunday Mass, unless for a serious reason such as illness or the care of infants, is a mortal sin.

## **Confirmation Name**

Each candidate must choose a Confirmation name, whether the Baptismal name is kept or a new name is chosen. In choosing a Confirmation name, the candidate must choose a Saint's name. By doing so each candidate has a model for holiness and a patron and intercessor. Candidates may choose a saint of the same or opposite gender (example: a girl choosing a female or male saint's name).

## **Summer Study Guide – *Everything a Confirmed Catholic Should Know***

This study guide, developed by Fr. Saunders, contains all the information about the Catholic Faith that each candidate should know before being confirmed. All the answers for the Summer Workbook and the Confirmation Exam are in this study guide. Pay particular attention to the terms listed on the front page.

## **Confirmation Exam**

Answers for all the questions on the Confirmation Exam are in the “Everything a Confirmed Catholic Should Know” packet. The Confirmation Exam will be during the spring of 2010. Each candidate needs to score a 75% or higher on this exam to be confirmed. Each exam is personally reviewed and graded by Fr. Saunders.

## **Confirmation Retreat**

All Confirmation candidates are required to attend a retreat prior to receiving Confirmation. The retreat will be a **day-long event** held on a Saturday in late September or early October, 2010.

## **The Sacrament of Penance or Reconciliation**

To receive all the graces and fruits of the Sacrament of Confirmation an individual must be in the state of grace. Therefore, prior to Confirmation, all candidates “should receive the sacrament of Penance in order to be cleansed for the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Catechism 1310). Reception of Confirmation in the state of mortal sin is itself a mortal sin.

## **Confirmation Practice**

There will be a mandatory practice session prior to the Confirmation Mass. The practice is designed to acquaint the candidates with the structure of the Confirmation Liturgy. The practice focuses on the candidates' procession into the Church, music and responses, and the students' participation in the liturgy. The candidate's sponsor and/or parent are required to attend the practice session. The date and time for the practice session will be determined later.

### **Confirmation Mass**

The Sacrament of Confirmation will be conferred in the fall of 2010 (the date will be announced when the Diocese notifies us, usually in late August). There shall be no picture taking during the Confirmation ceremony. The bishop will be available for pictures at the reception. A group picture will be taken immediately following the Mass. That picture and a DVD of the Mass will be provided to you.

### **Confirmation Mass Reception**

Following the Confirmation Mass, there will be a reception with the Bishop and parish priests for all candidates, their families and friends in the Our Lady of Hope Parish Hall beneath the Church.

### **Dress Code for the Confirmation Mass**

The young men are required to wear dress pants, dress shoes (no sneakers), a button-down shirt with a collar and a tie. A jacket is optional. The young men should not wear earrings. The young ladies are required to wear *modest* dress clothes, such as a dress or skirt, and dress shoes. All candidates will wear red robes, which will be rented for the day. This dress code applies to **sponsors** and **proxies** as well.

### **Our Lady of Hope Youth Group**

Each student is required to register for, attend, and participate in the Youth Group at Our Lady of Hope Catholic Church during the 2010 fall semester before he or she receives the Sacrament of Confirmation.

## **Important Confirmation Dates**

- Summer Workbook: Due at the first RE Class in September, 2009
- Saint Report: Due October 27<sup>th</sup> / 28<sup>th</sup>, 2009, to your RE Class
- All other paperwork (Baptismal certificates, etc.): Due December 1, 2009, to the RE Office:

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- Confirmation Exam: A Saturday morning in the spring of 2010 at Our Lady of Hope.
- Confirmation Retreat: Late September or early October, 2010
- Confirmation Practice: During the week preceding the Confirmation Mass.
- Sacrament of Confirmation: This sacrament will be conferred sometime in October or November of their 9<sup>th</sup> grade year (2010). The Diocesan Chancery Office sets this date. You will be notified as soon as we receive this date (generally in late August).

# Confirmation Sponsor Eligibility

## Duties & Responsibilities

A sponsor for a Confirmation candidate is meant to provide spiritual help to the candidate (Catechism 1311). He or she should be willing to serve as a strong and lasting Christian influence on the candidate. The sponsor enters into a spiritual relationship with the candidate and acts as a sort of spiritual parent and mentor. Therefore, it is both a great blessing and a responsibility to commit to the role of a sponsor.

Each candidate may choose **only one sponsor**; it may be either a man or a woman. A sponsor takes on a life-long commitment to help their candidate persevere in the Faith. According to the Code of Canon Law (892), “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.” The Church states that it is desirable that the sponsor would be one of the person’s godparents; however, this is not a requirement (893, §2). The sponsor needs to be a registered member of a Catholic parish in order to get the Sponsor Certificate of Eligibility signed by the pastor.

According to Canon 874, a sponsor must meet the following criteria:

- Must be 16 years old or older
- Must have received the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Eucharist
- Must not be a parent of the one to be confirmed

This canon (874, §1, 1) also states that the sponsor must lead “a life of faith in keeping with the function to be taken on.” Therefore, the following persons are **not eligible** to act as a sponsor:

- Persons married outside the Catholic Church
- Persons who habitually miss Sunday Mass
- Divorced persons who have remarried outside the Catholic Church
- Persons cohabiting without the benefit and grace of Catholic marriage
- Persons who neglect the religious education of their children
- High school students who do not attend their parish’s RE classes or Youth Group
- Individuals who neglect to fulfill their “Easter Duty” that is, Communion at least once a year during the Easter season and Confession once a year if in the state of mortal sin
- Those who give public scandal in any way

In the event that the sponsor cannot attend the Confirmation liturgy in person, a proxy, explicitly designated by the sponsor, who fulfills the above qualifications, may stand in for the sponsor during the liturgy. If the Confirmation candidate has a proxy, he or she must notify the Religious Education Office in advance. **A parent may not be a sponsor**, though they may act as the proxy if the sponsor cannot attend.

# Service Hour Suggestions

*“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 obligated to spread and defend the faith by word and deed.” (CCC 1285)*

## Guidelines for Service:

Service is based on the spiritual and corporal works of mercy and, most all, on the example of Christ who came to serve. When giving service, the following points should be considered:

- *It is selflessly and lovingly helping those in need. Your service is not just a job to be done.*
- *You should reflect on how your service project is helping you take on the mind and heart of Christ, fulfill the needs of others, and build up the Christian Community.*
- *The giving of service should continue after your Confirmation, and all through your life.*

## Service Activities:

- Check the **bulletin** for various parish groups that seek volunteers throughout the year.
- Offer your service to an elderly neighbor to do the following on a regular basis: mowing, shoveling snow, raking leaves, weeding or planting.
- Offer to baby-sit free of charge for children in your parish or neighborhood. You **may not** include babysitting for your family.
- Use some of your free time to: run an errand for a neighbor, volunteer at a hospital or nursing home.
- Organize activities for younger children or read stories to them as an after-school activity.
- The Knights of Columbus seek volunteers to assist with:
  - The annual KOVAR drive
  - Christmas tree sales
- Offer to assist with Vacation Bible School (**the week of July 20, 2009**)
- Volunteer at one of the various places on the list on the next page.

# Confirmation Service Project Activities and Facilities

*“Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.”  
Matthew 25:40*

## **Soup Kitchens/Food Sorting**

Interfaith Relief  
224-F South King Street  
Leesburg, VA 20175  
703-777-5911 x17

Link, Inc.  
Sterling, VA 20167  
703-437-1776

Reston Interfaith  
11484 Washington Plaza, Suite 100  
Reston, VA 20190  
571-323-9565

S.O.M.E (So Others Might Eat)  
71 O Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C.  
202-797-8806

## **Nursing Homes/Assisted Living Centers**

Inova Commonwealth Care Center  
4315 Chain Bridge Road  
Fairfax, VA  
703-934-5043

Sunrise Assisted Living Center  
4313 Chain Bridge Road  
Fairfax, VA  
703-934-5069

Fairfax Nursing Center  
10701 Main Street  
Fairfax, VA  
703-273-7705

## **Thrift Shops**

Bargain Loft  
336 Victory Drive  
Herndon, VA 22070  
703-437-0600

Blossom & Bloom Shop  
110 Market Street  
Leesburg, VA 20175  
703-777-3286

Good Shepherd Thrift Store  
20291 Davenport Drive Suite 113  
Sterling, VA 20165  
703-444-5956

Good Shepherd Thrift Store  
Ashburn, VA  
703-724-1555

## **Other Service Opportunities**

Birth Right  
823 S. King St.  
Leesburg, Va  
703-777-7272

Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Arlington  
Administration: 703-841-3835  
Ministry to Elderly: 703-751-2766  
www.cdda.net

Embry Rucker Community Shelter  
11975 Bowman Towne Dr.  
Reston, VA 20190

Loudoun Association for Handicapped Citizens  
71 Lawson Street, SE  
Leesburg, VA 20175  
703-777-1939

Loudoun County Senior Center at Cascades  
21060 Whitfield Place  
Sterling, VA 20165  
703-430-2397

Salvation Army  
10 Cardinal Park Drive  
Leesburg, VA 20176

Special Recreation Programs  
Loudoun County Parks & Recreation  
Leesburg, VA 20175  
703-777-0343

Virginia Cooperative Extension  
Loudoun 4-H Programs  
Leesburg, VA 20175  
703-777-0373

The Jeremiah House (for unwed mothers)  
Paeonian Springs, VA 20129  
540-338-2676/703-581-1550

Eastern Loudoun Regional Library  
21030 Whitfield Place  
Sterling, VA 20165

Loudoun County Parks & Recreation  
Leesburg, VA 20175  
703-777-0343

# Application for the Reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation

Name of person to be confirmed: \_\_\_\_\_

Confirmation Saint Name Selected: \_\_\_\_\_

Size Measurement for Confirmation rental robes: Height: \_\_\_\_\_ Weight: \_\_\_\_\_

## SACRAMENTAL RECORD

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Place of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Baptism: \_\_\_\_\_ Church of Baptism: \_\_\_\_\_

Church Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Have you received First Penance? \_\_\_\_\_ Have you received First Communion? \_\_\_\_\_

## CONFIRMATION SPONSOR

*The sponsor must meet the criteria listed on page five of this packet.*

Confirmation Sponsor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsor's Home Parish: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Relation to Sponsor: \_\_\_\_\_

***Only those attending the Parish School or home schooling need to complete this section:***

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Father's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Mother's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**This form is due December 1, 2009. When you submit it, please include:**

- A copy of your baptismal certificate.
- The **\$125 fee** (check payable to *Our Lady of Hope*).

# Our Lady of Hope Catholic Church Confirmation Sponsor Certificate of Eligibility

**Due: December 1, 2009**

I have been asked to be a Sponsor for the Sacrament of Confirmation for the following individual: \_\_\_\_\_

I have received the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Eucharist.

I am a practicing Catholic; I attend Mass faithfully on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation, fulfill my Easter duty, and live up to the moral teachings of the Catholic Church.

If married, I am validly married in the Catholic Church.

I am aware of the serious responsibility of being a sponsor and I promise to give support to the person I am sponsoring by my prayer, and by the Christian example of my daily life.

I am a registered and participating member of the following parish:

\_\_\_\_\_

Parish Name	Parish City & State
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Sponsor's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Sponsor's Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

I certify, to the best of my knowledge, that the above-mentioned person is eligible to be a sponsor.

Pastor's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**PARISH SEAL** (must be present)