

# St. Mary's Catholic Church



# Confirmation Program 2008-2009

Welcome to the confirmation program at St. Mary's. Our community wishes to share its tradition and life, its values and prayers, and its apostolic work with those who have expressed a desire to become fully initiated in the Catholic Church through the Sacrament of Confirmation. Because so much is involved in passing on the commitment of full membership in the Church, the program at St. Mary's, contains several different elements: Prayer, Catechetical Sessions, Stewardship (service) and Christian Witness.

## ***Completion Factors at a Glance***

### **7<sup>th</sup> grade**

- Attend and satisfactorily participate in all catechetical sessions whether offered through the Religious Education program or Parish School
- Complete 10 Stewardship (service) Hours. Complete and submit a reflection sheet for each project. (Three areas of concentration: Home, Community and Church)
- Complete 3 prayer experiences. Complete and submit a reflection sheet for each experience.
- Attend and satisfactorily participate in the Retreat, September 27, 2008
- Choose a Sponsor. Submit name and information to Religious Ed. office by December 3, 2008
- Provide a copy of Baptismal certificate to the Religious Ed. Office by October 1, 2008
- Attend and satisfactorily participate in initiation rites offered at Sunday Masses. (Rite of Entrance; October 5, 2008)

### **8<sup>th</sup> grade**

- Attend and satisfactorily participate in all catechetical sessions whether offered through the Religious Education program or Parish School
- Complete a minimum of 10 Stewardship (service) Hours. Complete and submit a reflection sheet for each service activity. (Three areas of concentration: Home, Community and Church)
- Complete 3 prayer experiences. Complete and submit a reflection sheet for each experience.
- Attend and satisfactorily participate in the Day Retreat, October 4, 2008
- Choose a saint name or research baptismal name. Write a reflection, which will be shared with class during Lent.
- Attend and satisfactorily participate in initiation rites offered at Sunday Masses
- Attend Night of Reflection and Practice; May 1, 2009.

# ***Program Obligations***

## **Weekly Mass Attendance**

Attendance at the weekly Eucharist is a necessity. Without participation at weekly Mass, no preparation could effectively evoke the communal nature of our Roman Catholic faith that comes from sharing in the breaking of the bread and sharing of the spiritual drink. This commitment to weekly Mass is as true for the parents and sponsor as it is for the candidate. *Make it a habit you never want to give up!*

## **Catechetical Sessions**

Each candidate will be catechized in the fullness of faith found in the Roman Catholic Church. To accomplish this, courses in Jesus Christ, Sacraments, Morality and The Church, are offered in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade. The 8<sup>th</sup> grade courses will focus on Revelation, The Trinity, Kingdom of God and Confirmation. Sessions will be conducted in a small group format under the direction of adult catechetical leaders. Group discussion, journaling, and faith sharing are elements incorporated into each session.

## **Stewardship (Service)**

Stewardship of Time, Talent and Treasure as adults is developed in students through service. Stewardship (service) is time that is set aside for the sharing of one's gifts and talents with the community and the Lord. Its purpose is to help the candidate become aware that what he/she does for others is a way of showing Christ's love to others. Stewardship is a means to share the candidate's faith. Stewardship, in turn, expands his/her vision of church and their participation in the greater community. A review sheet should be completed after each project, in order to share what the experience had on the candidate as well as the purpose that it served. These may be turned in at any time throughout the year to the RE office. We encourage your candidate to have their stewardship completed before April 15th.

Some guides for stewardship is to look at **community, home and church**. Many opportunities are offered through St. Mary's parish with various ministries. You may check newsletters being sent home through the School, RE and Youth Ministry, Sunday bulletin, or community announcements. Candidates can also create their own projects with the following guidelines:

- Must be unpaid
- Done for someone outside their immediate family
- Examples:
  - Mow, rake, or shovel for a neighbor who is physically unable to do it themselves
  - Baby-sit for neighbor, church, school event, etc.
  - Help nursing home residents play Bingo, or any activity that is giving of one's self.
  - Collect and deliver donations for a food pantry, shelter, mission, etc.
  - Assist in a religious education class or VBS

These must be approved by the student's teacher, catechist or Director of Religious Education prior to undertaking the project.

## **Prayer Activities**

During this process, we will attempt to aid the candidates in developing their relationship with God as a personal confidant to whom they will no longer look just for gifts, but rather for guidance and support. The transition from seeing God as primarily a giver of gifts to relating to him as a personal confidant is gradual. Beyond this concept, prayer becomes a relationship with a friend, Jesus – a relationship that has ups and downs and involves all kinds of feelings and needs and desires.

Prayer then becomes a way of nurturing the growth in faith of the candidate and enlarging their ability to discern God's will. Prayerful discernment will allow the candidate to stand before the Archbishop to truly state, "YES, I BELIEVE!"

St. Mary's offers a wealth of liturgical experiences, as well as opportunities to experience a variety of private devotions. The candidate is asked to seek out experiences in prayer either liturgical or personal in nature; many of these opportunities are included in the Religious Education and School curriculum. The candidate is asked to write a reflection sheet to express their experience using at least three different prayer activities.

### *Liturgical Examples:*

- Evening Prayer
- Stations of the Cross
- Parish Celebration of Reconciliation
- Daily Mass
- Witness sacraments that others receive (Baptism, Marriage, Anointing of the Sick, etc)

### *Private Devotions:*

- An hour of adoration before the Blessed Sacrament
- Have someone introduce you to the Rosary, Novena devotions, journaling, music, etc.

## **Retreats**

Each candidate is required to attend at least one retreat each year of preparation. The 7<sup>th</sup> grade candidates will participate in retreat that will focus on Formed in the Spirit. The 8<sup>th</sup> grade candidates will participate in a retreat that will focus on the Call to Discipleship through the Holy Spirit. This is an opportunity to encounter the larger group preparing for Confirmation, to build relationships and explore in depth important aspects of our Catholic faith.

## Sponsor

Candidates will be responsible for choosing a sponsor. The Archbishop prefers that the candidates choose their Baptismal sponsor (godparents), if that sponsor has provided a good example of Christian living and participation in the life of the Church. If not, the candidate's sponsor must meet the following prerequisite:

- Must be confirmed
- Must be at least 16 years old
- Must be able to provide a letter of validation from their home parish

Parents MAY NOT be sponsors for their own children (it is unacceptable under Canon law). Non-Catholics may not be sponsors at confirmation. The parish is happy to assist in finding a local sponsor should the candidate need one.

## PAPERWORK REQUIRED

**Baptismal Certificate:** Before a candidate can be confirmed, we must have a copy of their Baptismal certificate (or if baptized at St. Mary's we need the month, year, and name at Baptism) in our files.

**Sponsor Information** (7<sup>th</sup> grade)

**Stewardship Review Sheets**

(For a total of 10 hours for each year for a total of 20 hours)

**Prayer Reflection Sheets** (3 different experiences for each year for a total of 6 different experiences)

**Saint Name Report** (8<sup>th</sup> grade)

**Letter to the Archbishop (Abbot)**

