

Saint Katharine Drexel Parish – Confirmation Preparation Process

Confirmation Sponsor Invitation

Congratulations on being chosen as a prospective Confirmation Sponsor. As most people have never served in this capacity, the information provided below will allow you to decide whether this role is one that you are comfortable with and willing to fulfill. Please read all of the information and if you are willing to serve, please fill in your information at the bottom of the page, sign it, and give that to your Candidate to return to me. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call me at the parish office, 301-360-9581.

Thank you for considering serving in this important role!

Brian McCrohan
Pastoral Associate for Youth and Young Adult Ministry
Saint Katharine Drexel Catholic Parish

Sponsor Requirements:

1. Must be a confirmed, practicing Catholic in good standing at their parish
2. Must be at least 16 years of age and not the candidate's parent (or boyfriend or girlfriend)
3. Must be a person who is prayerful, open, dependable, loving, and is comfortable sharing his/her faith with young people.

The Role of Sponsor in the Sacrament of Confirmation

Confirmation is a community event. It celebrates the full initiation of members desiring to share in the community's mission of witness to God's redeeming love. During the Confirmation preparation process, candidates are provided with meaningful opportunities to prepare for full participation in the benefits and responsibilities of membership in the community of faith. Several ministries are involved in assisting this process; the role of sponsors being among the most important.

The sponsor visibly represents the community, which is the focus of the candidate's full initiation. As community representatives, the sponsor needs to be a person who values and participates in the life of the community and the mission of the Church. Through the guidance of the sponsors, candidates are invited and offered opportunities to experience and participate in all aspects of parish life. In a personal way, the sponsor represents the community's acceptance, witness and support of the Confirmation candidate. Their involvement in the preparation process includes welcome, inclusion, informal catechesis (teaching), faith-sharing, understanding and example for their candidate. They become mentor, guide, role model, and journey companion, not just throughout the preparation process but hopefully into the future as well.

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(I have always wanted to say that!)

Duties of the Sponsor

The sponsor assists in the formation of the candidates in a variety of ways, including:

- Attending the initial Sponsor Meeting at Saint Katharine's on either
 - Wednesday October 20th, 5:30-6:30pm OR
 - Sunday October 24th, 10:00-11:00am
- Attending at least ONE Confirmation Prep session with your candidate.
- Accepting the candidate as an individual, and listening to their thoughts and questions, hopes and fears, joys and frustrations.
- Recognizing the candidate's individual characteristics and giftedness.
- Attending Mass with the candidate monthly
- Spending time with the candidate in conversation on a monthly basis. This is a time for:
 - Sharing your own faith story, including struggles and any periods of questioning.
 - Answering questions openly and honestly.
 - Praying with and for the candidate.
 - Reading and reflecting on Scriptures with the candidate.
 - Inviting and encouraging the candidate into full and active participation in the life of the parish community.
 - Support the candidate's involvement in ministry.
 - Assisting the candidate in determining his/her readiness for the sacrament of Confirmation.
- Being present at the Confirmation Mass in the fall of 2011 (date TBA).

If you are a potential sponsor who is geographically distant, but is still interested in serving in the role of confirmation sponsor your candidate will request a parish mentor who will fulfill some of the more direct responsibilities (like attending the initial meeting and the Confirmation Prep session). However, even in this case I would strongly encourage you to take the time necessary to make the relationship with the candidate meaningful even if it is long distance.

If you are willing to serve, you surely have the thanks of the candidate, but you have my thanks and that of this parish community as well. It is primarily through relationship that we learn what it means to be disciples, and your example and your guidance can have a strong influence.

Please fill in the information requested below and sign that you understand the role that you are accepting. Please detach that part of the sheet and return it to the candidate so they can get it to me. I will be in contact after I have received your information, but do not wait until then to start the ball rolling with your candidate.

Please print information, sign, detach, and return to the candidate:

Sponsor's Name: _____ Phone Number: _____

Sponsor's Mailing Address: _____

Sponsor's Parish: _____ Signature of sponsor: _____

(Your signature affirms that you meet the requirements and agree to fulfill the role described above)

Sponsor's Email Address: _____

Candidate's Name: _____

- Candidate, check one: I request a parish mentor as my chosen sponsor lives out of the area.
 I do not need a parish mentor as my chosen sponsor lives in the area.