

OFFICE OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
ST. URSULA'S PARISH
8805 HARFORD ROAD
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21234
410-665-4106
stursulareligioused@verizon.net

. . . the Confirmed person receives the power to profess Christ publicly and . . . officially.
(CCC 1305)

June, 2009

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Thank you for taking an active role in your child's faith formation. This letter serves as notice of some very important information. Please keep it for future reference.

In this packet, please make sure you have received the following: Confirmation Record Card, proposed Confirmation Calendar, and Confirmation Service Information. Please fill out the Confirmation Record and turn it in tonight.

Archdiocesan Requirements for Confirmation

The Archdiocese of Baltimore, following the directives from the Code of Canon Law, has developed guidelines for the Confirmation of teenagers. These guidelines help us to plan and implement a preparation process for our candidates. First and foremost, the candidate must be prepared to live as a Catholic Christian in the world, ready to participate fully in the life of the Church. Requirements of this process include at least eight hours of catechesis (instruction about the faith), community service, a letter requesting Confirmation from the Bishop, and a retreat. The preparation process which we have been developing for the past three years is meant to not only fulfill these minimum requirements, but also to help realize our goal of nurturing young people who are fully committed to the faith and to their further faith formation.

Preparation for Confirmation

The number one preparation for the reception of any sacrament is through parental instruction and example. Teens must be attending Mass with their family on a weekly basis to be truly prepared for this important sacrament. We, as members of the Body of Christ, are here to assist. The Archdiocese requires that students receive catechetical instruction for a minimum of one year prior to entrance into the Confirmation preparation process. In addition, as stated above, they must receive at least eight additional hours of catechetical instruction once they are in the Confirmation program. During our scheduled classes, a portion of each class will be devoted to prayer, catechesis, and or preparing for/debriefing of events and the retreat.

Please notice on the calendar of events the due dates set for paperwork. This calendar is also on the parish website, at www.stursulaparish.org. In addition, if you need additional copies of the information given out tonight, they are available on the parish website. All Registration forms and Service Project forms are found in the parish website. If you do not have internet access or a printer, it is your responsibility to contact the office to obtain copies.

Classes

Classes are generally scheduled 2-3 times per month, with the exception of December and January, when the sponsor is asked to work individually with the candidates. In addition, we need assistance with classes--we would like at least another six adults to join the team, helping teaching and planning. In addition, we would like to ask each parent and sponsor to attend at least one class meeting to help facilitate small group discussions. A sign up sheet will be posted at the orientation. We will also need about 20 chaperones for our retreat, and occasionally I may send out an e-mail with other requests. Thank you in advance for your help.

Date of and Rehearsal for Confirmation

The celebration of Confirmation probably will take place at a 3 P.M. Mass in April or May. Candidates and Sponsors should arrive at the Parish Spiritual Center no later than 2:15 in order to meet the Bishop. When the exact date is given to us, it will be posted on the parish website, www.stursulaparish.org.

Rehearsal for Confirmation will take place on the Sunday before Confirmation, during regular class time. Sponsors will be asked to attend the final hour of class for rehearsal. If a sponsor is not available, someone should stand-in for them and relay any instructions.

Anyone who is unavailable on this date should still register and take part in the preparation process with the class; other arrangements can be made for an alternative Confirmation date.

Portraits and Candid Pictures

We have arranged for a professional photographer to take candid photographs of your children being Confirmed. This will show your child in the Church with no special background. These pictures will be available to preview on-line, and will be available to purchase directly from the photographer. The website address will be provided closer to the date. In addition, you may also choose to have individual portraits taken of your child, this date is TBD, and will probably be in late March/early April. Please contact me individually for that information if you are interested.

Our Pastor requests that no photographs be taken during the Mass other than by the photographer. Photographs may be taken after the service.

Video Tape

Mass may be video taped from the choir loft only. You must be positioned where Mr. Gonzalez (our choirmaster) allows. Any one who chooses not to follow Mr. Gonzalez' direction will be asked to leave the choir loft.

Dress

Your child should be dressed nicely for this important occasion. Boys should wear dress slacks, dress shoes and socks, and a dress shirt and tie. Sport coats or suits are encouraged but not required. Girls should wear a modest dress or pantsuit and dress shoes with hosiery (socks or stockings). Dresses must pass the knees, cover the back and not show cleavage. In addition, sleeveless tops/dresses and spaghetti straps are prohibited.

Seating

There will be reserved seating in the front for the candidate and sponsor. During the Harvest Festival, two reserved pews will be auctioned, with seating directly behind the candidates. There will be no other reserved seating. Please do not ask one person to arrive early to "save seats." This is disrespectful to the rest of the guests who will be attending.

Eucharistic Ministers, Alter Servers, Cantors, Ushers, etc.

If a family member serves the Church in one of these ways, please contact the person responsible for scheduling to request that he or she be scheduled for May 31, 2009 at 3 P.M.

Please call or e-mail with any questions.

Yours in Christ,

Laura Weatherington, DRE