

## ARCHDIOCESAN OFFICE OF CATECHETICAL FORMATION

225 Cordova Street  
Anchorage, AK 99501

### *Guidelines for Confirmation of Baptized Catholics*

1. Prerequisites for Confirmation:
  - a. A baptized Catholic
  - b. In the Archdiocese of Anchorage, the individual must have reached the age of 16, or be in 10<sup>th</sup> grade or above.
  - c. Be enrolled in a parish program.  
  
Enrollment of Candidates is to be based on:
    1. His/Her personal application
    2. An appropriate stage of evangelization (to be determined in an entry interview by the Pastor, DRE, Confirmation Coordinator or Youth Minister.
    3. A proven history of formal and continuous faith formation, to include at least one year enrollment in Confirmation preparation immediately prior to receiving the Sacrament.
    4. Have an appreciation for the Sacraments of Initiation already celebrated (Baptism and Eucharist) and of Reconciliation, and have an awareness of the meaning of those sacraments.
  - d. Some assurance that parents/guardians are cooperating in the Catholic upbringing of their children, evidenced, for example, by regular participation at Sunday Mass
  
2. Confirmation Program:  
The program should include:
  - a. *Sessions for parents, sponsors, and candidates* on the study of the Church and her mission, the Sacraments of Initiation, with a particular emphasis on the Sacrament of Confirmation: its history, its place within the Sacraments of Initiation, our current theology of the Sacrament, and responsibilities of being a confirmed Catholic.
  - b. *Sponsors* – those confirmed adults who spend quality time with the candidates, exploring the meaning of faith, commitment, and faith issues. The preference in Canon Law is that Baptism Sponsors are also the Confirmation Sponsors. Parents may be sponsors of their children only in an emergency. (Code of Canon Law - #889 - #896)
  - c. *Catechesis within the parish community*, which has an Obligation to participate in the preparation of those to be confirmed. The parish is the faith community, into whose life of prayer and worship they will be more fully initiated. It embodies the message to which the candidates are to respond and give witness, in service, to the faith they profess. The parish should strive to catechize on behalf of “obedience to Christ” and “loyal testimony to Him” through the power of the Spirit.

- d. *Celebrations* – to include ritualistic, liturgical expressions of commitment on the part of the candidates, sponsors, parents, and the faith community, i.e.: full celebration of the Rites of Enrollment, Acceptance, and Covenant.
  - e. *Outreach projects* – Candidates should be instructed in the Theology of Christian Ministry and guided in some active, personal outreach that addresses areas of real need, preferably parish-centered, but not to exclude those of the Archdiocese and / or total community.
  - f. *Retreat Day / Day of Recollection* – Some provisions to be made for an extended period of reflection and prayer for the Candidates, to include the following:
    - 1. opportunity for the reception of the Sacrament of Reconciliation
    - 2. formalization of their decision to be confirmed
    - 3. written declaration of their intent to be confirmed, in the form of a personal letter to the Archbishop
3. Readiness to Celebrate Confirmation:
- a. The parish community recognizes the individual freedom of each candidate in the Confirmation preparation to freely decide whether to be confirmed or not. Parishes should respect each individual's choice and should work with each family accordingly.
  - b. The ultimate choice of the readiness of each candidate for the Sacrament lies with the Pastor. It is evaluated through a final exit interview conducted by the Pastor, the DRE, and the Youth Minister or Confirmation Coordinator.
  - c. Some demonstration by each candidate of an understanding of the following faith concepts:
    - 1. Worship: an understanding and appreciation of the Mass, sacraments, and Catholic traditions.
    - 2. Word: and understanding of Sacred Scripture, Church teachings, basic knowledge of Vatican II Documents and the effect of that Council on the Universal Church.
    - 3. Beatitudes: understand the teachings / concepts and how they influence and form Catholic Social Teaching.
    - 4. Service: have completed and organized, structured program of social service based upon the Gospel.
    - 5. A general knowledge of the Catholic Faith:
      - a. Has demonstrated knowledge of basic Catholic teachings and traditions;
      - b. Is able to recite common Catholic prayers, including the rosary;
      - c. Knows the Our Father, the Apostles Creed, the Nicene Creed, and the Act of Contrition;
      - d. Can recite the Ten Commandments, the Beatitudes and the Precepts of the Church.

References:

The Catechetical Documents: pp. 267-268, #'s 118-119

The Catechism of the Catholic Church: pp. 325-333, Article 2.

The Code of Canon Law: c. 889-896

Note: Preparation for, and celebration of, the Sacrament of Confirmation

Takes place in the parish in which the family is registered. Exceptions to this are addressed by the pastor on an individual basis.

Submitted to Archbishop Schwietz for approval:

September 27, 2001