

Saint Bernadette Church

Confirmation

Sacramental Preparation 2022-2023

FAQ and Parent Check List

Confirmation Mass: Wednesday, March 1st, 7:00pm

*“You will receive power when the holy Spirit comes upon you,
and you will be my witnesses” (Acts 1:8)*

WHAT

The Confirmation Preparation program at Saint Bernadette Church is designed to:

- Prepare Confirmation candidates (confirmandi), through their religious education classes, to understand and explain our Catholic faith.
- Incorporate confirmandi into the parish community through Confirmation Preparation activities. These will bring together all confirmation candidates, regardless of where they go to school.
- Provide opportunities for our confirmandi to serve others in both the neighborhood and parish communities.
- Strengthen the faith and spirituality of families through parent and family programs.
- Prepare confirmandi for their active role in the celebration of the sacrament.

Confirmation is one of the sacraments of initiation (along with Baptism and Holy Communion). The Catechism (paragraph #1303) notes that Confirmation brings an increase and deepening of baptismal grace:

- It roots us more deeply in the Divine filiation (becoming sons and daughters of God).
- 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.
- It gives us a special strength of the Holy Spirit to spread and defend the faith by work and action as true witnesses of Christ to confess the name of Christ boldly and never to be ashamed of the Cross.

Confirmation Preparation Plans and Requirements

Please read the following sections carefully to ensure that your child is fully prepared for the Sacrament of Confirmation. This information in this packet is comprehensive. To help you keep organized, a checklist and calendar can be found on page 4:

Religious Education Requirements for Confirmation:

Religious Education Classes: Two consecutive years of religious education are required for Confirmation. This is typically fulfilled in 7th and 8th grade. Saint Bernadette school students receive this education during the school day. Students attending public school and homeschool should sign up for Religious Education classes on Sundays. Students attending other private Catholic schools or homeschool with Catholic curricula should consult the DRE about religious education expectations.

DUE: October 31st, 2022

Registration and Fee – Online Registration: All confirmation candidates must be registered with the Religious Ed office by October 31st, 2022. Registration should be completed online at <http://silverspringcatholic.com/religious-education-submit/> The fee for the registration for Confirmation preparation is \$150. This fee covers the materials, retreat, certificates, gown rental, and reception costs. Financial assistance is available for those who need it. Please contact the DRE to discuss or if you miss the 10/31/22 registration deadline.

DUE: January 9th, 2023

Parish Registration: It is typically expected and encouraged that children will receive sacraments at their home parish. If you are not a registered parishioner of Saint Bernadette, but would like your child to celebrate Confirmation here, please ask your pastor to send a letter noting his approval to Msgr. Smith. This letter is due by January 9th, 2023.

Baptismal Records to be sent to Saint Bernadette Church by January 9th, 2023

If the candidate was baptized at St. Bernadette, no action is required. All other candidates are asked to submit a **newly issued** Baptismal certificate as soon as possible – but no later than January 9th, 2023. To submit the necessary Baptismal record, contact the parish where the confirmand was baptized (via phone, letter, or email) and request that a certificate be sent. You can make this most direct by asking that it be sent to Saint Bernadette Catholic Church, Attention: DRE/Confirmation, 70 University E., Silver Spring, MD 20901. The baptism certificate must be a newly issued (2022/2023) official copy. It should include the pastor's signature and the parish seal.

Choosing a Sponsor

Confirmandi will invite someone to serve as their sponsor. This person will be an example of the Catholic faith to them and will share in their preparation and faith development. See the "Sponsor Selection Form" on page 5 for more details.

-The "Sponsor Selection Form" is due to the DRE by January 9th, 2023.

-The "Sponsor Certificate" from the sponsor's parish is due by February 13th. (page 6)

DUE: February 5th, 2023

Choosing a Confirmation Name

Confirmandi will adopt a new patron saint name. They will research saints with their teachers and select a new patron saint. They should have chosen their patron saint and informed their

teacher of their choice by February 5th.

DUE: February 13th, 2023

Letter to the Bishop

Each candidate writes a letter requesting confirmation and describes what he/she has completed in preparation for confirmation. The letter is addressed to the bishop (the bishop celebrating our Confirmation Mass is still TBD) who will confirm him/her and is due to his/her catechist by February 13th. The bishop really does read these!

Sponsor Certificate

The "Sponsor Certificate" from the sponsor's parish is due by February 13th. (See page 6) Sponsors should have this certificate filled out and have it sent to the DRE at St. Bernadette.

Service/Service Reflection

Service is a part of the sacramental grace received in Confirmation. We encourage your confirmand to engage in service in a way that is fitting with his or her interests, abilities, and schedules. We will strongly encourage confirmandi to engage in two forms of service: a work of mercy, or service to persons in need, and a parish life experience, in order to serve and participate in our parish community. Confirmandi will be given instructions from their catechists to complete a written reflection of their service experiences by February 13th.

CONFIRMATION GENERAL INFORMATION

Dress Code for Confirmation: The confirmandi will wear a rented Confirmation gown. However, they should still dress for the occasion. Young gentlemen should wear a button-down dress shirt, dress pants, tie and dress shoes. Generally, a sport coat or a suit is also worn. Sneakers of any type are not allowed. Young ladies should wear a dress, or a skirt and top, and dress shoes. Length of the dress/skirt should be no shorter than two inches above the knee. Outfits with spaghetti straps or low-cut fronts or backs are not permitted.

Photographs: We ask that no photographs be taken during the ceremony itself. Pictures may be taken in the church after Mass, and the bishop will pose with the group of newly confirmed. We will have a professional photographer to take pictures of the Mass. Those photos will be available for purchase.

Reception After Confirmation: There will be a dessert reception immediately following Mass, graciously hosted by our seventh grade families. All are invited to attend.

Questions? All paperwork and questions should be directed to Jasmine Kuzner, the parish Director of Religious Education. You can reach her at reled@stbernadetteschurch.org or by leaving a message at the rectory (301-593-0357). The DRE office is located in the school, adjacent to the entrance to the chapel.

CONFIRMATION CHECKLIST

- Due October 31st, 2022: ___ Registration Complete
- Due January 9th, 2023: ___ Newly Issued Baptism Certificate (to DRE)
 ___ Parish Registration or Pastor's Letter (If applicable)
 ___ Sponsor Selection Form (to DRE)
- Due February 5th, 2023: ___ Confirmation Patron Saint Choice (to Catechist/Teacher)
 ___ Gown Measurements (taken in class).
- Due February 13th, 2023: ___ Sponsor Certificate (to DRE)
 ___ Service Reflection (to Catechist/Teacher)
 ___ Letter to the Bishop (to Catechist/Teacher)

CONFIRMATION CALENDAR

Confirmation Retreat on Sunday, October 30th, 2022

The required Confirmation Retreat will take place on Sunday, October 30th, from 2pm until 8pm at Saint Bernadette Church. A group of young adults from NET Ministries will run the retreat. More information will be shared as we get closer to the date. The opportunity to house NET ministers is a chance at a meaningful service experience as a family! Stay tuned for more details.

Family Pilgrimage TBA, February 2023

We will have a family pilgrimage trip on a Saturday or Sunday morning in February. Sponsors are encouraged to come! Details will be sent by January 9th, 2023.

Rehearsal, Tuesday, February 28th, 2023

Tuesday, February 28th, evening at 7pm (the night before Confirmation). Confirmandi should bring their sponsors to the rehearsal if possible. Confirmandi will receive their Confirmation gowns.

Confirmation Mass, Wednesday, March 1st, 2023

Wednesday, March 1st, at 7:00pm. A reception will follow.

Sponsor Selection Form

(Due to the Religious Education Office by January 9th, 2023)

Confirmand Name: _____

Sponsor Name: _____

Relationship to Confirmand: _____

I have given the **Sponsor Certificate** to my sponsor. He/she is aware that the Sponsor Certificate needs to be signed by his/her pastor (and affixed with the parish seal) and is due to the DRE at St. Bernadette Church by February 13th, 2023.

_____ (Confirmand's Signature)

*If your sponsor is a priest, deacon, seminarian, or religious brother or sister, please note that here:

Sponsor Guidelines and Sponsor Certificate

A sponsor should be an active and informed Catholic who is willing and eager to accompany the confirmand through the process of preparation and into the fullness of life in Christ's Church. The sponsor should be someone who will continue to be a spiritual guide for the confirmand beyond the coming year.

A Sponsor is at least 16 years of age; has received the Sacraments of Baptism, Eucharist, and Confirmation in the Roman Catholic Church; if married, is validly married according to the norms of the Roman Catholic Church; is a registered and active parishioner of a Roman Catholic parish; and attends Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation. A parent cannot be their child's sponsor.

Here are some suggestions for your sponsor: Your godmother or godfather (this highlights the connection between your Baptism and Confirmation); A good Catholic role model in your life such as a teacher, coach, scout leader, neighbor, or family friend; Someone who already has a relationship of trust with you and who you like; Is someone willing to share his or her faith; Lives locally (preferably) so the sponsor can be present throughout the Confirmation process.

SAINT BERNADETTE CATHOLIC CHURCH
Confirmation Preparation Program
70 University Boulevard East
Silver Spring, Maryland 20901

SPONSOR CERTIFICATE

Due to the Religious Education Office by February 13th, 2023

I, _____
(Sponsor's Name) (Sponsor's Address)

a REGISTERED & PRACTICING MEMBER of

(Name of Parish) (City and State of Parish)

accept the Invitation to be the Sponsor at the Confirmation of

(Candidate's name)

at Saint Bernadette Church, in Silver Spring, Maryland.

In accepting this responsibility I truthfully affirm the following:

- I am not the parent of the person mentioned above;
- I am at least sixteen (16) years old;
- I have received the Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Holy Communion, Confirmation) in the Catholic Church;
- If married, I was married in the Catholic Church, or at least with the approval of the Catholic Church;
- I attend Mass regularly on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation, and have received the Sacraments of Penance and Holy Communion at least once in the past year;
- I understand and accept the responsibility which I undertake as a Sponsor, and I promise to offer my support and example to the person named above in his/her efforts to live a life of holiness that reflects the Spirit and Teaching authority of the Catholic Church.

Signature of Sponsor

I certify that to the best of my knowledge this person is capable of assuming the Duties and Responsibilities of a Sponsor.

PARISH SEAL

Signature of Pastor