

Queen of the Miraculous Medal
Catholic Church
Parent/Student
Confirmation Information
Handbook
2021-2022





Dear Parents and Confirmation candidates,

On behalf of Fr. Tim and the staff here at Queens, we want to welcome you as you begin your journey of Confirmation preparation! We are glad you are here, and want to assure you that we will be praying for you and with you and your student as they engage in the various activities in preparation for receiving the sacrament in the fall of 2022. This is a time to grow deeper in faith, and for the Confirmation candidate, a time to really “own” the faith that was first professed for them at their baptism by their parents.

There are several components to our Confirmation program here at Queens—this has been a work in progress over the last few years. Each year, we seek to build up the program to make it the best that it can be. Of course, no program can provide everything that is needed to fully prepare the students, so that is why the role of parents and sponsors is so critical. At baptism, the Church proclaims that parents are “the first and best teachers of the faith”, and that is still true now. We are here to aid you as you seek to fulfill your duties and responsibilities to your children as they prepare for this sacrament—and beyond, because Confirmation is NOT graduation from Religious Ed or from learning about our faith. Confirmation completes baptism and also completes the Sacraments of Initiation, but it is not an ending. Rather, it is the launching of a new, fully initiated member of the Church into his/her lifelong walk with God and with the Church. Continued participation at Mass, Religious Education (whether through Queens’ Faith Formation, at Lumen or homeschool), Youth Group, Diocesan Youth events, as well as personal prayer and Bible study is critical.

This booklet is intended to help you understand our Confirmation preparation program and track your child’s progress. Our pastor Fr. Tim MacDonald, our youth minister Callaghan Theoret, our 8th grade catechist Timothy Iding and myself form our Confirmation team here at Queens, with Kathy Blanchard at Lumen providing catechesis for Lumen students. We are here to help you in any way we can, so please do not hesitate to call on us at any point in the coming year.

May God bless each of you and your families,

Betsy Koval
Director of Faith Formation



CONFIRMATION PREPARATION REQUIREMENTS

The Confirmation preparation program for 2021-2022 involves the following requirements:

1. Attendance at Mass each Sunday and Holy Day of Obligation
2. Attend either Sunday Faith Formation at Queens or be enrolled in Lumen and participate in theology classes there. **NOTE: Public school students will be receiving their catechesis specifically for Confirmation during Queens' Sunday Faith Formation sessions; therefore public school students MUST be enrolled and participate in Tim Iding's 8th grade FF class.** Lumen students will be receiving Confirmation-specific instruction from 8th grade theology teacher Kathy Blanchard.
3. Attend the **Rite of Enrollment at the 5:00pm Mass and retreat before hand on November 13, 2021.**
4. Attend all 4 Saturday afternoon retreats, which will be held in Vincentian Hall **from 2:45-4:45pm.** The dates are:
 - November 13, 2021 (combined with the Rite of Enrollment, mentioned above)
 - January 8, 2022
 - March 12, 2022
 - May 14, 2022
 - Attendance at the 5:00pm mass immediately following these retreats is **strongly encouraged.**
5. Complete **10 hours** of Service activities. This **service is for Confirmation only**, and must be separate from other school service requirements. Service must be completed as follows:
 - 3 hours service to the parish
 - 3 hours service to your family
 - 3 hours for the community at large
 - The final hour can be the choice of the student in one of the three categories.
6. Attend the Queens Confirmation Retreat (fall of 9th grade, details to follow)
7. Write a Letter of Intent to the Bishop (due **August 31, 2022**)
8. Participate in a Confirmation Interview (fall of 9th grade year)
9. Attend the Confirmation rehearsal and Evening of Reflection (fall of 9th grade year.)



SATURDAY MINI-RETREATS

The Confirmation preparation program has changed somewhat in the past couple of years, in comparison to what we were doing earlier. We are blessed to have Kathy Blanchard, the 8th grade theology teacher at Lumen, commit to teaching Confirmation-specific catechesis to the students as part of the theology curriculum. Because of this, we at Queens are now able to provide a year-long program of Confirmation preparation during Faith Formation on Sundays for public or homeschool students. We are likewise blessed to have Tim Iding, theology teacher at Lumen, commit to teaching this Confirmation preparation for our Faith Formation students. It cannot be emphasized enough that **ALL PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS MUST BE ENROLLED IN THIS 8TH GRADE FAITH FORMATION CLASS IN ORDER TO BE CONFIRMED.**

A few years ago, we began having Saturday sessions to try and provide catechesis to the students, since Confirmation preparation was not being done at Lumen nor in Faith Formation classes. We are still going to have 4 Saturday sessions, to ensure that our students obtain all that they need before Confirmation, but the focus will be a bit different than in the past.

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As mentioned in the beginning of this booklet, the Saturday retreats will be:

- November 13, 2021 (combined with the Rite of Enrollment, mentioned above)
- January 8, 2022
- March 12, 2022
- May 14, 2022



CONFIRMATION SERVICE HOURS AND TRACKING

In the gospels, Jesus said that He came not to be served, but to serve. We believe that the habit of being of service to others in our families, the parish, and the wider community is an important one for our Confirmation students to develop. Therefore, we are requiring students to engage in the following service hours:

- 3 hours of service to the Queens parish community
- 3 hours of service to the Candidate's family
- 3 hours of service to the wider community
- 1 additional hour in category of the student's choice

The service projects undertaken to fulfill this requirement are **for Confirmation alone**; service done for school requirements, for example, cannot also be used for Confirmation.

Examples of service to the Queens parish community can include things like (but are not limited to):

- Altar serving at Mass (**one hour only-this is a change from the past**)
- Helping with Vacation Bible School
- Assisting at the St. Vincent de Paul pantry
- Souper Bowl of Caring (weekend of the Super Bowl; youth group activity)
- Assisting with set up and take down of the Baccalaureate Brunch
- Spring clean-up on parish grounds
- Assisting with the Community Dinners (Christmas and Easter)
- Assisting with Faith Formation classes or Children's Liturgy of the Word (as an aide)

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Service to family should be something out of the ordinary, ie, not usual chores that the student is responsible for. This service can be done for extended family members such as grandparents, and aunts/uncles as well as immediate family.

Service to the wider Community can include any service to Community organizations, such as the Interfaith Shelter, the Aware Shelter, or other organizations that you may know of.

Students can also assist elderly or infirm neighbors by doing things such as shoveling snow in the winter, doing yard work, making grocery/prescription runs for them, etc.

We will be tracking service hours through a website called Track It Forward (www.trackitforward.com). An email will be sent to you as soon as all the students' contact information is recorded on the site so that you can begin keeping track of the hours completed. We ask that the student also provide a description in the space provided of what they have done and how it made them feel to help out in that way.

Service hours must be completed by August 31, 2022.



CONFIRMATION SPONSOR REQUIREMENTS/RECOMMENDATIONS

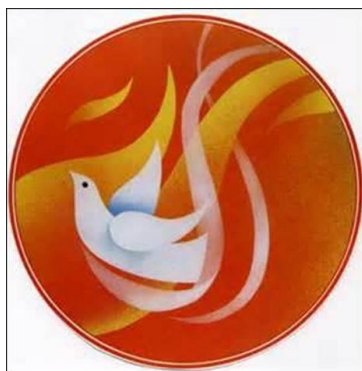
Requirements

1. A Confirmation sponsor *cannot be* a parent. Grandparents, aunts/uncles or siblings can be.
2. The Church states that it is desirable that the sponsor be one of the godparents of the one being confirmed: however, another person may be chosen to fulfill the role of the sponsor.
3. The sponsor must be 16 years of age or older.
4. The sponsor takes care that the Candidate behaves as a true witness of Christ and faithfully fulfills the duties inherent in this sacrament. This also implies that the sponsor behaves as a true witness of Christ. See #5 below.
5. The sponsor must be a Catholic who has been confirmed and has received First Eucharist, and who lives a life of faith which befits the role to be undertaken, including the following:
 - a. Attendance at all Sunday Masses and holy days of obligation.
 - b. Reception of the sacrament of reconciliation at least once a year.
 - c. There is no canonical impediment to being a sponsor, which includes not being married outside of the Catholic Church nor being divorced and remarried without a declaration of nullity (annulment) of the first marriage.
6. The sponsor engages the Candidate on a regular basis regarding their Faith Formation and Confirmation preparation.

7. If the sponsor is not a member of Queen of the Miraculous Medal Church, they must have a letter sent from the parish where they are registered to Queens stating that they are eligible to be a sponsor for this sacrament. We will provide that letter for the sponsor to present to their parish. Please have the letter sent to: Queen of the Miraculous Medal Church, 606 S. Wisner St. Jackson, MI 49203 Attention: Betsy Koval. Sponsors from Queens will also need to fill out a form for Fr. Tim to approve. Please submit these forms by January 8, 2022.

Recommendations

1. Share with your Candidate, through word and deed, the love you have for Christ and his Church and how you seek to foster that loving relationship each day.
2. Pray daily for your Candidate and with them when you are together.
3. Share with the Candidate your own experience of preparing for and receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation.
4. Ask your Candidate what they are learning throughout the preparation process and discuss it with them.
5. Participate in a required Service activity with your Candidate. Share with your Candidate how you try to serve others and discuss with them how they serve and will serve others.
6. Accompany the Candidate to the Divine Mercy Chapel for Eucharistic Adoration.
7. Take your Candidate out to eat occasionally to build your relationship and discuss any faith doubts/questions they may have.
8. Communicate with your Candidate about the necessity of attending Mass every Sunday and every Holy Day of Obligation and attend Mass with your Candidate on occasion.
9. Communicate with your Candidate about the need to receive the Sacrament of Confession regularly and bring them to Confession yourself a few times throughout the preparation process.
10. Be there for your Candidate in difficult times and celebrate with them their achievements and accomplishments.



CONFIRMATION RETREAT

Attending a retreat of any kind is a great opportunity to set aside the usual activities of one's life to concentrate on your relationship with God. Receiving the sacrament of Confirmation is a big step, and for that reason, we will ask/require all Confirmation candidates to attend our Confirmation retreat. This retreat will be held in the fall of 2022 about a month/month and a half before Confirmation will occur so that the candidate will

have a final opportunity to reflect on the step they are taking close to the time they take it. The date and details will be communicated to you during the summer of 2022.



CONFIRMATION LETTER OF INTENT TO THE BISHOP

During the process of Confirmation preparation, each candidate will hopefully deepen their relationship with Jesus Christ, learn by firsthand experience how to serve others in His Name, and become more committed to attending Mass and participating in the life of the Church. Toward the end of the candidate's Confirmation preparation, we ask them to write a letter to the Bishop stating their desire and intention to be confirmed.

Following are a few suggestions regarding how the letter should be written:

Greeting

“Dear Bishop Boyea,” or more formally “Most Reverend Earl Boyea, Bishop of the Diocese of Lansing”

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Body of the letter (these are suggestions)

Paragraph 1: Introduce yourself. Tell him things about yourself such as where you are from, what parish you attend, what school, and/or something about your family or your background.

Paragraph 2: Request the Sacrament. Write something like: “I would like to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation because...” and give a couple of reasons why you want to receive the sacrament. Also mention how you intend to continue to grow in your faith and be involved with the life of the Church after you are confirmed.

Paragraph 3: Explain how you are preparing for the Sacrament: faith formation, service, Mass attendance, involvement with the parish, etc.

Conclusion

Make sure to sign your letter after the appropriate closing. Say something about how/why you are looking forward to being confirmed.

Close with some type of formal closing such as “Sincerely in Christ,” “Respectfully yours,” or “Asking for your blessing.” PLEASE SIGN YOUR LETTER IN INK IN YOUR OWN HANDWRITING, not a computer signature.

The letter is written to Bishop Earl Boyea, but please send it to the parish office, do not mail it directly to him in Lansing. Please send your letter to Betsy Koval, Queen of the Miraculous Medal Church, 606 S. Wisner St., Jackson, MI 49203. **The deadline to submit your letter is August 31, 2022.**



CONFIRMATION INTERVIEW

Each candidate is required to participate in a Confirmation interview in the weeks leading up to Confirmation; typically, these occur during the first two weeks of October. This is meant to be a time to talk about how the Confirmation preparation process has gone for them, to assess their readiness to receive the sacrament, ask a few basic questions about doctrine (such as naming the 7 Sacraments, the 7 Gifts of the Holy Spirit and what they mean, the 10 Commandments, what we believe about the Eucharist, etc.), and most importantly, addressing any questions or concerns that they may have either about the ceremony or the reception of the Sacrament itself.

Confirmation interviews will be scheduled with Fr. Tim, Betsy Koval and other staff members. There will be a Sign-Up Genius with interviewers and dates and times available. Interviews will be held at the parish offices for all students.



CONFIRMATION REHEARSAL

The celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation in our area is a regional celebration, meaning that several parishes join together for the Confirmation Mass. Currently, Queens, St. John the Evangelist parish, St. Mary Star of the Sea, Our Lady of Fatima, St. Rita and St. Catherine Laboure all join together for a communal celebration held at Our Lady of Fatima parish in Michigan Center. Usually,

this Confirmation mass happens in mid-October. The Bishop's office sets the schedule for Confirmations and they will notify us as to the date he will celebrate that Mass. Once we receive the date, we will schedule the Confirmation rehearsal. (For planning purposes, it has traditionally been on Saturday evening about two weeks before Confirmation.)

Even though the celebration of the Sacrament occurs at Our Lady of Fatima, the rehearsal will be held at Queens. The rehearsal usually begins with a pizza dinner, and includes a walk-through of the ceremony, a reflection by Fr. Tim, and a time for Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. Please note: If at all possible, **sponsors are required to attend this rehearsal with their candidate.** If the sponsor cannot attend for a serious reason (such as living out of state), a parent should stand in for the sponsor.

This has typically been a very meaningful evening for both the candidates and their sponsors. We will confirm the date as soon as possible.



CELEBRATION OF THE SACRAMENT

As mentioned in the earlier entry regarding the Confirmation rehearsal, the celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation in our area is a regional celebration, which occurs at Our Lady of Fatima Church in Michigan Center, 913 Napoleon Rd, Michigan Center, MI 49254. The time of the

Mass and details regarding when to arrive, where to park, etc. will be emailed to all parents a few weeks before the event.

The bishop changed the way he wanted to administer the sacrament during 2020 due to Covid, and ended up using that same procedure this last year. Instead of having the candidates approach him in communion-line fashion, he went to each pew and confirmed the students there. At this time, we do not know how he will want to administer the sacrament this coming year, so we will have to await instructions about that closer to the time next fall.

Regarding other details:

- There is no assigned seating for the Mass. Regardless of how the bishop administers the sacrament, candidates and sponsors will sit together. Family members may or may not be sitting with them, depending on the procedures the bishop wants to use.

- Candidates and sponsors are asked to arrive between 30-40 minutes before the Mass begins, and they should then check in with Betsy Koval in the parish hall to get their nametag and certificate. In the past, the bishop has wanted to speak to all the kids in the hall, but he has not done this the last two year. Again, we will need to wait to see how he wants to handle this next year

Dress code: We do not go into great detail about what our students should wear, but guidelines would include:

- Ladies: Dresses, skirts, or dress pants are acceptable. Dresses should be of modest length and taste. Please wear shoes that are easy to walk in.
- Gentlemen: Dress pants, shirt, and tie are preferred. Suits or sport coats are optional. Dress shoes would also be more appropriate than casual shoes.

These guidelines could fall under the category of wearing your “Sunday Best!”

FORMS AND DUE DATES

Information Card: **Tonight!**

Candidate Information Form— **November 8, 2021**

Sign Up for “Track It Forward”—**November 8, 2021**

Sponsor Information Form—**January 8, 2022**

Sponsor Eligibility Form (for everyone)—**January 8, 2022**

Service Hours Completed –**August 31, 2022**

Letter of Intent to Bishop Boyea—**August 31, 2022**

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Forms can be submitted before the due date if desired. Any questions? Call Betsy Koval at 517-783-2748.

