

***St. Pius X Parish
Office of Religious Education and Youth Ministry***



***Confirmation Process and
Handbook
For High School Students***

Candidate _____

St. Pius X Mission Statement

In Communion with the Roman Catholic Church, our mission at St. Pius X centers around Liturgy and Christ's true presence in the Eucharist. As a Parish Family, we bear witness to the Gospel of Christ and dedicate ourselves to living a life of prayer, action and service.

Philosophy of the Religious Education Office

The St. Pius X Office of Religious Education, while recognizing that the parents are the primary faith formation teachers of their children, is committed to aiding the students to become true disciples of Christ. By offering a structured and systematic curriculum, we strive to help students develop a truly personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Our catechesis is based upon scripture, tradition, liturgy, the teaching authority and the life of the church.

Purpose of handbook

The purpose of this handbook is to clarify and list the policies and directive of the Religious Education office and the Confirmation program.

The Confirmation Program of St. Pius X Parish

This process will allow greater flexibility to our youth of high school age as they discern the commitment they make as they ask to be confirmed in the Catholic faith.

The openness of these courses and activities to all young/ young adults will give greater diversity to classes, enrich sharing and provide opportunities for more of our young people to enrich their experience and understanding of our faith.

The time frame allows students to prepare for Confirmation at their pace and take sufficient time to consider their decision and the responsibilities they assume as confirmed Catholics. Students may petition for Confirmation in one year granted that they have successfully completed all requirements, but may also choose to be confirmed in junior or senior year as long as all requirements have been fulfilled.

The preparation for the Sacrament is now in the context of total youth ministry- allowing the student more ample opportunities to be enriched in mind and spirit through the educational aspects, service opportunities and retreat experiences.

This process is a collaborative effort of our Religious Education Ministry and Youth Ministry geared not simply to those preparing for Confirmation but for all youth who want to rediscover what their Confirmation and commitment are all about.

**Emergency Plans and Drop off / Pick up procedures
for St. Pius X Parish Religious Education**

Emergency Plans

Fire

Fire drills are conducted twice per year. A review of fire drill procedures occurs annually at the teachers' orientation meeting. When a fire, fire drill, or other evacuation occurs, each teacher leads his or her class to the designation meeting place. Each teacher takes attendance. Students will wait in silence as teachers recheck attendance. Students return to the building only after directed by the catechetical leader.

Weather Emergency

If school is cancelled or dismissed early due to inclement weather, then religious education classes are also cancelled for the day. If there is a weather advisory, or afternoon activities in the school district are cancelled, then religious education classes will also be cancelled.

Weather related closures are announced on our parish website, www.stpiusxnh.org, WMUR (channel 9) and on the following radio station, WZID (95.7 FM).

General Building Safety for Elementary Grades and Confirmation (Parish Center)

For the safety of our students, please check in with the Parish Office or Confirmation Coordinator. Do not go into classrooms.

Lockdown

In the case of a regional or local disaster, a report of a person in the vicinity of the building with a weapon, or other similar emergency, a lockdown will occur.

When a lockdown occurs, the following takes place:

For classes at the Parish Center

- Local authorities (police, fire) take charge.
- The building remains locked.
- Monitors ensure that students leave hallways or bathrooms and return to nearby classrooms.

- The door to each classroom is locked, shades are drawn, lights turned off, and students are instructed to stay away from windows.
- Should it be necessary for students to leave their classrooms, they will be moved to the designated off-site evacuation location (the church).
- Students will be instructed to silence their cell phones.
- Parents will be instructed to stay away from the building until further notice.
- Students will be released once the situation is resolved. Parents will need proper identification.

For classes at the Church

- Local authorities (police, fire) take charge.
- The building remains locked.
- Monitors ensure that students leave hallways or bathrooms and return to nearby classrooms.
- The door to each classroom is locked, shades are drawn, lights turned off, and students are instructed to stay away from windows.
- Should it be necessary for students to leave their classrooms, they will be moved to the designated off-site evacuation location (the Parish Center).
- Students will be instructed to silence their cell phones.
- Parents will be instructed to stay away from the building until further notice.
- Students will be released once the situation is resolved. Parents will need proper identification.

Drop off and Pick up Procedures for St. Pius X Parish Religious Education

Confirmation

Classes are held on Saturday mornings from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM. Students should be dropped off at the Parish Center and report immediately to class.

Dismissal takes place at the front doors to the Parish Center. Students will wait, supervised, until their parent arrives.

Permission to Photograph

Photographs are sometimes taken during faith formation sessions and events. They are displayed publically; e.g., parish website, in the newspaper, in a brochure, on bulletin boards, etc. And used to keep the community aware and informed of parish events and activities. If you do not want images taken and used as described, please send a written notice to that effect to the parish Confirmation Coordinator.

Requirements for Confirmation

1. Participation in at least 8 mini-courses and two accelerated courses, to be completed in a minimum of four years.
2. Participation in two retreats completed in order.
3. Participation in service ministry at a commitment of 12 hours, 2 of which must be completed with their sponsor or parent.
4. Attendance at Sunday Mass, cooperation with all involved in the process and seriousness of intent are, of course all taken for granted in the person who is seeking to be confirmed. If these areas are lacking, perhaps the commitment should be postponed.
5. Baptismal certificates (unless baptized at St. Pius X Parish) and sponsor forms must be submitted by the end of the year. Candidates must choose sponsors who are active in a parish, at least 16 years old, and Confirmed. Sponsors **may not** be the candidate's parents. Sponsor forms are available in this packet. All complete forms **must be affixed with the seal from the sponsor's parish. All sacramental documents must be turned into the Religious Education office no later than January 1st of the candidates first year of enrollment.** For example, if you registered your child in the fall of 2012, then the sponsor forms and baptismal certificates are due into the religious education office no later than January 1, 2013.
6. A minimum one page typed, double spaced essay about the saint whose name they have chosen to take as their Confirmation name. The essay must include a one to two paragraph biography of the saint and one to two paragraphs stating the reason why they have chosen that saint. **Small** graphics are acceptable. The completed essay must be turned no later than two weeks prior to the Confirmation date.

Elements of the Process

Mini Courses

These are designed to provide the student with an overview of Catholic teaching and the living out of a committed Catholic Christian lifestyle. Each mini course is offered twice a year. Accelerated courses are only offered once a year.

Mini Courses

- Sacraments of Initiation
- Teaching Mass
- Sacraments of Healing
- Beatitudes and Social Justice
- Theology of the Body
- Liturgical Calendar
- Our Life in Christ
- The Creed and the Commandments

2 Accelerated Courses

Accelerated courses are open to all high school parishioners and are offered on a Friday night. The subject matter differs from year to year and is taught by either Father Bob Gorski or Deacon Mark Hobson. Parents are encouraged and welcomed to attend the course.

Retreats:

These are provided to give the student the opportunity to withdraw and reflect upon personal faith and commitment to the Lord and His Church. Retreats are offered, each in varied styles, to suit the needs of each student and their temperament. Goals of retreat experiences are reflection, prayer and an experience of shared faith in community (This builds on the education focus to encompass the whole person). The Student must take Retreat A before Retreat B.

Service Experience:

This provides students with a chance to interact with other youth/young adults in the parish and outside of the

parish that could provide solid role models or enriching friendships. It also gives the student a change to help in the efforts of the wider parish community- beyond themselves and their age group. There are many possibilities in and outside of the immediate parish.

Sunday Mass/ Youth Ministry:

Since the parish offers many weekend liturgies, we encourage the youth to attend. The 6:00 Mass tends to have more of an appeal to the youth of the parish. **Of course, it is expected that anyone serious about committing as a Confirmed Catholic would attend Mass each weekend.** The high school youth ministry meets most Friday nights and we encourage high school students to attend.

Service Opportunities

Each candidate will be responsible for completing 12 hours of community service throughout the two year program, *two of these hours must be completed with their sponsor or a parent if the sponsor is not available.* Service opportunities are often sent out via email notices from the Parish Office. If you would like to make sure that you receive these notices, please contact the Office of Religious Education and Youth Ministry to be sure we have your email address on file.

Interviews

At the beginning of the first year, each candidate and a parent must complete an interview with the pastor or youth minister. This interview is informal and explains in detail the Confirmation Covenant agreement, and Confirmation process. After a successful completion of all the requirements, the candidate must complete an interview with the pastor. At this interview, the pastor will determine if the candidate has satisfactorily completed the program and is ready to receive the sacrament.

St. Pius X Parish Religious Education Conduct Policy Confirmation

This policy will be strictly enforced so that the Religious Education Program may be an enjoyable and safe experience for those students and volunteers who participate in the program. Please read this policy and have your student read the policy. Send the signed form back to us.

1. Each Confirmation student is expected to act like a young adult and come to class dressed in Church attire. This means spaghetti strap tops, belly shirts, low cut shirts, skirts or shorts that are above mid-thigh, shirts with inappropriate words or phrases will not be tolerated. If the student is out of dress code, he or she will not be permitted to participate in the program until a change of clothes can be provided for them. This is a Catholic Religious Education program. Proper dress shows reverence to our Lord and respect to everyone else around us.
2. No student will be allowed to participate in the program if they are an interruption to class, rude or disrespectful to teachers, other students, guests, or staff. This includes inappropriate gestures, words, or actions.
3. Students are not permitted to wear hats or any other kind of head-gear at any time in the Parish Center, Church Hall or Church. Please leave these items at home.
4. No outside food or beverage will be allowed in class at any time.
5. Gum chewing in the Parish Center, Church or Church Hall is not permitted.
6. Cell phones must remain in pockets or back packs. Students are not permitted to use them at any time during class or at breaks. If your student is unable to keep the cell phone out of sight for the duration of the class, it will be collect by the Religious Education Teacher and turned in to the Office until the end of class.
7. If a student receives a verbal warning in class by a teacher or staff member, a parent will be notified. If it occurs a second time, the parent will be asked to come and get the child. If your child feels

that they can behave, we welcome them back, on the condition that the parent attends every session with the child. Remember we are here to assist you with your child's faith formation. We need to work together to provide every student the opportunity to grow in their faith.

8. Skateboards, scooters, rollerblades, etc. are not permitted on Church property and should be left at home.

Amendments to Handbook

The Pastor and Coordinator of Religious Education retain the right to amend the handbook for just cause. Parents will be given prompt notification if changes are made.

This handbook is effective May 1, 2014

Confirmation Covenant Agreement

Pastor and Confirmation Team

We agree to:

1. Provide a Confirmation program based on the teachings of the Catholic Church and the Holy Bible. We will use only curriculum approved by the USCCB.
2. Use a variety of teaching resources and guest speakers.
3. Provide private tutoring when necessary or requested.
4. Facilitate periodic classes for students and parents together.
5. Facilitate two retreats for your Confirmation program.
6. Offer opportunity for service hours, youth worship, and reconciliation.
7. Facilitate an exit interview after all aspects of the program have been satisfactorily completed.
8. Remember you and all the Confirmation candidates in prayer.
9. Offer faith formation classes beyond Confirmation through our Youth Ministry program.

Student

I agree to:

1. Worship regularly
2. Participate in classes and attend retreats.
3. Be on time, polite and attentive to the teachers.
4. Do the 12 service hours required.
5. Talk to my parents and sponsors about my faith and this Confirmation program.
6. Remember my fellow Confirmation Candidates, teachers, and pastor in prayer.

Parent

I agree to:

1. Go to Mass regularly
2. Encourage and support my daughter/son in hers/his decision to participate in the Confirmation program.
3. Talk to my son/daughter about their faith and the Confirmation program.
4. Make sure that all sacramental paperwork such as baptismal records and sponsor forms are submitted to the Office of Religious Education on time.

5. Pray for my son/daughter and participants in the Confirmation program.

Signatures

Pastor

Date

Student

Date

Parent

Date

Confirmation Sponsor Form

To be selected as a sponsor for a prospective member of the Catholic Church is a great privilege. As a sponsor you will be asked to extend in a personal way our Catholic Community's welcome and support. Through your companionship with your candidate, you will pass on the spirit of community and God's loving presence as she/he prepares to confirm their faith through the Sacrament.

Requirements for Sponsors

These requirements flow from the above understanding of the Sacraments and roles of sponsors as set forth in the Code of Canon Law. Sponsors must be:

- At least 16 years old, Baptized and Confirmed in the Catholic faith.
- An active Catholic: "An active Catholic is one who attends Sunday and Holy Day Masses regularly and participates in the Sacramental life of the Church." **If the sponsor is not an active member of St. Pius X Parish, this form must be stamped with the official parish seal of which the sponsor belongs to in order for the document to be valid or a letter from the sponsor's Pastor.**
- Only one sponsor is required and cannot be a parent of the candidate.
- Sponsor may be of either sex and may be a Baptismal Godparent.
- Must be able to attend sponsor meetings or have a proxy available (a proxy may not be the candidate's parent)

Candidate's Name _____

Sponsor Information

Name _____ Age _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Registered Parishioner of (parish name) _____

Home # _____ Cell # _____

Email address _____

Church of Baptism _____ City/State _____

Are you married? Yes _____ No _____

If married, where you married in the Catholic Church? Yes _____ No _____

"I understand the responsibilities I am undertaking and have both the desire and intention to fulfill them"

Sponsor Signature

Date

Student's Name _____

**Service Hours Form
Confirmation St. Pius X Parish
Religious Education Program**

Date	# of Hours	Description of Service	Supervisor's Signature

Service Hours Completed with Sponsor

My sponsor and I completed the following 2 hour activity together (describe activity). Please describe what you did and how it made you feel.

sponsor's signature

supervisor's signature

Please keep record of the classes your child attends in case there is any discrepancy with our records.

Class	Date

Retreat A _____ **Retreat B** _____

Saint Essay _____ **Service Hours** _____