

*OUR MOTHER OF
GOOD COUNSEL PARISH*



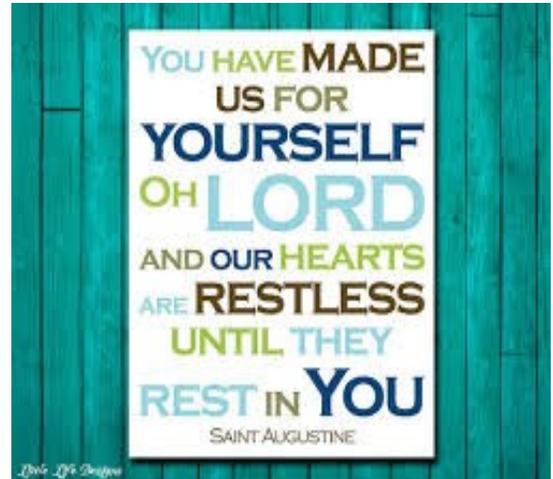
**PARENT AND STUDENT
SEVENTH GRADE
CONFIRMATION
INFORMATION
BOOKLET**

PARENTAL SUPPORT

Dear Parents/Guardian,

Please help your child come to know that each one of us has been gifted very specially by our God who loves us. There is no way we deserve the healing, nourishing love, and forgiveness of our God. It is simply His gift to us.

Therefore, the months of preparation that lie ahead will not be a process of your children “earning” the Sacrament of Confirmation, but of recognizing their unique gifts and responding to the graciousness of God.



Parents are the child’s first and primary catechists to pass on our faith. We ask your promise to support your child’s Confirmation Catechist along with our parish requirements.

We ask you to show an active interest in guiding your child through the assigned lessons and activities, and to attend weekend Mass as a family. Pray as a family often, at the dinner table and at night.

Be supportive in your child’s service projects without taking over. Do some service hours together as a family project. Assist your child in choosing their earthly and heavenly sponsors and to support and encourage the earthly sponsor in light of the recommendations of our program.

If your child chooses a sponsor that cannot be with him/her on the day of Confirmation, a proxy will stand in for the sponsor. A proxy is someone that will represent the sponsor in their absence. More information on the sponsor’s role is included in this booklet.

We share our hope that this preparation period will be a time of enrichment for you and your entire family.

Please keep this booklet for your reference.



CONFIRMATION PROGRAM

OUR MOTHER OF GOOD COUNSEL PARISH

HOMER GLEN, IL

(Completing the below information will identify your booklet in case you misplace it, or leave it in class.)

Candidate's

Name: _____

Candidate's

Address: _____

Candidate's

Phone: _____

Parent(s)/ Guardian: _____

Dear Confirmation Candidate:

The Parish Family of Our Mother of Good Counsel welcomes you as you begin your journey toward Confirmation. We want you to be an active and involved member of our Parish Family. You will have our support and prayers on your journey. We will strengthen our Faith through a continual encounter with Christ, prayer (both at home and in community/Mass), sharing the Gospel message with others, and performing service—responding to the needs of others. Together we will deepen our understanding of Jesus' life and His teachings. We will see how Jesus acted and follow His example.

PRAYER

Prayer is talking, listening and being with our Lord. It is not so much something we do — rather it is something God does in us. Prayer is a gift. It is God’s work within us. What we need to do is make ourselves available to God.

We don’t have to try to get God’s attention. The opposite is true. God is always trying to get our attention. God is always with us, always loving us, always wanting to share His own love and forgiveness with us. God is always available for us, we are at times, the ones not available for Him.

In prayer we do not try to change God’s mind. Rather, we share who we are with God, and then listen for God’s Spirit in our lives. Prayer is not about saying the right words; prayer is about being honest with God, about sharing our deepest thoughts, emotions and feelings—and then listening to God’s Spirit.

When we pray, we see ourselves as someone who is loved by God — unconditionally — no strings attached. In prayer, we come to know the abundance of God’s love for us. Prayer is a gift from God who is always with us. God begins the relationship with us — we listen — we respond.

It is important that each of us becomes a prayerful person. We need to get in tune with the Spirit of God in our lives. The following page has a few suggestions to help you.



Prayer to the Holy Spirit

Breathe into me, Holy Spirit, that my thoughts may all be holy.
Move in me, Holy Spirit, that my work, too, may be holy.
Attract my heart, Holy Spirit, that I may love only what is holy.
Strengthen me, Holy Spirit, that I may defend all that is holy.
Protect me, Holy Spirit, that I may always be holy.

St. Augustine

Personal Prayer:

Spend at least five or ten minutes each day in private prayer. Prepare for your day. Relax. Then, “Let go” of any concerns by placing them in the hands of God. Spend some time with God. Below are some scripture references that might help you pray.

Isaiah 41:10, 13	Do not be afraid; God is with you
Isaiah 42; 6, 7	God calls us to make a better world
Micah 6:8	What God asks of us
Mark 4: 35-41	Jesus calms the storm; what are the storms in my life?
Mark 8: 22-26	Curing of the blind man; in what ways am I blind to my own gifts? To the goodness of others? To the needs of others?
Luke 15: 11-32	The Prodigal Son—God’s forgiving and healing love.

Group Prayer:

Prayer will be a part of your class time together. You will be invited to participate by sharing any special needs, desires, or intentions weekly with your classmates.

The Church’s Public Prayer:

Make a special effort to become more involved in our weekend Liturgies. Try to remember the Gospel and homily. Take time to apply them to your own life. Talk about them. Come experience Eucharistic Adoration on First Fridays at 7 pm in church.

Come and receive of the Sacrament of Reconciliation. This Sacrament celebrates the healing and forgiving love of God that we find in our life. Our Mother of Good Counsel Parish provides opportunities to celebrate this beautiful Sacrament. Also receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation at other times of the Church year: the Seasons of Advent and Lent are especially good times for this.

CHOOSING YOUR SPONSORS

You will be asked to choose 2 sponsors.

One will be your Sponsor in heaven—the saint whose name you choose.

Your second sponsor will be your earthly sponsor—the person you choose to “accompany” you on your journey toward greater faith, hope, and love. What is most important, therefore, is the quality of the relationship that you have with this person. Your sponsor should be a person of faith, someone you admire; someone who has qualities in his/her life that you would like to have...much the same as with your heavenly sponsor. Your sponsor is a witness that would say at your confirmation that you are ready.



YOUR EARTHLY SPONSOR

You and your sponsor can spend time via phone calls, social media, texting or in person. He or she will answer your questions about life, and with whom you can share your experiences of God. Your sponsor will be with you in your growth toward being more Christ like. Attend Mass with your sponsor, talk about our faith with your sponsor. Share what is happening in your life: in school, with your friends, at home. Discuss your service projects and your class preparation for Confirmation.

Your sponsor will be with you at your Confirmation rehearsal and on the day of Confirmation. Your sponsor will write a letter of encouragement to you as you journey towards Confirmation.

Having a relationship with your sponsor is an opportunity to discover some really good things about yourself—and a time for you to come to know your sponsor better. It can be a “gifted” time for you—if you are willing to totally enter into the process of preparation. Be open to the Spirit of God present in your life and in your relationships.

Choose your earthly sponsor who is:

1. Confirmed in the Catholic Faith
2. Actively practicing our faith by attending Mass regularly, receiving the Sacraments regularly, and are involved in their parish
3. At least 16 years of age
4. Either a man or a woman.

Your Parent Cannot be Your Confirmation Sponsor.

CHOOSING A HEAVENLY SPONSOR/SAINT'S NAME

In the Book of Isaiah we read, “I have called you by name: you are mine” (Isaiah 43:1). Your name was spoken aloud on the day of your Baptism and it became part of your identity as God’s child and a member of the Catholic Church. A great deal of thought went into your parents choice in naming you. You may be named after a relative, a special family friend, or a saint your parents greatly admire.

Now that you have decided to be Confirmed, you have the opportunity to think in a new way about your name and how it relates to your decision in this process. The research you do will help you focus on the reasons for your decision, as you will be writing a saint paper.

Research Your Saint's Name

Whether you reaffirm your Baptismal name or add a new name at Confirmation, research the life of your Christian namesake. Find out how they serve as an example for your faith journey such as characteristics, values, and lifestyle makes you want to follow in their footsteps. Your heavenly sponsor/saint will accompany you during this process toward Confirmation by praying and being a role model for you. You can ask your saint for guidance along your journey. Incorporate the aspects of your saint’s life into your own life.

Choosing a new name or keeping your baptismal name is a decision which indicates your awareness of how Confirmation will help you live as a disciple of Christ. The name you choose must be a Christian name—the name of a saint or one of the great men or women from the Bible who have gone before us in faith.

You may also choose the Christian name of your Confirmation sponsor, or another adult in your life, because this individual is an example of how to live the Catholic life. Spend time prayerfully reflecting about your choice as this is an important decision.

***If you've narrowed down your choices and are stuck and can't decide, pray!
Ask God to shed His light on who He thinks is the best name for you.***



SERVICE HOURS

Why Do We Do Service Hours?

Service hours flow from our baptismal vocation. Our Baptism allows us to share in the common priesthood of Christ as Priest, Prophet and King. As a Priest we pray and participate in the sacraments, as a Prophet we share the good news (evangelize) and as King we serve. Jesus himself said I came to serve not to be served.

Our service is a sign that we love our neighbor and trust that God will always be there for us.

What Are Service Hours?

They are hours spent sharing our time, talent and treasure with those around us. It is your opportunity to show that you believe in Jesus and what He taught us through your actions.

How Many Hours Are Needed?

You will need a **minimum** of 20 hours of service: 10 in Grade 7 and 10 in Grade 8 prior to your confirmation date. We want you to incorporate the aspect of service to others as a part of your life. Therefore, as you live your life, you will be mindful of, and helpful to others, just as Jesus lived His life.

Are There Categories of Service Hours?

Yes, below are 3 categories for service hours. **A minimum of three hours are done in each category per year.** All service is done without pay.

Parish: Assist with various parish ministries, such as altar serving, greeting/hospitality before and after weekend Masses. Help with various parish events, such as the Santa Breakfast, Spaghetti dinners.

Home: Rake leaves, cut grass, shovel snow for an elderly relative or neighbor. Lead family meal time prayer for a month. Visit an elderly relative or a home-bound neighbor—read to them, talk with them, listen to them.

Community: Something you do to help your school, the town library, soup kitchen, nursing home and the like.

How Do I Start?

Think and pray about some of your God-given talents and then list ways that those talents can help in our parish family, in our community and in your family. Talk with your parents and your sponsor to discuss ideas. Pray to The Holy Spirit for guidance. Remember that your service hours should be something special, and not part of your usual chores.

Log your hours on the sheet provided in this booklet.

