

SACRAMENTAL INSTRUCTION

EXPLANATION OF REQUIREMENTS

Requirements for First Holy Communion in the Diocese of Rockford

Norms

1. The Church asks that baptized children who are to celebrate First Holy Communion have celebrated the Sacrament of Penance; Note: This is the norm for the Diocese of Rockford. It is stated in the Catechism (#1457): “Children must go to the Sacrament of Penance before receiving Holy Communion for the first time.”
2. In order to receive First Communion the student must:
 - Desire to receive Jesus in the Eucharist
 - Recognize the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist
 - Understand that in the Eucharist, bread and wine are changed into the body and blood, soul and divinity of Christ.

Program Content

1. See Diocese of Rockford Program Content Guidelines

Requirements for Confirmation in the Diocese of Rockford

Age

1. Bishop Malloy’s official decree dated May 19, 2013, states, “The age of those to be confirmed in the Diocese of Rockford will be established as norm for individuals who are in the 7th, 8th or 9th grade.”

Confirmation Name (required)

1. If the student is already named after a Saint, he/she may use their baptismal name or may select another Saint’s name to honor that person.
2. If the student was not named after a Saint, he/she must select one for their Confirmation name.
3. The name selected must be one the student admires or appreciates, one who shows a particular spiritual strength or gift, perhaps someone who took a strong stand for their faith, a commitment to serving the poor, a prayerful life, or a dedication to social justice. It should be a Saint, a Blessed, or a biblical hero.
4. The name does not have to be gender-specific.

Confirmation Sponsor (required)

1. The sponsor witnesses the commitment to Christ the student is making. Ideally, the sponsor should be one of the Baptismal sponsors / godparents.
2. The sponsor must be at least 16 years of age and already received the sacrament of Confirmation, as well as be a practicing Catholic.
3. The sponsor cannot be a parent.
4. The sponsor does not have to be the same gender as the candidate.

The verification of this criteria is done by the local parish. If a parish chooses to have a specific form that a sponsor fills out it is a local decision; refer to Required Forms for samples.

Letter to the Pastor (optional)

1. Your parish may ask the students to write a letter to their Pastor formally requesting the sacrament of Confirmation.
2. The letter should reveal their Confirmation name and sponsor, and the reasons he/she would like to be confirmed.

It is Bishop Malloy's desire that artificial impediments not be created in our programs for Confirmation. While they are a part of preparing a student for Confirmation, hours of service, retreat day or day of recollection, and letter to the bishop are not required.