

FAQ – CONFIRMATION PREPARATION 2024

- 1.) **Are we removing religion class from the schools?** We are not removing religion class from schools. We are adding additional instruction and formation for our young people as they prepare for the final sacrament of initiation. All schools, in every grade, will continue to teach religion.
- 2.) **Why don't we just add more instruction for the Catholic children, in the school day? Why do Our Lady of Lourdes School, St. Aloysius of Gonzaga School, St. Catharine of Siena School, St. Martin of Tours Parish, PREP and Homeschool students have to come every Monday?** 3 out of 4 of our schools' 7th and 8th grades are less than 70% Catholic. This means in 3 out of 4 schools, Catholics are the minority. Removing the Catholic students from the classroom for sacramental prep is not a viable option during the regular school day. We don't want to single out these students, nor do we want them to have additional homework because they missed classwork. Therefore, Confirmation preparation for these students will take place each Monday after the free Family Monday dinner. We anticipate the total number of Catholic children from all 3 of these schools and the Faith Formation students to be around 40 in total. These children will be able to prepare for the sacrament as a group, in community with one another. Any students who currently attend St. Antoninus school and wishes to have additional preparation on Mondays, are welcome, and encouraged, to join.
- 3.) **Why wouldn't we simply teach the non-Catholic children about Confirmation?** What we have seen is that our non-Catholic children do not know the basics of the faith. Therefore, it is difficult for them to grasp higher-level theological/sacramental concepts. As a result, we have experienced a significant number of discipline problems and distractions to the Catholic children who are trying to learn their faith. This is not the vibrant, dynamic faith formation experience our children should have as they prepare for their final sacrament of initiation.
- 4.) **Why do St. Antoninus 7th and 8th graders need to attend formation on the first Monday of each month?** St. Antoninus is part of our family of parishes. While St. Antoninus School has greater than 70% Catholic children in the 7th and 8th grades, they are still part of our family, and they need additional formation and to be part of something greater than the individual parish. Allowing St. Antoninus children to come together with all the other 7th and 8th graders shows unity. A sense of community will grow. Relationships will form among them. We are one family- we are no longer individual parishes.
- 5.) **What if this new program does not work?** What we know- is that what we've done for 20 years has not worked. We have looked at new models of formation, ministry best practices and other parishes who are trying new things and seeing positive results. We know it might take time to see the fruit of our work, but we must do something different. If we do nothing to help our youth grow more deeply in their faith, we are neglecting to address a very real problem. We must try something new.
- 6.) **Is attendance required in order to receive the sacrament of Confirmation?** Yes. All candidates are expected to attend the Confirmation class program, including retreats, luncheons, and rehearsals. Absences will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. A letter to athletic coaches is available to be printed from our website, explaining the Confirmation program and expectations. Please feel free to utilize it when explaining that your child's faith life is the highest priority.

Please reach out to any of us with questions:

Fr. Matthew Robben, Pastor, mrobben@fmhe.org or 513-494-HOST ext.1029

Fr. Henry Hoffman, Vicar, hhoffman@fmhe.org or 513-494-HOST ext. 1003

Erin Dwyer, Director of Stewardship & Evangelization, edwyer@fmhe.org or 513-494-HOST ext. 1005

Julie McDonald, Director of Religious Education, jmcdonald@fmhe.org or 513-494-HOST ext. 1009