



**CONFIRMATION HANDBOOK
FOR PARENTS AND CANDIDATES**



church of
st. **IGNATIUS**
Singapore

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Dear Parents,

Welcome to the current Confirmation Year!

The Sacrament of Confirmation completes the initiation into the Christian Community, building on what was begun in Baptism and nourished in the Holy Eucharist. At Confirmation, before the Archbishop, the candidate renews baptismal promises.

We are delighted that you and your child will be a part of our program this year and we look forward to working with you to make this year a meaningful one.

Like you, we are parents of Confirmation candidates. We share your enthusiasm in having our children grow in commitment to their Catholic faith during the Confirmation process. It is exciting that people from so many different countries and customs will be making this journey together.

We understand that you and your family have many work, school and social commitments. In many parishes around the world, candidates are required to attend 2 to 4 years of faith formation classes before being eligible for the sacrament of Confirmation. Due to the short-term stay of children in international schools, this program has been designed and condensed into 9 months thereby making attendance to all lessons compulsory. We appreciate your effort and sacrifices to have your child attend all the scheduled classes and required activities.

We hope this Parent Handbook will be an informative guide for you as the year progresses. Should you have any questions during the year, please feel free to contact one of the Confirmation Coordinators at CCDConfirmation@gmail.com.

1. Course of Study

The four main topics will be

- (1) The Invitation Period
- (2) The Formation Period
- (3) The Reflection Period
- (4) The Mission Period.

In addition to the lessons from the textbook *Confirmed in a Faithful Community* by Saint Mary's Press, community service activities, a retreat, and a Celebrate Life workshop are components of the course.

2. Attendance and Behavior

[Please refer to the current Confirmation Calendar for the first day of class.](#) Thursday classes meet from 3:45-5:00pm. [Sunday classes meet from 3:45pm to 5:30pm.](#)

Attendance is a must—it is not optional. You will note that the calendar is full. This course has been condensed from the normal 3-year requirement into just 9 months. We have made every attempt to accommodate the different school holiday schedules so as not to inconvenience families who may be traveling.

Class make-up policy. We understand however, that an occasional class may be missed due to a family emergency, unforeseen important event, illness, or a compulsory school trip (not including sports and band trips which are expected to be passed on in favor of class attendance). Doctors' notes or school letters should be given to the Coordinators in the event of such an absence. [In the event of a make-up class](#), Sunday students should attend 2 Thursday classes and Thursday students should attend 1 Sunday class, within 3 weeks from the date of absence. ***All absences must be made up.***

In the event that more than 4 Thursday or 2 Sunday classes are missed, please be aware that the Church has a policy of asking candidates to delay their Confirmation to the following year. At this time, the candidate and parents will be asked to meet with Father James Tan, S.J. to reassess their commitment to the Confirmation program.

Notice to Coordinators of class absence and make-up. If your child is absent, it is the parent's responsibility to notify the Coordinators promptly of the date of and reason for the absence. It is also the parent's responsibility to notify the Coordinators of the intended date for make-up.

No make-up will be organized for Theology of the Body Workshop and Retreat. There will be no make-ups organized for the Celebrate Life Workshop or the Retreat. To plan these events takes considerable time and effort by volunteers who organize speakers and make arrangements for community service venues. An important aspect of the Confirmation program is participating as a Confirmation group with believers of a similar age who are eager to grow spiritually. ***If you already know that your child cannot attend the workshop or retreat, please inform the Coordinators immediately.***

Behavior. There are approximately 16-20 candidates in each class. This is a considerable number of students for each teacher. Inappropriate or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. It is important that the candidates realize that the teachers are giving up their free time, not only in the classes, but also the time spent preparing the lessons. We would be grateful if you would speak to your child before classes begin and encourage them to show respect to their dedicated teacher. Similarly, good behavior is expected during community service events, the retreat and workshop.

3. Rite of Commitment

This Rite will be held during 6:00p.m. Mass. [Please refer to the current Confirmation Calendar for the details.](#) This is an obligatory mass for all Confirmation candidates. All candidates and parents must attend. The Rite of Commitment is the first official step the candidates take toward pledging themselves as Catholics. During this Mass, the candidates will renew their Baptismal Promises in front of the Church community. In addition, the parents and candidates will pledge themselves to the upcoming year and all the necessary Confirmation preparation. After the mass, the candidates will receive the Bible they will use during their instruction and will hand in a signed and witnessed certificate attesting to their commitment to continue on their Catholic faith journey.

Before the Rite of Commitment, your child will go through the ***Sacrament of Reconciliation***. For the candidates attending the Sunday classes, confessions will be held on the first or second Sunday from 5:15pm onwards. The teacher will take the class to the Church for confessions. For the candidates in the Thursday class, the Sacrament of Reconciliation will be held on the second Thursday during class.

It is important to reinforce to your child that Church is the House of God and they should dress respectfully. Dress code for Rite of Commitment Mass is as follows,

BOYS:

- Collared shirt
- Long pants (No SHORTS)
- No SANDALS (WITH OR WITHOUT SOCKS)

GIRLS:

- No miniskirts/no shorts
- No exposed stomachs
- No spaghetti straps
- No flip flops
- No low cut necklines
- No halter or strapless tops/dresses

4. Christian Community Service

Candidates must participate in the two Community Service activities organized by the Confirmation Program of St. Ignatius Church. To goal is do service among the poor and the needy within the local community -a new community for the candidates, a community within the Church. While many candidates probably already take part in school organized community service activities, the church organized ones are different and are mandatory to fulfill the requirements of the Confirmation program. The dates for these events are listed on the calendar.

5. Retreat Day

Retreat day is designed for candidates from all three Confirmation classes to get to know each other and bond spiritually while participating in various activities. There will be a spiritual leader helping the candidates to understand more about the concept of the Holy Spirit and the commitment the candidates are making to their faith. ***The retreat will end with a Mass which parents should attend with their child.***

Parents should be aware that the dates for these events, once set, will not be changed. There will be no make-up sessions organized for either the Retreat or Celebrate Life Workshop. To plan these events takes considerable time and effort by the volunteers in organizing venues, speakers, facilitators, etc. An important aspect of the Confirmation program is participating as a group of believers of a similar age who are eager to grow spiritually.

If you know that your child cannot attend the Workshop or Retreat, please inform the coordinators immediately. If we know in plenty of time that there is going to be a clash, then it is sometimes possible to send the candidates on the local weekend CCD Retreat or Celebrate Life Workshop.

In cases where a candidate misses either the Retreat or Celebrate Life Workshop and cannot make up the session by attending the local weekend CCD session, there are options: If the candidate and his/her family decide he/she will complete the rest of the classes and compulsory events, and then he/she will only need to repeat the missed event and will then be eligible to make their Confirmation the following year.

If the candidate and his/her family decide he/she will not complete the rest of the classes and compulsory events, the will need to repeat the whole of the course the following year.

This is one of the main reasons why we ask that you make Confirmation a priority, even to the extent of planning your year around it.

6. Theology of the Body Workshop

Please note the candidates will attend a workshop covering the Church's teachings on sexuality, pro-life and the sanctity of marriage. A representative from the Catholic Pastoral Institute of Singapore will facilitate this workshop. ***The attendance of one parent is required; parents will have their own workshop simultaneously. We anticipate that your child may want to discuss the subject matter with you so it is helpful for parents to know what was covered.***

7. Choosing a Confirmation Name and Sponsor

At the beginning of the third part of the Confirmation Syllabus, entitled Period of Reflection, the candidates will be asked to choose a Saint's name/Confirmation name as well as a Sponsor.

- **Choosing a Confirmation Name:**

Parents should be encouraged to allow their children to pick their own Confirmation names. Some parents prefer to just use one of the candidate's baptismal names, but they should be encouraged to let the children research a saint whom they admire themselves. The name chosen must be that of a recognized Catholic saint. If in doubt there are various websites you can check with such as:

- www.catholic.org/saints
- <http://saints.sqpn.com>
- www.catholic-saints.info

You can also do a search on "Lists of Catholic Saints". This will bring up a number of helpful websites.

A candidate may choose a saint of either gender. For example, we had a girl choose Stanislaus as her Confirmation name.

- **Choosing A Confirmation Sponsor:**

Your child's sponsor must be a fully initiated Catholic. What does this mean? The sponsor must be a baptized Catholic and have made their First Holy Communion and their Confirmation.

A frequently asked question is "Can one of the child's parents be his/her sponsor?" According to Canon law, a parent cannot be his/her child's sponsor.

If, however, the candidate's actual sponsor cannot be here the day of Confirmation, a parent may stand in as a proxy. Canon 874 from The Canon Law: Letter and Spirit forbids either parent of the candidate from undertaking the role of sponsor. The rationale for this rule is that the role of sponsors is to assist parents in carrying out their responsibilities and, if necessary, to make up for any failure of the parents in this regard. In addition, Canon 893 recommends that it is desirable that the sponsor chosen be the one who undertook this role at Baptism.

8. Confirmation Rehearsal

Please refer to the current Confirmation Calendar for the date and time of the Confirmation Rehearsal. **At least one parent must attend.** Candidates with their sponsor (or proxy, if sponsor is not able) will meet in the Church at 2:00pm sharp for the rehearsal. It is mandatory for all candidates to attend the rehearsal. It is not a dress rehearsal; there is no need for either the candidates or sponsors to dress in the clothes they will wear for Confirmation Mass.

9. Confirmation Day

All candidates will meet at 1:30pm in the designated location. Class photos will be taken at this time and candidates will line up for the entrance procession. Mass will begin at 3pm.

- **Photographs:**

There will be an official photographer. No one else is allowed to take photographs in church during the mass. There will be opportunities to take photos during the day. Please respect the Church of St. Ignatius policy on photography in church

- **Dress Code for Confirmation Mass:** The following is the dress code for the candidates required by the Archbishop for all Confirmation candidates at a Confirmation Mass. In addition, the dress code is a tradition in the parish of St. Ignatius. Out of respect for this archdiocese and parish, we ask that your children adhere to this dress code.

BOYS:

- Long sleeve white shirt
- Tie
- Black or dark colored long dress pants (no cargo pants)
- Dark dress socks
- Dark dress shoes.

NO SANDALS (WITH OR WITHOUT SOCKS), SNEAKERS, TENNIS SHOES, OR SPORT SHOES.

- Blazers or suits are fine

GIRLS:

- Simple white dress or white blouse and white skirt
- Length of dress should be no higher than slightly above the knee or any length below the knee
- Shoes: White or light colored dress shoes or sandals
- NO MINISKIRTS
- NO EXPOSED STOMACHS
- NO SPAGHETTI STRAPS
- NO FLIP FLOPS
- NO LOW CUT NECK LINES (NO CLEAVAGE SHOWING)
- NO HALTER TOPS OR STRAPLESS DRESSES/TOPS**

In cases where a dress is strapless or has spaghetti straps, a matching white shawl/cardigan or shrug is acceptable to cover up with.

BOYS AND GIRLS:

Hairstyle should be neat and presentable. No radical or distracting hairstyles.

The Archbishop will be anointing each child's forehead so girls and boys must have the forehead free of hair. The Archbishop does not want to push hair off the candidate's forehead in order to anoint the child.

SPONSORS:

Do not need to wear white. "Sunday best" attire is fine. No blue jeans, please.

The Archbishop is strict about the above dress code. The clothing your children will wear for this very special occasion should reflect their reverence for God and for the Church.

- **Reception:**

After mass there will be a Reception, with light refreshments. All families and candidates should attend. Candidates will receive a gift from the Confirmation Team, and a rose to give to their sponsor. At that time, presentations will be made to the Catechists, Fr. James Tan, and others involved closely in working behind the scenes. The Archbishop will also attend and this is a good moment to take photos with him and have him bless any gifts that the candidate has received.

- **Confirmation Certificates and Photos:**

Each candidate receives a Confirmation certificate and a photo DVD. The Confirmation certificate is an important document and should be kept safely. It may be needed, for example, when your child marries.

Confirmation Certificates and Photo DVDs will normally be ready approximately 2 weeks after the Confirmation mass. Please collect the certificates and photos from the Church office as soon as you are notified that they are ready for collection. If you are relocating away from Singapore before notification, please make sure that the coordinators have your new mailing address so that the certificate and photo CD can be posted to you. Please note that the Church office is not responsible for these documents as record of Confirmation is kept with the parish of the candidate's baptism.

If you know that you are leaving Singapore permanently, please make sure that the coordinators have a note of your new address. In the event that they are not ready for collection before you leave, they will be posted to you.

10. Costs

The projected budget is attached. The cost is S\$250 per candidate. Please keep in mind that tuition and administration are *free* as we are all volunteers. However, there are other expenses that must be taken into account. Please refer to the budget sheet to get an idea of how the money is spent.

11. Committees

All parents are required to commit to **at least one** committee involved in running this program. The Committee Task List/Description is attached. In addition, parents will be asked to chaperone some of the Community Service activities with their children.

The committees are: Retreat, Community Service, Liturgy, Reception and Celebrate Life Workshop. If you do not indicate your preference, you will be placed on a committee where assistance is needed.

12. Efficient Communication

The catechists will be communicating with the parents on matters concerning their lessons via e-mail. The Confirmation Team will also communicate with parents about activities via e-mail so please print your email clearly on the registration form.

We would greatly appreciate it if you would return all e-mails and/or phone calls in a timely manner, and we will do the same. We hope you will work with us to ensure that lines of communication are open and efficient.