



ST. GABRIEL THE ARCHANGEL  
CATHOLIC COMMUNITY

## Sacrament of Confirmation Program Guide 2025-26

### Our Approach

The goal of our Faith Formation Program is to “make disciples,” as the Lord Jesus commanded his Church to do. While discipleship involves a certain amount of learning and head-knowledge, it’s more about saying YES to Jesus, and then letting one’s life be transformed by the grace and working of the Holy Spirit. Discipleship is about *learning how to live*, taking one’s cue from the Master and Maker of all Life, God himself.

The Faith Formation Program is not an extension of High School. Rather, the program serves as a supplemental help to parents as they raise their teens in the practice of the Catholic faith. The program is intended to help shape and form the baptismal identity of our teens as sons and daughters of God in Christ. Through the program, they will, hopefully, “graduate” *into* even more committed discipleship as young adults.

### Goal and Objectives

The High School Disciple Formation program at Saint Gabriel Catholic Parish is designed around one goal and three objectives:

The **1<sup>st</sup> objective** is:

To acknowledge the individual person

The **2<sup>nd</sup> objective** is:

To build, support, and reinforce a Catholic culture

The **3<sup>rd</sup> objective** is:

To bridge faith and culture

The **goal** is: *To form committed disciples—friends and followers— of the Lord Jesus Christ who love God and love their neighbors as themselves as members of the Roman Catholic Church.* Preparation for Confirmation is woven throughout the entire High School Faith Formation program, with more immediate preparation for the sacrament in their Junior year.

# Requirements of the High School

## Confirmation Preparation Grades 9-11

### Requirements for St. Gabriel Confirmation Preparation

	Faith Formation Student	SMC Student
<b>9th Grade Year</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Attend Educational Catholic Religious Classes either through St. Gabriel Parish or St. Mary's Catholic High School* <input type="checkbox"/> Participate in Sunday Mass at the parish <input type="checkbox"/> Meet with a Parish Leader in the middle of the 9th Grade year to begin Confirmation Process and Establish Parish Support <input type="checkbox"/> Attend Confirmation Info Night with Parents in the beginning of the year.	
<b>10th Grade Year</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Attend Educational Catholic Religious Classes either through St. Gabriel Parish or St. Mary's Catholic High School* <input type="checkbox"/> Participate in Sunday Mass at the parish <input type="checkbox"/> Progress along the Levels of Engagement <input type="checkbox"/> Meet with a Parish Leader in the first semester of the 10th Grade year to check in and share progress on Service Project <input type="checkbox"/> Complete 1 Service-Vocational Project for the HSFF in the Sophomore or Junior Year	
<b>11th Grade Year</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Attend Educational Catholic Religious Classes either through St. Gabriel Parish or St. Mary's Catholic High School* <input type="checkbox"/> Participate in Sunday Mass at the parish <input type="checkbox"/> Progress along the Levels of Engagement <input type="checkbox"/> Meet with the Pastor in the first semester of the 11th Grade year for Interview <input type="checkbox"/> Meet with a Parish Leader in the second semester of 11th grade year and submit the Request to be Confirmed <input type="checkbox"/> Participate and attend the Immediate Confirmation Preparation sessions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Choose a Confirmation Name</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Write a Letter to the Bishop</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Choose a Confirmation Sponsor</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Attend a Retreat</li> </ul>	

**\*FAITH FORMATION: Not able to Attend Educational Catholic Religious Classes at the Parish (2 options)**

- **Home study.** Parents and students should meet with the FF Coordinator to arrange for class materials to be taught at home.
- **Participate in another parish's program** for the *classroom portion* if they have a schedule that works better for you. The FF Coordinators at each parish need to be in communication over this arrangement prior to the student beginning in another parish's program.

# Preparing for Confirmation Grades 9-11

Below are four specific areas you'll want to pay attention to as you prepare for Confirmation during the three years or so you're in the High School Faith Formation program. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact the Faith Formation Coordinators. We all want you to *flourish!* as Catholic men and women, husbands and wives, mothers and fathers, and friends today and forever!

## 1. Parish-Home Partnership

The Catholic Church is deeply aware that the faith is passed along primarily in the home by parents. The role of the parish faith formation program is to *assist* parents in the obligations they took upon themselves when they asked to have their children baptized. There should be a practical working relationship between the parish and the home when it comes to formation in the faith. The parish guides not only the students who come to us, but also parents in the efforts to build a Catholic culture at home.

## 2. Levels of Engagement with God

The Scriptures and life experience shows us abundantly that people relate to God on many different levels. When the students begin the program, and again at the end of each semester, the students themselves will consider how they have advanced along the Levels of Engagement. The full range of "levels of engagement" we can identify go beyond the scope of the High School formation program, but the levels which fall within the program include:

### - Disciple -

- A person who has learned (and keeps learning) the teachings of Scripture and Tradition; One who has committed him- or herself to applying the lessons taught by Christ to his or her life, in imitation of Christ; One who is committed to a life of ongoing conversion of heart and mind; One who asks the question: "What does God ask of me?" (in addition to other questions and requests of God).

### - Seeker -

- A person who is "in the crowd" that follows Jesus around; One who begins to ask questions about faith and wonders about who this person is they keep asking things of; One who is intrigued enough to be curious about God and faith; One who is able to be evangelized (that is, to be influenced and shaped by the Lord); One who is a potential disciple.

### - Novice -

- A person who is "in the crowd" that follows Jesus around; One who is primarily a recipient of divine grace (healing, hope, forgiveness, and so on); One whose primary question is: "What can God do for me?"; One for whom conversion of heart and mind isn't especially a priority; One who approaches faith formation as primarily something that has to be done: like a class which just has to be taken, like Math or Language Arts or Science.

### - Foundling -

- A person who finds him- or herself at our doorstep without a desire to be there, nor with a desire to be engaged in things related to faith; but, one who, nonetheless, has a basic "religious sense"; One who might be "spiritual, but not religious."

The purpose for identifying these levels of engagement is so that the student can see that discipleship is a process of growth and maturation. The point of being in the formation program is "to be *formed*:" to *progress* from being a Novice to a Seeker, from being a Seeker to a Disciple, and so on.

## 3. Theological Reflection and Spiritual Journals

Spiritual Journals will be introduced in our program in the coming years. Students will not need journals for the 2025-26 school year.

#### 4. Emphasis on “Confirmed Living” before Confirmation

Living the life of a confirmed Catholic doesn’t suddenly begin with Confirmation. We have been already given the Gifts of the Holy Spirit at our Baptism and are living our Baptismal call. It begins *before* the Sacrament of Confirmation is received (the sacrament *strengthens* what a person has already been given, is already doing and compels them to go further). Students are expected to take on, over the course of their time in the program, an attitude of “living confirmed life now, today.”

#### Being a confirmed, practicing Catholic "looks like" something.

Some outward signs of confirmed living include (for you and your Sponsor):

- **Observing the five basic precepts of the Catholic Church:**
  - Attend Mass on Sundays and on holy days of obligation, and rest from servile labor.
  - Confess your sins at least once a year.
  - Receive the sacrament of the Eucharist *at least* during the Easter season
  - Observe the days of fasting and abstinence established by the Church.
  - Help provide for the needs of the Church.

[For more details, visit: beginningcatholic.com/precepts-of-the-catholic-church](http://beginningcatholic.com/precepts-of-the-catholic-church)
- **Giving of your time and talents to your parish community:**
  - Serve as a good example to others
  - Have a good relationship with the Catholic Church and dialogue with its teachings and wisdom in order to learn
    - What gifts, talents, and abilities has God given me?
    - Am I giving of my giftedness for the benefit of others (and for my own personal growth)?
- **Letting faith shape how you approach and navigate important areas of life, for example:**
  - Marriage, Relationships, and Friendships
  - Work, Career
  - The Parish community, neighbors
  - College/school, Knowledge, and Learning
  - Communal worship and individual prayer
  - Physical fitness, Sports, and Sportsmanship, and so on

“Confirmed living” is about each disciple of Jesus Christ learning to integrate and interweave faith and life, so that daily life becomes truly a life “of faith.”

#### 5. Religious Educational Classes

By the time a student completes his or her 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Religion classes (whether at SMCS or the St. Gabriel Faith Formation program), he or she should possess the **basic** “head knowledge” of the Catholic faith. When the student enters High School, he or she is expected to begin making connections between the *head* knowledge of the faith and the *experiences* of life. Making these connections requires **learning more** information and **learning more and newer** life skills.

The classes offered through the High School Faith Formation program are intended to equip students to make these connections. The classes also provide material for continued growth in knowledge of the faith, Church, God, and the world. Each school year, 3-4 different class topics will be available for students to choose from each semester. The selection of available topics will rotate on a 3-year basis.

Students enrolled in SMC High School fulfill the education requirement during their regular school day's religion classes. SMCS students are, however, welcome to participate in the parish's classes if they wish.

### **Classes Offered for 2025-26**

Students will be enrolled in one of the following courses for the Fall-Winter Semester and a different course for the Spring Semester:

#### **Scripture and Typology**

- This course makes connections between the Old and New Testaments, showing students how Jesus and many people and events surrounding him were prefigured in the Old Testament, and brought to fulfillment in the New.

#### **Liturgical Appreciation**

- This course will expose students to the breadth and depth of the Church's liturgical practices, offering them a form of mystagogy by which they can participate more fully in liturgical celebrations.

#### **Hot Topics and Current Issues**

- This course takes the form of a debate, where the students investigate the "sides" of current issues and hot topics and, with the help of the catechist as a moderator, engage in discussion to further understand the complexities of how to blend faith and everyday life.

## **6. Individualized Service-Vocational Projects**

The purpose of Service-Vocational Projects is that the students make concrete connections between faith as something which "I" believe, and faith as something which "I" live out. Living out our vocations should be an intentional part of our "new life in Christ" from the time of our Baptism until the time of our Death.

In 2025-26, our current Sophomores and Juniors will participate in the "Works of Mercy Service" packet that has been used at St. Gabriel during the Junior year. Beginning in the 2026-27 School Year, students will begin service in the Sophomore year, with guidance being given when they meet for their start-of-year interview with the Confirmation Coordinator.

### **2025-26 Works of Mercy Assignment (11th Grade only)**

The seven Spiritual Works of Mercy are listed below. Each work of mercy has suggestions for how to live them out, as well as a reflection on what they mean to you.

Please complete at least four service opportunities as a part of your Confirmation preparation. We recommend 2 Corporal Works of Mercy, and 2 Spiritual Works of Mercy. All students should complete the last page as their final assignment (and one of the Spiritual Works).

For each one, complete a page from the packet by relating your service to one of the Works of Mercy and turn them in when you come to class. You may turn them in at any time, but there are staggered due dates to help you not fall behind throughout the year. Please turn in service projects by

- 1) December Class (2 months into the year)
- 2) February 1st (2 months later)
- 3) Before March 22nd (Confirmation Interview)
- 4) April 12th (Final Class) – Turn in "Pray for the Living and the Dead" page. It asks you to reflect on the prayers we used through our classes this year.

## 2025-26 Calendar (Grades 9 & 10)

### Religious Education Classes

#### High School Faith Formation

##### Fall-Winter Semester

Sept 10	7:15-8:15	Small Group / Meet Fr. Brian
Sept 17	6:00pm	Kick-Off Mass with Ice Cream Social
Sept 24	6-7:30pm	@ St. Bernadette (Fox Valley RE Night)
Oct 1	7:15-8:30	Class 1
Oct 8	7:15-8:30	Class 2
Oct 15	7:15-8:30	Small Group Night
Oct 22	7:15-8:30	Class 3
Oct 29	7:15-8:30	Class 4
Nov 5	7:15-8:30	Class 5
Nov 12	7:15-8:30	Small Group Night
Nov 19	7:15-8:30	Class: Large Group (Presentation on Marriage)
Nov 26	-----	No HSFF—Thanksgiving Break
Dec 3	7:15-8:30	Small Group & Reconciliation
Dec 10	7:15-8:30	Class 6
Dec 17	7:15-8:30	Class 7
Dec 24 & 31	-----	No HSFF—Christmas Break

##### Winter-Spring Semester

Jan 7	7:15-8:30	Class 1
Jan 14	7:15-8:30	Class 2
Jan 21	6-7:30pm	5-Parish Night @ SMCMS
Jan 28	7:15-8:30	Small Group Night
Feb 4	7:30-8:45	Grades 9-11
Feb 11	7:15-8:30	Class 3
Feb 18	5:30-6:20	Lenten Family Night   6:30pm Ash Wednesday Mass
Feb 25	7:15-8:30	Small Group Night
Mar 4	7:15-8:30	Class 4
Mar 11	7:15-8:30	Reconciliation Service
Mar 18	7:15-8:30	Class: Large Group (Presentation on Catholic Funerals)
Mar 25	7:15-8:30	Class 5
Apr 1	-----	No HSFF (Holy Week)
Apr 8	7:15-8:30	Small Group Night
Apr 15	7:15-8:30	Class 6
Apr 22	7:15-8:30	Class 7
Apr 29	7:15-8:30	Small Group Night
May 6	6:00pm	Summer Send Off Family Night

# Immediate Confirmation Preparation

## Grade 11

Your preparation for Confirmation through Saint Gabriel Parish begins in Grade 9 through the Grade 11. Your regular involvement in educational class sessions, and worship experiences--as well as your participation at weekend Mass and in the parish in general--are all ways you become prepared for the Sacrament of Confirmation. The Sacrament of Confirmation takes place the spring of Grade 11 and requires additional preparation beyond the educational component.

### 1. Knowledge of the Faith

1.1. Confirmed living is, indeed, a "life." It takes form in the flesh-and-blood lives we live. However, there's also some knowledge which goes with it: knowledge about the gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit which you'll receive in Confirmation, knowledge about what the Church asks of its confirmed members, knowledge about living a life of love and mercy might "look like," and so on. The Bishop asks all confirmation candidates to have a good knowledge of these things.

### 2. Students participate in a Confirmation retreat and six class Immediate Preparation sessions.

2.1. While the entire High School Faith Formation program is meant to prepare students for Confirmation and Catholic living, focused preparation for the sacrament is the subject of these six sessions and retreat. The Confirmation Retreat will be held through Spiritus at the Mount Tabor Center in Menasha as part of Neenah-Menasha Catholic Youth Ministry.

### 3. Confirmation Request, Every youth who wishes to be confirmed *must request the sacrament.*

3.1. All of the sacraments are received by request as an exercise of a person's free will and desire to receive the grace of God. When a student stands before the Bishop, the Church, and God and says, "I wish to be confirmed," it's vital that this statement reflect what's in the student's mind and heart. The responsibility of the individual in living out the Christian calling can only be taken up by the individual—with the help of the community and God's grace. This need for a request is the same with all the sacraments (for children under the age of 7, parents make the request for Baptism and Eucharist on behalf of their child).

3.2. The student meets with a Parish Leader for a Confirmation Interview and during this process requests to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. This is an exercise in Catholic maturity for our youth, and is aimed at keeping our youth as intentional, willing participants in their faith and faith formation.

### 4. Choosing a Confirmation Name

4.1. At Confirmation you will be called by name as you receive the gift of the Holy Spirit and complete your Christian initiation. You are encouraged to choose a new confirmation name; however, you may decide to use your baptismal name. In either case, the name you use at Confirmation should be significant to you. Your confirmation name is reflective of your new life in Christ as a young adult, engaged member of his Church. It should have special meaning and should express something about who you hope to become as an adult Catholic.

4.2. When choosing a Confirmation name, please avoid names which you like simply because of the way they sound. Instead, choose a name connected with, perhaps, a person or saint whom you respect and for whom you would like to have as an inspiration for your ongoing life of faith. Your Confirmation name should challenge you to grow as you enter into this next adult stage of practicing your faith. *See the Confirmation Study Handbook for ideas.*

## 5. Choosing a Confirmation Sponsor

- 5.1. When you are confirmed, you will be presented to the Bishop by your Sponsor. The Sponsor represents the Catholic community and, by presenting you to the Bishop, in effect testifies that you are ready to be confirmed. Because of this, your Sponsor **MUST** be an already practicing Catholic.
- 5.2. In choosing a sponsor, the student/candidate for the reception of Confirmation should select a person with the characteristics listed below. These characteristics come from the Canon Law of the Catholic Church and the guidelines for the Green Bay Diocese:
  - 5.2.1. The sponsor may be a man or a woman, but not a parent. The sponsor must be 16+ yrs old.
  - 5.2.2. The sponsor **MUST** be confirmed, **MUST** practice his or her faith by regular participation in Sunday Mass and Eucharist, and **MUST** lead a life in harmony with the Catholic faith.
  - 5.2.3. The sponsor will willingly participate in the Confirmand's process of sacramental preparation, by being both a guide in the faith and an example whom the Confirmand can look to. The sponsor exemplifies in faith and action a lifelong journey toward a closer relationship with the Lord, participates in the communal prayers and gatherings of the Church, and will encourage the young candidate to delve more deeply into Catholic living during the preparation period and after the Sacrament of Confirmation is received.
- 5.3. If the student is unable to find a suitable sponsor, he or she should contact the Faith Formation Coordinators or Father. There are many parishioners at St. Gabriel who would be more than happy to serve in the role of Sponsor for you, and we will put you in contact with them.

## 6. Sponsor/Candidate Meetings

- 6.1. The Candidate will attend Mass and meet with their chosen Sponsor for 2 sessions throughout the year. One will be at the Rite of Confirmation and another will be at the Presentation of Confirmation Candidates.

## 7. A formal letter is written by the student to the Bishop

- 7.1. Each Confirmation Candidate will be given details as to what the letter should include. This letter is then given to the FF Coordinator, who forwards it to the Bishop.

## 8. The Sacrament of Confirmation is scheduled and takes place.

- 8.1. Saint Gabriel's Confirmation Masses are in the Spring of the year. When an annual date for our next Confirmation Mass is confirmed with the Bishop's office, parents and students will be notified without delay so that planning of celebrations can begin.

### Delay of Confirmation

If a student's confirmation is delayed until a later date, it will be for concise and measurable reasons, and every attempt will be made to support and encourage the student toward the reception of the sacrament by giving attention to these reasons. If a student's confirmation is delayed, specific reasons will be given as to *why*, and specific actions will be given to ensure confirmation. Some common reasons that *MAY* delay the Sacrament of Confirmation include:

1. Poor attendance at classes or Sunday/Saturday Mass.
2. Disinterest in bridging faith and life (as seen in general attitude), or of practicing the Catholic faith
3. Lack of progression through the "Levels of Engagement," according to *the student's own self-reflection* on his/her relationship with God
4. Failure to set up and attend a Parish Leader meeting/check-in.

**In the end, nothing extraordinary will be asked of students whose confirmation is delayed: only a *renewed participation* in the Faith Formation program as laid out in this guide.**

## 2025-26 Calendar (Confirmation: Grade 11)

### Immediate Confirmation Preparation 2025-26 ONLY

#### High School Faith Formation

*\*Note: This year's Juniors are participating in the pre-existing Confirmation Prep program that they started in. For 11th grade in future years, refer to above information and calendars posted on the St. Gabriel Website*

Sept 17 (Opt)	6:00pm	Kick-Off Mass with Ice Cream Social
Sept 24 (Opt)	6-7:30pm	@ St. Bernadette (Fox Valley RE Night)
Oct 5	5:00pm	Mass followed by Parent/Candidate Info Night at 6pm
Oct 19	5-7:30pm	Mass followed by Class
Nov 2	5-7:30pm	Mass followed by Class
Nov 16	5-7:30pm	Mass followed by Class
Nov 19 (Opt)	7:15-8:30	Class: Large Group with 9 <sup>th</sup> & 10 <sup>th</sup>
Dec 3 (Opt)	7:15-8:30	Reconciliation
Dec 7 <u>or</u> 14	5-7:30pm	Mass followed by Class
Jan 11	5-7:30pm	Mass followed by Class
Jan 21 (Opt)	6-7:30pm	5-Parish Night @ SMCMS
Jan 25	4:45-7:30	Mass w/Presentation, Sponsor Mtg 2
Feb 1	5-7:30pm	Mass followed by Class
Feb 4 (Wed)	7:30-8:45	Wednesday Class
Feb 18 (Opt)	5:30-7:30	Lenten Fam. Night w/Ash Wed Mass
Feb 21-22	Overnight	Confirmation Retreat
Feb 22	11:00am	Mass at St. Mary Menasha w/retreat
Mar 1	5-7:30pm	Mass followed by Class
Mar 8	5-7:30pm	Mass followed by Class
Mar 11 (Opt)	7:15-8:30	Reconciliation
Mar 18 (Opt)	7:15-8:30	Class: Large Group with 9 <sup>th</sup> & 10 <sup>th</sup>
Mar 22	5-7:30pm	Mass followed Class/Conf Interviews
Apr 12	5-7:30pm	Mass followed by Final Class
Apr 19		Make-Up Day or Conf Class Party
May 14	7:00pm	Confirmation Mass at St. Mary Menasha