

Saint Raphael Parish, Milford
Sacrament of Confirmation
Frequently Asked Questions for Parents/Guardians

What is the meaning of the Sacrament of Confirmation?

The Sacrament of Confirmation is the gift of the Holy Spirit. We first received the Holy Spirit in Baptism. Through Confirmation, we receive the Holy Spirit in a new way, leading us into a deeper knowledge of Christ, Christ's teaching, and Christ's mission. The Holy Spirit helps us to become more like Christ and to use our gifts/talents to be the presence of Christ in the world, demonstrating our faith through our actions.

Have there been any changes in the focus of the Sacrament of Confirmation?

For many years, the focus of Confirmation was on maturity. Through Confirmation, children became "soldiers of Christ" who would defend the faith. Today, there is a greater emphasis on the Holy Spirit who will help us to continue to grow together in grace throughout our lives. Confirmation is seen as part of an ongoing growth/conversion within the community of faith rather than a "graduation."

What is the role of parents/guardians, sponsors, and other adults in our faith community?

Our key role is to lead by example. How do we live as Christians in the Catholic faith? It is important that we share our challenges and joys with our Confirmation candidates. How does our faith make a difference in our lives? Why do we share our time, talent, and treasure with our parish community as well as with those in need in our city, state, and world? Our examples of "faith in action" will speak volumes to our young people as we help them to recognize the unique gifts/talents they have to share. Our active participation in the GIFT program shows our young people that ongoing faith formation is important to us.

Are there specific requirements for Confirmation sponsors?

Confirmation sponsors must be practicing Catholics who have received the sacrament of Confirmation. They must be at least 16 years of age. They cannot be the child's parent. They can be a Baptismal Godparent. When choosing a sponsor, young people should select someone who is a role model for good Christian living, demonstrating their faith in their words and actions. The sponsor will be responsible for helping the Confirmation candidate to continue to grow in their faith and relationship with Christ.

At what age are our young people eligible to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation?

- * In the Archdiocese of Hartford, the minimum age for the Sacrament of Confirmation is currently 10th grade.
- * We begin the Confirmation program classes in 9th grade (age 14 by December 2025). Our Confirmation candidates attend GIFT, our Growing in Faith Together program – with a parent/guardian or sponsor. Our Confirmation candidates also attend additional Confirmation program classes.
- * The Archdiocese of Hartford is currently planning to transition the Sacrament of Confirmation to Grade 8.

What can be selected as a Confirmation name?

A name helps to identify who we are. Our Confirmation candidates will have the choice of using a Baptismal name or another name for their Confirmation name. The name must be a saint's name (or variation of that name). Our Confirmation candidates will be asked to conduct some research on saints, explain why they have selected a particular saint name, and outline how they will try to follow the example of this saint in their lives.

What is the service requirement for this year's Confirmation candidates?

Our Confirmation candidates are typically required to participate in parish/community service projects and a parish ministry of their choice – based on their talents and interests. This will provide the opportunity for our young people to be an active participant in the Saint Raphael community of faith and in our local community. These service opportunities replace the previous service hour requirement. We also encourage our young people to be of service to their families, schools, and community.