

OUR LADY OF LOURDES
233 North Main Street
Milltown, New Jersey 08850
732 890-9907

Dear 7th Grade Confirmation Candidate:

During the next two years you will begin a journey of intense focus on your faith in Jesus Christ and the responsibilities that accompany your decision to follow Him as a Confirmed Catholic. As you continue your journey to grow in Faith, you are also called to grow in your knowledge and understanding of the truths and traditions passed down to us through the centuries. As you come to know more about Jesus and the Holy Spirit, our goal is for you to develop a deeper appreciation of our Catholic Faith, Truths, and Traditions.

The Confirmation Team at Our Lady of Lourdes is dedicated to helping you on your journey to the Sacrament of Confirmation. This time can be very rewarding for you, your parents/guardians, and sponsor if you allow yourself to be filled with the Holy Spirit. We ask in return that you make this journey a time of growth with reverence and sincerity, in doing so, it can be a time of great closeness between yourself and with God our Father.

Please know that the Confirmation Team and the entire OLOL Parish Community will be praying for you on your journey. A journey in which you will, grow in love of Faith, Truth and Traditions, and that you will embrace as your own on your Confirmation day. If we can be of any assistance to you, your parents/guardians, and/or sponsor on your journey, please feel free to contact us.

Sincerely in Christ,

Renee E. Young
Our Lady of Lourdes
Parish Catechetical Leader

Time Table for Confirmation

- 1) 7th Grade Student/Parent meeting and Parent signing of Covenant Agreement. (October 13th 2011)
- 2) 7th Grade Student Covenant Signing during 7:00pm Saturday night mass. (October 22nd 2011)
- 3) Confirmation name and explanation of why you choose this name completed and handed in to PCL by the April 7th Grade.
- 4) Sponsors name and information to PCL by May of 7th Grade.
- 5) Sponsors Commitment Form returned to PCL by May of 7th Grade.
- 6) Letter of Petition given to Fr. Ed by January of 8th Grade.
- 7) Attend Confirmation retreat in February of 8th Grade.
- 8) 21 hours of Stewardship broken down into three categories as follows: 7 hours for family, 7 hours for Church and 7 hours for Community. Stewardship hours must be completed and turned in to PCL by March of 8th Grade to be confirmed in the 8th grade.
- 9) Sacrament of Confirmation will take place in May of their 8th Grade year. We usually receive notification of the date in February. As soon as we know the date we will post it on the Parish website along with rehearsal date and time.
(www.ololchurchnj.org)

For those in OLOL Religious Education program students are required to attend classes until CCD is over in May though they may have received the Sacrament of Confirmation prior to the end of Religious Ed classes, NO EXCEPTIONS!

Our Lady of Lourdes Policy for Confirmation

Rationale: Candidates in both public and parochial schools are required to complete the two year Confirmation Prep program offered by the parish. Since the goal is to form Christian community among the candidates, it is believed that two years is the optimal time for candidates to pray, share, learn, worship, and serve together. Perfect attendance in the Confirmation Prep program is expected. More than 4 absences will lead to postponement of the Sacrament for the Candidate.

Adequate Understanding: Over the next two years each student will be involved in various programs that prepare them for the Sacrament of Confirmation as well as continuing their understanding of the faith and family life. Confirmation Prep will be one part of the CCD curriculum and will take place over a 10 week period in 7th grade. Perfect attendance during Confirmation Prep is mandatory. Should a student miss a class during Confirmation Prep they will need to contact the PCL to schedule a time to complete the lesson missed. Every effort must be made to attend all CCD classes **more than 1 missed lesson in any one course will result in a possible delay in receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation.** Parent/Guardian or Sponsor is required to oversee the candidate's completion of all chapters. It is expected that parents/guardians and sponsors will take an active role in the candidates preparation for the sacrament. Students will be expected to complete all in class and at home reading and assignments on time. Each chapter will need to be signed off on by a Parent/Guardian or Sponsor. If a student loses his/her books (5 in all) it will be their responsibility to purchase and complete each chapter in the new book along with parent/guardian or sponsor signature and submit it to the PCL for review before being confirmed. Students keep their book once a course is completed.

Attendance at Liturgy: The family of God gathers together as a parish community for the Liturgy. Candidates are expected to attend the weekly Sunday Liturgy. Frequent reception of the Eucharist as well as reception of the Sacrament of Reconciliation is strongly encouraged. In order to orient the Candidates toward the Liturgy as a way of prayer and to orientate them toward the Bible there will be **12 Liturgy assignments per year** for those in the Religious Education Program only. Students are required to write two paragraphs as a reflection on the Gospel Readings or Homily given at 12 different Sunday Liturgy's per year. They are to be handed in as completed and will be reviewed by the Confirmation Team. This is a requirement for the reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation. Liturgy assignments are to be completed no later than February of the 8th grade year.

Stewardship/Community Service: Confirmations candidates need to complete **21 hours of Stewardship**. Stewardship is broken down into 3 service categories with **7 hours of service for each category**. The service categories are as follows: **Family, Parish, and Community**. The candidates may be asked to participate in a group service project/s each year, which may require extra time outside of their regular scheduled class attendance (i.e. Saturday, Sunday, or weekday evenings.) Stewardship hours must be completed and turned in to the PCL by March of 8th grade to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation in 8th grade.

Confirmation Name: The baptismal name is the preferred name to take at Confirmation. This expresses the relationship between Baptism and Confirmation. If a new name is chosen it should be the name of a recognized saint of the Church. A derivative of a Christian name will be acceptable. Check with the PCL if you have any questions. A two paragraph explanation on why you chose a specific Confirmation name needs to be completed and handed in for review by the Confirmation Team, PCL and/or OLOL Pastor. ***Please note the Confirmation Name and explanation of same must be submitted by April of 7th grade.**

Petition for Confirmation & Commitment to Christian

Living: Candidate will write a letter to the pastor of OLOL indicating their readiness to make a commitment to live out the baptismal promise of the Church. It will include a plan to live a life consistent with their baptismal call, which will be sealed by the Sacrament of Confirmation. Interviews may be held periodically during which time the PCL and/or the OLOL Pastor will evaluate a candidate's growth and progress in preparation to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. ***Please note letter of Petition to Fr. Ed must be turned in by January of 8th grade.**

Sponsors: Candidates are to choose sponsors which meet the qualifications of the Church and the requirements of OLOL parish. Special forms will be distributed to validate this purpose. Parents may not act as sponsors for their child. **Sponsors name must be submitted during the first year of the Confirmation Program by May of 7th grade.** The sponsor must be a person who is a practicing Catholic with regular Mass attendance, duly registered in a Catholic parish, active within the parish community, and a person of prayer who upholds the teachings of the Catholic Church to the best of his/her ability. If married, they must be within a marriage recognized as valid by the Catholic Church. He/she must be at least sixteen years or older, having received all three Sacraments of Initiation, (Baptism, First Eucharist and Confirmation). The highest priority in the selection of a sponsor should be the person's religious faith and standing in the church. The idea that he/she is a close relative or friend must take a secondary role to the type of Christian witness the sponsor is. The matter of choosing a sponsor is of the utmost and serious nature and should take precedence over common social customs. **Sponsor Commitment form must be returned by May of 7th grade to verify Sponsor eligibility.**

Special Celebrations, Classes and Retreat: Over the 2 year preparation period candidates must attend special celebrations, classes and a retreat. The purpose of the gatherings are to aid the spiritual growth of the candidate, to aid the candidate to a prayerful approach to the Sacrament of Confirmation, and to assist them to grow towards a full commitment to Jesus Christ. Attendance at all events marks a significant stage in the candidates' preparation and commitment to fully enter into the life of the Church and as a disciple of Jesus.

- 1) Parents and Candidates are to attend Parent/Candidate Orientation in **October**.
- 2) Parents/guardians and sponsors are to be present at the Ceremony of Enrollment, **Signing of the Confirmation Covenant October 22nd** for those in the **7th grade**.
- 3) 8th grade Confirmation Retreat in **February**.
- 4) Confirmation practice – one for Candidates, Sponsors and/or Parents.

Administration: The Pastor of OLOL, makes the final decision as to whether a candidate is ready to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. OLOL Confirmation team, which consists of the PCL and Catechists, will advise the pastor as to the readiness of each individual candidate to receive the Sacrament based on the attitude of the candidate, their class attendance, the ability to articulate the Churches teaching and their faith in word and action. If the child is unwilling or feels that he/she is not ready to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation it may be postponed until the next year, although if this the case he/she will need to be enrolled again in the Catechetical program or RCIA at OLOL. There is no strict timeline on reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation but however, if the sacrament is not received at all, it may cause a problem later in life.

Liturgy of Confirmation: The date for this celebration will be announced as soon as the pastor of OLOL is informed by the Diocesan office of Metuchen. Confirmation is a spiritual celebration and thus should be approached with great joy as well as solemnity. It is expected that all candidates will receive the Eucharist during this special celebration of Mass. As part of their immediate preparation for reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation, all candidates should partake of the Sacrament of Reconciliation before Confirmation day. Robes will be worn. Details on dress code, confirmation robe and retreat will follow. **All candidates and their sponsors must be present for Confirmation rehearsal.** Certificates of Confirmation will be presented to the Confirmed on the last day of CCD classes which is in May. **Students must continue to attend all CCD Classes until the school year ends in May.**

PARENT/GUARDIAN PLEDGE OF COMMITMENT

I/We the parent/guardian of _____ recognize that it is my/our responsibility along with the vows I/We took at his/her Baptism in cooperation with the Confirmation Team of OLOL to help my/our child grow in his/her Catholic Faith in preparation to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. I/We promise

- To see that my/our child celebrates the weekly Sunday Liturgy (mass), attend mass on Holy Days of Obligation, receive the Eucharist, and celebrate reconciliation (at least once a year).
- To see that my/our child attends all religious education classes and completes any necessary assignments.
- To support and encourage my/our child in preparation for the sacrament by participating in all Confirmation classes, the Covenant signing, Group Community Service Project(s) and Confirmation Retreat.
- To participate in the sacramental life of the Church, (which includes weekly Sunday Liturgy) as a witness of my faith to my/our child.
- To help my/our child learn the prayers and practices of our faith as required.
- To pray for and with my/our child.
- To continue to share the gift of myself/ourselves and the gift of faith with my/our child.
- To facilitate regular meetings with my/our Child's chosen Sponsor.
- To support OLOL Parish on a regular basis with the gifts of my/our Time, Talents and Treasure.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Parent/Guardian Signature

Dated: _____

Dated: _____

We, the Confirmation team at OLOL parish, believe strongly that parents are the primary religious educators of their children. Our program is not designed to replace the faith formation that occurs within the family, but rather to enrich the faith formation that is already being shared at home.

We pledge to you, that we will provide the necessary programs to assist you in your important role and that we will guide and monitor these programs throughout the year.

SPONSOR COMMITMENT Return by the May of 7thGrade

I, _____ accept the honor of being Confirmation Sponsor for _____, who is preparing to receive the sacrament of Confirmation at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, Milltown, New Jersey in the Diocese of Metuchen. As a mentor for a teenager that is making the decision to choose their faith as their own, I understand the importance of this responsibility. I am a registered and participating member of the Catholic Faith Community of

Parish Name: _____

Parish Address: _____

I affirm that:

I am Sixteen years old or older and have received the three Sacraments of Initiation: Baptism, Eucharist and Confirmation. I regularly attend and participate in Sunday Liturgy (mass), regularly receive Holy Communion, Reconciliation (at least once a year), and uphold the teachings of the Catholic Church.

I strive to live out the gospel message in my daily life.

I strive to grow in the understanding of my Catholic faith.

I will give support to my confirmation candidate by:

- meeting regularly to discuss Confirmation lessons
- attending liturgies together whenever possible
- discussing the connection of how Stewardship, service, and commitment lead to a lifetime of service toward others
- praying together for spiritual growth and the concerns we share in our regular meetings
- providing a Christian example by the way I live my life

Sponsor Signature _____

Name (please print) _____

Address _____

Phone # _____ ***All information will be sent**

to Sponsors Parish/Pastor to be verified for eligibility.

Letter of Petition to Fr. Ed

Writing your letter of petition to Fr. Ed should be in letter format and include the following thoughts. You can begin with “Dear Fr. Ed”.

First, tell him a little about yourself, your family, pets, and hobbies that sets you apart from your classmates.

Second, make a formal request to be considered as a candidate to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation it may begin with “Fr. Ed, I respectfully request to be considered as a candidate to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation”, you may wish to use another statement with similar sentiments.

Third, tell Fr. Ed why you would like to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Last, tell Fr. Ed how you plan to live out your Baptismal promise on your journey through the Confirmation process as well as after receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation.

The letter should be brief and to the point, in your own words, and consist of three or four short paragraphs. It should be no longer than one side of a piece of notebook paper. If you need help ask your parent/guardian or sponsor to help you but they should not to write the letter for you.

The letter of Petition must be completed and handed in by January of 8th grade.

These can be combined into one paragraph if you wish.

Choosing Your Confirmation Name

Names give us our identity. It tells others who we are. When you were baptized your parents/guardian chose your name. Ask your parent's/ guardian's the reason why they chose the specific name for you. Ask them something about your Baptism.

Now that you are preparing to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation, it is time to choose the name you will take as a sign that you are growing in faith. The tradition of taking on a new name is to show that you are taking on a new role in life. In the Old Testament, when Abram was called to lead his people to believe in the one God, his name was changed to Abraham, meaning "Father of many nations". In the New Testament, Jesus changes Simon's name to Peter, meaning "Rock", because he was to become the "Rock" upon which Jesus founded His Church.

Your name should reflect your role as a mature Christian. Ask your parents guardians what name they took at Confirmation and why, as well as something about their Confirmation journey and Confirmation. Many Confirmation candidates, because of the love they have for a Parent, Grandparent or Guardian take their name. You may wish to take the name of a person you look up to as a Christian example. The only condition is that it must be a Saint's name or variation of a Saints name. You may wish to take the name given to you at Baptism. Again, the only condition is that it must be a Saint's name or variation of a Saints name. Or you may wish to take the name of a Saint which you have a special connection with.

Take your time to do a little research on the Lives of the Saints, you may find one that fits who you are, what you believe and/or the struggles you have.

After you decide on your Confirmation name, you will need to write two short paragraphs explaining why you have chosen that name. This must be completed by and handed in to your Catechists by **April of 7th grade.**

Please make sure you highlight the name you have chosen for Confirmation, as well as your full name on the top of your paper before handing it in

STEWARDSHIP SERVICE COMMITMENT

“To be like Christ is to be a Christian” – Brennan Manning

As a Confirmation Candidate at OLOL Parish, I understand that the role as a disciple for Jesus means a dedication to become more like Him. Committing **Myself** to service for others is an important way to affirm my desire to be more like Christ.

I _____ agree to share my time and talents to serve my family, my church and my community with a minimum of **21 Stewardship hours** broken down into **3** categories of **7 hours each (family, church, and community)**. The hours recorded confirm the completion of my Stewardship commitment. I understand that I will need to have all Stewardship hours completed and turned in to OLOL PCL by March of my 8th grade year in order to be eligible to receive Confirmation in 8th grade. I also understand that there may be additional Group Service Project I must participate in.

Each activity must include the date, hours served and signature of the person and/or organization that I served. I can do multiple activities or one activity, over a period of time, in each category to meet my Stewardship commitment. If I wish, I can complete additional hours of Stewardship.

_____(Signature of Candidate)

STEWARDSHIP SERVICE & HOURS

Name _____

Family

Description of Service	Date	Hours	Signature of Adult Or Organization
1. _____			
2. _____			
3. _____			
4. _____			
5. _____			
6. _____			
7. _____			

Church

Description of Service	Date	Hours	Signature of Adult Or Organization
1. _____			
2. _____			
3. _____			
4. _____			
5. _____			
6. _____			
7. _____			

Community

Description of Service	Date	Hours	Signature of Adult Or Organization
1. _____			
2. _____			
3. _____			
4. _____			
5. _____			
6. _____			
7. _____			

CONFIRMATION COVENANT

With gratitude to God for the inherent gift of faith, I prayerfully embrace my journey on becoming fully initiated into the Catholic Faith. I ask for the strength of the Holy Spirit to guide me, our Pastor Fr. Ed, our PCL, and Catechists to lead me, as well as the parish community of Our Lady of Lourdes to pray for me on my journey to the Sacrament of Confirmation.

I am ready to begin my preparation to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation.

I wish to be fully initiated into the Church through this Sacrament which already began at Baptism and continued at Holy Communion.

I wish to learn an awareness of and share in the Gifts of the Holy Spirit which are: Wisdom, Understanding, Knowledge, Reverence, Courage, Right Judgment, and Wonder & Awe.

I will work toward a greater understanding as well as to witness Christ's presence in the world so that His Kingdom will be more real and alive in my life.

Because I choose to take this next step, I realize that I am the one who is responsible to commit to all aspects of the Confirmation program.

I have decided that I want to be part of Our Lady of Lourdes parish community. Therefore, **I Promise:**

I will attend and participate fully in all Confirmation Prep and CCD classes.

I will reflect on what we talk about at Confirmation Prep classes and all CCD classes.

I will complete assignments assigned outside the classroom.

I will attend and fully participate in a one day retreat in the 8th grade.

I will perform 21 hours of Stewardship service.

I will attend and participate in Sunday Liturgy with reverence and respect as a model to the members of my family and members of OLOL Parish.

I will share my faith journey with my parents & sponsor.

I intend to continue my education in the faith after my Confirmation.

Candidate's Signature

Date

Candidate's Printed Name

Candidates Witness