

INSTRUCTIONS FOR FAITH-SHARING COMPONENT FOR SPONSORS (OR PARENTS) AND CANDIDATES

Sponsors should arrange to meet with their candidates for at least **FOUR** faith-sharing conversations. This is a special time to grow with your candidate.

An hour of sharing is recommended. Choosing dates and times in advance may help ensure regular communication. It is actually recommended that it be in a relaxed atmosphere (i.e., a shared meal). You should have a bible or two available also to use the Word in your reflection.

The enclosed sheets are to be used as guides for the sharing sessions. The sheets are divided into three sections: Prayer, Knowing My Faith, and Christian Service. Candidates and sponsors should share the respective topics together, using as much of the sheet as time allows.

SEVEN "Candidate/Sponsor Sheets" are available: numbers 1-5, and then Advent & Lent. We are asking candidates to discuss and turn in reflections for at least FOUR of these sheets, but would encourage the use of all.

Throughout this time of preparation, sponsors should seek to support candidates and their families. They should help the candidates become aware of their reasons for wanting to celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation. Candidates will grow in their acceptance of the responsibility of being confirmed in the Catholic Church.

Candidate's Name _____



Candidate/Sponsor Faith Sharing #1



Candidates and sponsors should share the respective topics together. Candidates then fill out the brief section at the bottom of the page and turn in this sheet to the Religious Education Office.

PRAYER

- ☞ When do you pray? How do you pray?
- ☞ What does prayer mean to you?
- ☞ How will you try to grow in prayer during this time of preparation for Confirmation? Be specific, but realistic. *Don't try to do too much and then give up.*

KNOWING MY FAITH

Every week we make a profession of faith in the words of the Nicene Creed. This Creed contains the beliefs of our faith. Read over the creed. Christians of every century have held strongly to these beliefs. Some have even given up their lives to defend them. Why are these beliefs important to you?

**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made, one in Being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.
For us men and for our salvation
he came down from heaven:
by the power of the Holy Spirit
he was born of the Virgin Mary, and became man.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
He suffered, died, and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in fulfillment of the Scriptures;
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and His kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son.
With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.
He has spoken through the Prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

CHRISTIAN SERVICE

As a Christian, which spiritual or corporal works of mercy have you practiced at home? In your neighborhood? At school?

Corporal Works of Mercy

The Corporal Works of Mercy are these kind acts by which we help our neighbors with their material and physical needs.

feed the hungry
shelter the homeless
clothe the naked
visit the sick and imprisoned
bury the dead
give alms to the poor

Spiritual Works of Mercy

The Spiritual Works of Mercy are acts of compassion, as listed below, by which we help our neighbors with their emotional and spiritual needs.

instruct
advise
console
comfort
forgive
bear wrongs patiently

How do you plan to continue showing your faith and love through service?

God bless you in your faith sharing!

Candidates - fill out this section and then return form to the Religious Education Office

Date you discussed this sheet with your sponsor: _____

Which topics (from above) did you discuss with your sponsor?

What did you learn from your sponsor? _____

Candidate's Name _____



Candidate/Sponsor Faith Sharing #2



Candidates and sponsors should share the respective topics together. Candidates then fill out the brief section at the bottom of the page and turn in this sheet to the Religious Education Office.

PRAYER

We sometimes speak of the four ACTS of prayer.

- | | | |
|---|------------------------|---|
| A | Adoration or love | We express our love for God. |
| C | Contrition or sorrow | We express our sorrow for our sins and ask forgiveness. |
| T | Thanksgiving | We thank God for his many blessings. |
| S | Supplication (request) | We ask for his help and guidance. |

A healthy prayer life includes all of these approaches. Examine your prayer life. What approach do you use most often? Least often? For a week keep track of the prayers you use.

KNOWING MY FAITH

What does it mean to give witness of your Christian faith to those of your own age? How have your parents helped you? How has your sponsor helped you? How have other candidates helped you?

Baptism is the sacrament by which you were incorporated into Christ and became a member of the Church.

Ask your sponsor why he or she agreed to be your sponsor. Together, talk about the responsibility of a sponsor that you both consider most important.

CHRISTIAN SERVICE

Find one incident in the Gospels that shows Jesus helping others. What do you learn about him in the incident? How can you imitate him in a similar way?

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 Candidate/Sponsor Faith Sharing #3 

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PRAYER

- ☞ The prayer given to us by Jesus is the Our Father, the Lord's Prayer. It is a prayer of love and unity, of sorrow for sin, and of gratitude for God's mercy. It has been the prayer of Christians throughout the centuries.
- ☞ Pray the Lord's Prayer pausing after each phrase and really think about the meaning.
- ☞ Jesus told us to "pray always." This week, each night before you go to bed, try to spend at least 10 minutes reading the Scriptures.

KNOWING MY FAITH

Jesus taught us what we must do to be his followers. His teachings are found in the Sermon on the Mount (Gospel of Matthew, chapters 5-7).

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted.
Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the land.
Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied.
Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.
Blessed are the clean in heart, for they will see God.
Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.
Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven

- ☞ So far, how well have you been involved in the preparation for Confirmation?

CHRISTIAN SERVICE

- ☞ How do the Beatitudes relate to the attitudes needed for Christian service? Have you been serving others in a cheerful way?
- ☞ How have you reached out to the discouraged, the lonely, or the elderly?

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Candidate/Sponsor Faith Sharing #4



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PRAYER

If you are serious about your spiritual life, set aside time each day to examine your conscience. This means looking prayerfully at how you have or have not imitated Christ.

After you have looked at your life, pray to the Holy Spirit, asking him to help you be Christ like in your thoughts, words, and actions. Do this each night this week. Examine your conscience each night.

Examination of Conscience

My Relationship With God

What steps am I taking to help me grow closer to God and to others? Do I turn to God often during the day, especially when I am tempted?

Do I participate at Mass with attention and devotion on Sundays and holy days? Do I pray often and read the Bible?

Do I use God's name and the names of Jesus, Mary, and the saints with love and reverence?

My Relationships With Family, Friends, and Neighbors

Have I set a bad example through my words or actions? Do I treat others fairly? Do I spread stories that hurt other people?

Am I loving of those in my family? Am I respectful of my neighbors, my friends, and those in authority?

Do I show respect for my body and for the bodies of others? Do I keep away from forms of entertainment that do not respect God's gift of sexuality?

Have I taken or damaged anything that did not belong to me? Have I cheated, copied homework, or lied?

Do I quarrel with others just so I can get my own way? Do I insult others to try to make them think they are less than I am? Do I hold grudges and try to hurt people who I think have hurt me?

KNOWING MY FAITH

It is good to look over the past weeks and evaluate how your Confirmation preparation is helping you grow in your relationships with Christ, your family, your friends, and the Church. When have you been strong and faithful to Christ? When has it been difficult for you to live your faith?

CHRISTIAN SERVICE

How can you be a Christian healer or peacemaker at home this week?

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PRAYER

Look up in a Bible: 1 Corinthians 13:4-8, and read it aloud.

Evaluate yourself on it. How well do you love? Reread the same passage, but this time say your own name wherever it uses the word love.

Look up some of the following Scripture passages and discuss them: Matthew 5:13-16
Luke 4:16-21, John 14:23-26, Matthew 16:24-25, Luke 8:4-15, John 14:15-17, Matthew 25:14-30, Luke 10:21-24, or John 15:11-17

KNOWING MY FAITH

Who is your bishop? What do you know about your bishop? How does he help the people of your diocese live the Christian life?

Discuss what you have learned about the structure of the Church (pope, bishops, priests, lay people, etc.).

CHRISTIAN SERVICE

What are you doing to show you are really interested in being a member of this faith community?

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Candidate/Sponsor Faith Sharing



ADVENT

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PRAYER

Christ came to the earth because he loves you. What part of the nativity narrative (Luke chaps. 1-2 and Matthew chaps. 1-2) means the most to you? Why?

Advent and Christmas hymns are beautiful prayers. Find one in a missalette or hymnal. Discuss the words (one verse) of the Advent hymn that you find most meaningful. Use it as an Advent prayer.

KNOWING MY FAITH

Look up the Joyful Mysteries of the rosary and write them in your journal. How can praying the Joyful Mysteries help you prepare for Christ's coming?

The Annunciation

Mary learns that she has been chosen to be the mother of Jesus.

The Visitation

Mary visits Elizabeth, who tells her that she will always be remembered.

The Nativity

Jesus is born in a stable in Bethlehem.

The Presentation

Mary and Joseph take the infant Jesus to the Temple to present him to God.

The Finding of Jesus in the Temple

Jesus is found in the Temple discussing his faith with the teachers.

During Advent, we speak of the three comings of Christ: in history, in mystery, and in majesty. What does each of these terms mean?

Remember, December 8 is the feast of the Immaculate Conception, when we celebrate Mary's being conceived without original sin. It is a Holy Day of Obligation.

The Immaculate Conception is the doctrine that Mary was preserved free from original sin from the first moment of her conception. Prior to the Middle Ages, there was no discussion of this idea. When the idea was suggested, prominent theologians, including Saints Anselm and Thomas Aquinas, opposed it. Gradually, however, the idea took hold, and the 16th-century Council of Trent excluded Mary when it talked about original sin. On December 8, 1854, Blessed Pope Pius IX defined the Immaculate Conception as a dogma of the Catholic Church. Eight years earlier, the bishops of the United States had chosen Mary under the title of her Immaculate Conception to be patroness of their country. Thirty-one dioceses in the United States have adopted Mary of the Immaculate Conception as their patroness. Today the largest Catholic church in the Americas is the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C.



What is the meaning of Mary's Immaculate Conception?

CHRISTIAN SERVICE

How do you plan to make Christmas a time for showing love to Christ? To others?

How can you make this holiday season simpler, less filled with the business of buying and selling?

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Candidate/Sponsor Faith Sharing



LENT

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PRAYER



Lent is a time of challenge. We are challenged to make renewed efforts to be more Christ like, to put more enthusiasm into living the Gospel, to genuinely love one another. This Lent, think of the characteristics of the Christian community. A community: *worships* regularly; *serves* others in imitation of Christ; sees itself as a *community*, the Church; gives witness to its faith in word and deed.

Using the italicized words above, write a paragraph about how you have grown in each of these areas. What area do you need to work on as you finish preparations for Confirmation?

Participate fully in the parish services of the Easter Triduum (Holy Thursday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday) and Easter Sunday. Reflect on the importance and connection between these three events in *your life*.

KNOWING MY FAITH

As you draw even closer to the Rite of Confirmation, explain how each of the following relates to Confirmation and what happens to you during the ceremony:

- ☞ Holy oil (chrism)
- ☞ Sign of the Cross
 - ☞ Bishop
- ☞ Laying on of hands
- ☞ "Be sealed with the Holy Spirit"
- ☞ Confirmation name

Read the Acts of the Apostles 2:1-12, the story of Pentecost. What would you have done if you were there? What kind of Christian do you want to be?

Make a list of the things you know about Confirmation already. Make another list of questions you may have **which you should ask during final class meetings.**

CHRISTIAN SERVICE

You may wish to think of an extra act of service you can do during Lent: be cheerful at school, go out of your way to be kind to those you find difficult, pay more attention to your studies, put more enthusiasm into your Christian service or Confirmation preparation, spend more time with your family, be more respectful to your parents, give some of your extra time to do things with your brothers and sisters. Let the world see your love for God and your willingness to serve.

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