

# St. Therese Church

## Confirmation Program Overview

### **BASICS:**

1. This is a 2 year program, beginning in September of the Freshman year and ending in May of the Sophomore year.
  - a. Sept. to April then summer off.
  - b. Begin again in Sept. with Confirmation in May administered by the Bishop.
2. The Manuals we use are called "Confirmed in a Faithful Community".
3. Lessons in the program are called "Faith Theme Sessions".
4. Students enrolled in the program are called "Candidates".
5. There will be between 8 to 12 girls and boys in each small group. The groups stay together for the full 2 year period.
6. The adult leaders of the program are called "Sponsor Catechists".
7. The groups meet approximately 2 times per month. 1 time is a Faith Theme Session and the other time would be a Teen Mass or Liturgical event.
8. We have found through experience that the best meeting time is on Sundays.
  - a. We have 3 meetings on a weeknight, one in Sept. (Night of Beginning), one in February (NET Retreat) and one in May (Comm. Svc).
9. Faith Theme sessions last an hour and a half with a short break in between.

### **Important Information:**

1. Four years ago, the Bishop's Conference of the United States put in place a policy called "Protecting God's Children".
  - a. All volunteers working with children under 18 must have a background check
  - b. All volunteers working with children under 18 must attend the Protecting God's Children workshop in order to help recognize and / or prevent child abuse.
  - c. All meetings, religious classes or events for children under 18 must take place within the church / school grounds or an approved diocesan location and be mediated by an adult that has attended the Protecting God's Children workshop and had a positive background check.
2. Faith Theme Sessions take place in the church.
  - a. Freshman groups will be scheduled once a month for a 1 and a half hour session from 4 – 5:30 pm. Sophomore classes will meet from 7 – 8:30 pm

## **1<sup>st</sup> Year:**

1. Candidates will be signed into groups towards the end of August.
  - a. I meet with the Sponsor Catechists and we place candidates in groups together. I like putting the candidates with their friends. One restriction is to have an even amount of boys and girls in each group. Candidates will be contacted in September as to which group they will be in.
2. Night of Beginning is scheduled for a Wednesday evening in September.
3. Candidates will be asked to choose a Sponsor (Godparent) by October.
  - a. Information regarding guidelines for choosing a Sponsor will be given to the candidates at the Night of Beginning.
4. Each small group will be asked to choose a Patron Saint. 12 to 15 different profiles of saints will be given them to choose from, but they must decide on 1 saint for their group.
  - a. Candidates will receive a medal and holy card of their saint at a Teen Mass.
  - b. Candidates will be asked to learn about their saint and as a group, do a Community Service project which relates to the work their saint is known for.
5. Each candidate will receive a Bible at a Teen Mass which they will use during some of their Faith Theme Sessions.
6. A group of young adults called the National Evangelization Team visit us in February and run a retreat for the candidates. This takes place usually on a Thursday from 4:00 in the afternoon until 9:30 p.m. Attending a retreat is a Diocese requirement for receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation.
7. In May, candidates attend a meeting to introduce them to the Community Service requirement of our program. Community Service hours can be completed from Spring of Freshman year until March of Sophomore year.
8. Teen Masses take place approximately every 5 to 6 weeks.

## **2<sup>nd</sup> Year:**

1. Community Service:
  - a. 20 hours need to be completed in the areas of Church and Community. Candidates can sign up for different events at meeting in May.
  - b. Candidates are asked to write a Reflection Paper explaining what they did for Community Service; how the people they helped benefited; and how they benefited from doing it.
  - c. Most candidates find doing community service is actually FUN!
2. Candidates attend a Reconciliation Service in May, just prior to being Confirmed.
3. Final Interviews take place in April where each candidate sits down with an adult in the program and is interviewed on their past 2 year involvement in the program.
4. Teen Masses take place approximately every 5 or 6 weeks.

## **CONFIRMATION:**

1. Confirmation takes place in May of the candidate's Sophomore year.
2. The Sponsor chosen by the candidate has a part in the Confirmation Mass and will be asked to attend a practice session as well as be in attendance the night of Confirmation.
3. The requirements set by the Paterson Diocese for receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation are as follows:
  - a. Attendance in all Faith Theme sessions and Liturgical events throughout the 2 year process. (Both Public and Catholic School students are required to attend.)
  - b. Attend a Confirmation Retreat.
  - c. Community Service.
  - d. Attend Mass.
  - e. A good understanding of the Catholic faith and a willingness to become a full, active member in their parish community.

## **CONFIRMED IN A FAITHFUL COMMUNITY:**

1. Faith Theme Session topics:
  - a. Concepts for Personal Growth & Self Identity
  - b. Church – Building a Community
  - c. Prayer and Worship
  - d. Sacraments
  - e. Scripture – Bible
  - f. Moral Decisions and Christian Living
  - g. Gospels – The Life of Christ

## **ROLE OF THE SPONSOR CATECHIST:**

1. An adult or adults that lead the group by sharing their faith.
2. Sponsor Catechists attend 4 separate meetings throughout the year where the Faith Theme Sessions are explained, upcoming and past events are reviewed, and help in planning is offered.
3. Sponsor Catechists need to review and prepare for the Faith Theme Sessions.
4. Most important is a willingness to share their faith with the teenagers in our parish.