St. Louise de Marillac Confirmation Handbook

2019-2020
St. Louise de Marillac 2019-2020 Confirmation Guidelines

Welcome and thank you for choosing St. Louise de Marillac for your teen’s Confirmation preparation! We are excited to journey with your family as you and your teen continue to develop your faith. This is truly a special time of spiritual formation, not just for your teen, but for the whole family! During this two year long journey, we need your help! We ask that you remain especially faithful in the following areas:

- Submit all registration forms and certificates prior to the first confirmation session
- Pay confirmation fees prior to the first confirmation session
- Attend Sunday Mass and all Holy Days of Obligation
- Help your teen choose a qualified sponsor
- Support/tithe to the Church

The St. Louise de Marillac Confirmation Process

SLDM has intentionally adopted Chosen, by Ascension press for this class’ confirmation model. This model emphasizes a combination of large group teaching combined with a small group discussion. This ensures that the teen is able to have a voice to challenge and learn at their own pace, with a group of peers but guided by one of our talented and dedicated adult Catechists. The large group component of Chosen uses a DVD format with lectures from different specialists throughout the Church on the given topic for that week.

Over the course of the 2 years, challenging and engaging topics such as the divinity of Jesus, salvation history, Marian devotion, and many other topics approved by the Archdioceses of Los Angeles will be discussed, all aimed towards helping the teen wrestle with their faith life. The catechists and the Youth Minister are made available as resources for the teen to help work through any especially tough questions or topics.

On several occasions, we will require the sponsor and parent to attend a session here at the church. Please see the official schedule for these dates.

Confirmation Sessions

Candidates are required to attend all sessions listed on the schedule. However, we realize that family life and other emergencies occur. As a courtesy, if a candidate is going to miss a session, please email the Coordinator of Youth Ministry at andyr@stlouisedm.org or send him a TEXT at (213) 271 – 0645. Guidelines for teens’ texting the Coordinator’s work cell are listed below. Each teen is allowed three absences for the year in total. Excessive absences will be reason for evaluation of the spiritual maturity of the candidate and readiness to promote to the next year.
Mass Attendance and Involvement
The Eucharist is the source and summit of our faith as Catholics. As such, Mass attendance is extremely important. It is the expectation of the Catholic Church, and the Faith Formation Department that all families attend Mass on a weekly basis. In addition to weekly Mass attendance, all Holy Days of Obligation should be observed. Keeping the Sabbath holy within the family life can be a challenge, but it also brings great joy! The joy comes from spending time with our family, praying together at mass, sharing a meal, and spending time at rest and in recreation. When you and your family are at Sunday Mass, you are sharing your holiness with others, and contributing to the worship experience of the faith community. Teens and their families are encouraged to attend the Sunday 5pm Mass, immediately before or after their confirmation session.

Regardless of which mass the family attends, all are encouraged to get involved in liturgical and hospitality ministries like serving as a lector (for students over the age of sixteen), usher, cantor, or altar server! So please join us!

Youth Ministry Gatherings
Candidates preparing for Confirmation are invited to participate in as many youth ministry gatherings as possible! These events include weekly fellowship nights, Youth Day, City of Saints, and the 30 Hour Famine. Fellowship is held every Thursday from 6:00pm – 7:30pm. These gatherings are a way to stay connected to the Church – during and after their Confirmation. However, none of these gatherings require the teen to be enrolled in the Confirmation program. Invite your friends!

Service and Outreach
It is a vital part of the Christian life to serve others with love and care, so candidates are expected to accept their share of responsibility to serve others. Candidates are required to complete a minimum of 3 service opportunities in both Year 1 and Year 2. Some service projects will be on our calendar, but teens are encouraged to go out into the community and serve others there as well! Parents and sponsors are encouraged to be involved in the service projects that the teens are working on. This is a great way of practicing Christian service together!

Retreats and Conferences
Retreats and conferences are a great way to grow and develop spiritually. This is why we require one retreat a year; a one day retreat for Year 1 Candidates in the spring, and a weekend retreat for Year 2 Candidates in the fall. In addition to these retreats, we attend other conferences around the Southern California area such as Youth Day and City of Saints. These events will be included in the calendar.

If for some reason, the candidate is unable to attend their retreat, they must make arrangements with another parish to participate in that parish’s retreat. It is the responsibility of the candidate to then bring a signed notification from the retreat director to the Youth Ministry and Confirmation Coordinator stating that the teen fully participated in the retreat. Please don’t wait until the end of the year to make these arrangements!
Pancake Breakfast and Spaghetti Dinner
The pancake breakfast and spaghetti dinner are longstanding fundraisers here at St. Louise. They're a fun way of engaging the parish community while raising funds to help the confirmation program! These fundraisers are wonderful service opportunities that help engage the student in meaningful service to the parish community. Parental involvement in these fundraisers is recommended and indeed hoped for!

Two tickets per student per fundraiser will be sent home at a later date. See the calendar for the final dates of each fundraiser.

Parent, Student, Sponsor Days
Twice per year, the confirmation families will be able to come to special events cultivated by the Confirmation team specifically for the families and their candidates. These nights serve to further strengthen the relationship between parents, students, and sponsors. They allow the parents and sponsors even more opportunities to create conversations revolving what the teen is learning in confirmation and to engage with them in deep, meaningful discussions.

The dates for these events are in the calendar. It is mandatory that the parent, sponsor, and student attend these events.
Sponsor Selection
As a part of the Confirmation Rite, all candidates must choose a sponsor to help journey with them in their faith walk. A sponsor must be a practicing, confirmed Catholic who is at least 18 years of age and is sufficiently mature. This person may not be the candidate’s mother/father (Canon 874). A godparent is an excellent choice as it emphasizes the relationship between Baptism and Confirmation (Canon 893). The candidate is encouraged to choose someone who is close by in order to help foster a good mentor/candidate relationship. The sponsor should be a person who is prayerful, open, dependable, loving and is comfortable sharing their faith with the candidate. Please see the attached sponsor candidacy form for further guidelines on choosing a sponsor.

Please note that sponsors (and parents) will be required to attend two sessions with their Candidate per year. Please see the schedule for dates.

Saint Report
Choosing a saint name is an essential part of Confirmation and it is an acknowledgement that the Holy Spirit will change you in a positive way through the Grace of this Sacrament. We see in scripture that God changed the name of some of his disciples to signify that their role had been changed. In this same sense, when the candidate chooses their saint, they should be choosing a person after whom they can model their life. Someone they want to emulate, someone who can act as a role model for them.

After choosing a saint, the candidate will be required to write a short essay on why they chose that person. The report should follow these guidelines:

- The report should be entirely original research and writing of the candidate.
- The report should be properly cited, wherever websites or other sources are used. Use MLA format.
- The saint report should be no less than 500 words, typed in a 12-point font and double spaced.
- Include a cover page that features a picture of your saint or some other relevant artwork.
- Answer the following questions in your report;
  - Why have you chosen this Saint?
  - What obstacles did they endure?
  - How can this Saint help you to pray?
  - How can this Saint lead you closer to Christ?
- How does this saint serve as a Catholic role model in your faith?

Email the completed report to ff-conf@stlouisedm.org as a PDF or a Word Document. No other format will be accepted.

The report should explain why you chose a particular saint; it is not a research paper. Some research will need to be done to learn about different saints, but the heart of the report needs to revolve on how and why they will serve as a role model. See the calendar for the final due date.
Fees
All fees are due no later than September 1st. We accept cash, checks, or credit cards. Registered parishioners may also pay online. Please make all checks payable to St. Louise de Marillac Church, and in the Memo line write “Year [#] Confirmation.” Please keep in mind that payments made after the first confirmation session will incur a $25 late fee. All confirmation sessions after that in which fees have not been paid in full will be considered an absence for the student.

If you are in need of financial assistance, please feel free to contact us. Money should never be a reason to not participate in Sacrament preparation.

Baptism and First Holy Communion Certificate
Copies of the candidates’ Baptismal certificate and First Holy Communion certificate are due with the registration forms. If you don’t have a copy on hand, please contact the parish the child was baptized or received their first holy communion at.

If the student was baptized or received their first communion at St. Louise, it is still your responsibility to ask the parish office for a copy of the certificates. We are unable to retrieve the certificates.

Parental Involvement
Parents are the primary catechists and evangelists to their children. The role of Faith Formation is to support parents in fulfilling their call to pass on the faith. As such, parents are expected to journey with their teen through the Confirmation process. To help fulfill this role, we expect each family to help in at least one of the following ways:
- Facilitate a small group in becoming a catechist (no you don’t have to be your child’s direct catechist in class)
- Facilitate a small group at the thirty Hour Famine
- Help transport a group of teens to and from their retreat, a conference, or another youth ministry event
- Chaperone the confirmation retreat or the 30 Hour Famine
- Assist with the execution of the Pancake Breakfast
- Assist with the execution of the Spaghetti Dinner

Prayerfully discern where you might be called to help and where your talents might be best put to use in order to make the experience of Confirmation here at St. Louise the best it can be!
Contacting the Youth Minister

Should any parent or teen need clarification on any event or question about class, or even just prayer, the youth minister is made available. That being said, the communication tools offered must be respected. Traditional communication tools such as office phones and email work very well, and are the preferred method of communication.

Flocknote
Flocknote is an announcement blasting tool that we’re adopting for this year. This tool allows not only for us to directly communicate with the entire program at once, but it allows any of the participants to express excitement, questions, or concerns directly to the St. Louise Faith Formation team!

See the registration forms to sign up!

Work Cell
In an effort to create a stronger work/life balance, the Archdiocese of Los Angeles has given all Youth Ministry and Confirmation Coordinators cell phones! This wonderful tool will allow me to be open to answering any questions or being available for prayer whenever you might need. That being said, some boundaries must be set.

The first time messaging or calling the work cell number, all parents and students must send a text using the following format;

Parent’s Name;
Student’s Name;
Confirmation Year or Ministry;

Failure to follow that format will result in my asking you to do so. Further noncompliance will prompt me to block your phone number. For the safety of the teens, I will not answer phone calls from teens. Furthermore, any and all text correspondence will be recorded and made available for the Director of Faith Formation.

The phone number to text is (213) 271 – 0645.
Student Contract

I, __________________________

have read, understand, and agree to all of the above information regarding the requirements for my confirmation process.

promise to fully participate to the best of my abilities in class discussion and conversations.

promise to engage fully in my retreat.

promise to prayerfully choose my sponsor and patron saint,

and I promise to whole heartedly engage in the service opportunities that I'll be completing.

Student Signature ______________________________________
Date ______________________

Parent Contract

I, __________________________

have read, understand, and agree to all of the above information regarding the requirements for my student’s confirmation process.

promise to walk alongside them, pray with them, and to gently guide them along in this journey.

promise to support their decision in picking a sponsor and saint.

Parent Signature ______________________________________
Date ______________________