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Guardian Angels Confirmation Program Frequently Asked Questions

Does G.A. need the original baptismal Certificate? YES. The Archdiocese requires that your Baptism certificate be dated by the Church of Baptism within six (6) months of receiving Confirmation. Call your Baptism parish after January 1st of the year confirmed to request that they send an updated Baptism certificate. Baptism certificates may be faxed or mailed to the Parish Office

What if my teenager was baptized at G.A.? You do not need to provide the Baptism certificate. G.A. staff will prepare the required certificate. Just let us know when your teen was baptized here.

What if my teenager was baptized in a different parish, but made his/her First Communion at G.A.? We still need your Baptism certificate from your Church of Baptism dated within six (6) months of receiving Confirmation.

What are the goals of the retreat? The retreats are meant to draw youth into a closer relationship with God. They are also meant to draw the youth into a closer relationship with other persons from their parish community. Many of the retreat options specifically have Confirmation as the theme of the retreat, which will offer the opportunity for additional understanding of the sacrament they are preparing for. Remember candidates need to complete a Confirmation retreat EACH year of the process.

Can the retreat that my teen does at a Catholic School count for their Confirmation Retreat requirement? No. One of our primary goals is to connect the youth to their local church community and/or provide a retreat experience specific to Confirmation; therefore, school-based retreats do not fulfill this requirement.

Why do we do five different service experiences rather than a number of hours? Our ministry of service requirements are understood as a kind of apprenticeship in the Christian life. We hope that participation in several different experiences, some performed in a group with other parishioners, will give your youth exposure to a variety of types of service. This will help build an understanding of a Christian community working together toward a common goal. Each candidate is asked to complete at least one experience each with his/her sponsor, family and small group. For most candidates, one or more of the experiences may be a long-term or even

year-long commitment, but most are several hours or part of a day. Each experience must be a minimum of 2 (two) hours to be considered a completed project. Completing the service experience records will help the candidates reflect on their service. This record is required and can be a permanent reminder for future needs such as college applications.

Can my spouse or I be a sponsor for our teenager? No. Canon law states that sponsors must be people other than the parents, since Confirmation sponsors take the place of the parents in the same way that godparents do at Baptism. This also means that stepparents cannot be sponsors either. However, it is okay to ask Baptismal godparents to also serve as Confirmation sponsors.

My teen would like to ask a relative/friend that lives out of state to be a Confirmation sponsor, but they will only be able to come for the ceremony. Is this wise? This is a tough call. It is possible, but not ideal. A sponsor really needs to be a person who is actively in contact with the teen. Sometimes this can be done well through phone calls and emails. This mentoring sponsor relationship is one that lasts longer than the Confirmation ceremony – ideally throughout the candidate’s life. It really depends on the ability of the two people to establish and maintain a relationship, even though it is long distance. During the candidate’s second year of preparation the sponsor will be welcome to attend some of the formation sessions.

What if the candidate’s Baptismal sponsor is no longer in our family due to divorce? Or what about choosing a relative who is not or is no longer Catholic? For Baptism and for Confirmation, candidates can have a Christian witness, but they also need a Catholic sponsor who will be written in the church records as the sponsor for Confirmation. A Catholic sponsor per Canon Law is sixteen years of age, confirmed and actively participating in the Catholic Church.

Who should we choose if we are from out of the area and don’t know anyone who is Catholic? You may want to choose the parent of one of your candidate’s friends. If you still have difficulty finding a person, please call the Faith Formation office. Every year we are happy to match up parishioners who would be honored to be a Confirmation sponsor for a candidate who does not have one.

When do candidates choose a “Confirmation name?” During one of our first sessions, we will present the concept of Confirmation names. This is really not about choosing a name, but instead about selecting a saint who might be a role model or “patron saint” for them. We will give guidance, some great resources and plenty of time to make their selection.

Faith Formation Office

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