



Diocese of Austin

The Catholic Church of Central Texas

Policy on the Age of Confirmation

Effective January 1, 2006

Religious education and faith formation is a life-long process. The sacramental preparation process is in addition to regular participation in the parish or school religious education programs. It is understood that each parish is responsible for providing the faith formation of the middle school and high school age members of the community. At certain times in the life of the youth, they are more involved in school and employment activities. To serve the people of God in their desire to participate in the sacramental life of the church, the Diocese of Austin has established the following:

1. The age for the celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation will be the early years of high school, between 14 and 16 years.
2. A minimum of two years of formal religious education in a parish or Catholic school program precedes preparation for the celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation.
3. Because the primary faith community is the local parish, preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation is to take place in the local parish.¹
4. Sacramental preparation for Confirmation has a distinct catechesis with its own focus and elements. (Challenge of Adolescent Catechesis (1986), no. 46) This study and preparation should take place within a period not to exceed 9-12 weeks and include the following:
 - the elements of the Rite of Confirmation,
 - the meaning of the Baptismal Promises,
 - the Gifts and Fruits of the Holy Spirit (Isaiah and Galatians)
 - the meaning of “Be Sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit.”
 - the action of the laying on of hands and anointing with the Sacred Chrism
 - the Lord’s Prayer – “because it is the Spirit who prays in us and in the Spirit the Christian says, ‘Abba Father.’” (Rite of Confirmation, no. 14)
 - the rights, responsibilities, duties and obligations of full initiation in the Catholic community – Word, Worship, Community and Service

¹ “Preparation for confirmation should aim at leading the Christian toward a more intimate union with Christ and a more lively familiarity with the Holy Spirit – his action, his gifts, and his biddings—in order to be more capable of assuming the apostolic responsibilities of Christian life. To this end, catechesis for Confirmation should strive to awaken a sense of belonging to the Church of Jesus Christ, the universal Church as well as the parish community. The latter bears special responsibility for the preparation of confirmands. (Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 1309)

5. All persons involved in the preparation process are required to study the introduction, the full prayer texts and Scriptures of the Rite of Confirmation and to understand the theology of Christian Initiation, especially the Sacrament of Confirmation.