

GENERAL

300 Parishes shall provide comprehensive ministry to, with, by and for adolescents which:

1. is the intentional and pro-active response of the parish community to young people, demonstrating loving care and concerned challenge for youth in the context of faith;
2. incorporates vital family and cultural perspectives;
3. calls forth the gifts of youth and welcomes their presence and full participation in the life of the parish faith community; and
4. responds to specific needs of youth, such as those of youth with primary language other than English, youth with disabilities and youth at risk.

301 Parish youth ministry shall incorporate the components of Word (evangelization and catechesis), Prayer and Worship, Community Building, Guidance and Healing, Justice and Service, Enablement and Advocacy for Youth.

[See *Vision of Youth Ministry*, USCC.]

302 As an integrated component of multifaceted and comprehensive youth ministry, parishes shall provide for youth an adolescent catechesis of a systematic and intentional nature.

Guidelines for Implementation:

- *Adolescent catechesis should:*
 - *be situated within the lifelong development process of faith growth and of ongoing catechesis, and be committed to the continuing faith growth of the individual;*
 - *foster Catholic Christian faith in three dimensions: trusting, believing, doing; support and encourage the role of the family, and in particular the role of parents in the faith growth of young persons by involving parents in the formation of adolescent catechetical curricula and in programs;*
 - *respect the unique cultural heritages of young people and build on the positive values found in these cultural heritages, while at the same time*

engaging young people in examining their culture in the light of faith and their faith in the light of culture;

- *respond to the developmental, social and cultural needs of adolescence its various stages, providing significantly different content and approach for younger and older adolescents;*
- *respect the variability in maturation rates and learning needs of adolescent individuals;*
- *respect the expanding freedom and autonomy of adolescents;*
- *use a variety of learning formats, environments, schedules and educational techniques; and*
- *respond to the learning needs of adolescents by focusing on particular faith themes.*

[See *The Challenge of Adolescent Catechesis*, 1986, NFCYM.]

SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION: CONFIRMATION

310 Preparation

1. Preparation for reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation should be seen as a component of the ongoing catechesis and faith development of the candidates.

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...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.

Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1309

2. To provide uniformity and consistency in the duration of all parish and school sacramental preparation programs in the Diocese of San Diego, these shall be two years in length. While there is no specified diocesan program of preparation for Confirmation, there are specific requirements which candidates must meet to qualify for receiving the sacrament.
3. All who meet the candidate requirements are eligible for reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation regardless of whether they have completed a particular program.

Note:

- *There is more to parish youth ministry than preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation and its celebration which is only **one component** or part of the total process of catechesis and faith development for adolescents.*
- *Parishes should develop guidelines regarding preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation which implement diocesan policies.*

311 Candidate Requirements

1. BAPTISM AND THE STATE OF GRACE

One must be validly baptized to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation (Canon, 889.1).

In addition, if baptized persons have the use of reason, it is required that they be in the state of grace, properly instructed and able to renew their baptismal promises (*Rite of Confirmation, 12*).

2. MINIMUM AGE

Fifteen (15) is the minimum age for Confirmation in the Diocese of San Diego, except for the case of unbaptized children of catechetical age (catechumens) who should receive Confirmation when they are baptized and the case of baptized Christian children of catechetical age but not Catholic (candidates) who should receive Confirmation when they are received into the full communion of the Catholic Church.

3. FORMATION IN THE FAITH OF THE CHURCH

Candidates for Confirmation are required to evidence an understanding of the Catholic faith appropriate to their age. This means that they should have integrated all their years of catechesis and acquired appreciation of what the Church teaches.

As a minimum, candidates are expected to show competence in the following four areas of Christian catechesis found in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*:

- a. *The Creed* in which the Christian mystery is the object of faith;
- b. *The Sacred Liturgy* in which the Christian mystery is celebrated and communicated in liturgical actions;

- c. *The Christian Way of Life* in which the Christian mystery is the basis for the proper formation of conscience and for living according to the moral and social teaching of the Church; and
 - d. *Christian Prayer* in which the Christian mystery is the basis for prayer, the privileged expression of which is the Our Father.
4. EXPERIENCE OF CHRISTIAN LIVING prior to Confirmation as demonstrated by:
- a. faithful participation in the sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist;
 - b. a commitment to ongoing human and spiritual growth and development through prayer and good works;
 - c. involvement in the parish community.
5. PROPER DISPOSITION as evidenced by:
- a. a stated personal desire to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation;
 - b. willingness to witness more firmly to Christ by word and action;
 - c. acceptance of the responsibility to be an active adult member of the Church, to continue to mature in faith, and to put one's faith into practice.

Note:

- *Parishes are responsible to provide opportunities which will assist young people to meet the candidate requirements for Confirmation.*

312 Determination of Candidate Readiness

Each parish is responsible for developing a process whereby, according to the candidate requirements, the readiness of individuals to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation is determined.

Note:

- *Pastors, parents, sponsors, coordinators of youth ministry and others involved in ministry with youth should take part in this process.*

- *Candidate readiness is defined in terms of requirements which do not include participation in a program but are taken from the Rite of Confirmation and Canon Law.*
- *The Sacrament of Confirmation should not be seen as a reward or something one can or must earn.*
- *There are many ways to determine whether, according to the candidate requirements, an individual is ready to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation, e.g. interviews and evaluations by those involved in ministry with the candidates – pastors, parents, sponsors, youth ministers.*
- *Ultimately, the burden of responsibility for meeting the requirements for the reception of Confirmation belongs to the candidates and so they should be involved in discerning readiness.*
- *Appropriate adaptations in candidate requirements should be made for persons with developmental disabilities who have the use of reason. Judgment of readiness for them to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation should be based on whether they demonstrate acceptance of the faith and a desire for greater participation in the life and mission of the Church.*

313 Immediate Preparation

After determination of readiness, candidates are expected to participate in immediate short-term preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation which should include:

1. catechesis on the Holy Spirit based on the Catechism of the Catholic Church, nos. 683-747.
2. catechesis on the Sacraments of Christian Initiation based on the Catechism of the Catholic Church:
 - Baptism (nos. 1213-1284);
 - Confirmation (nos. 1285-1321);
 - Eucharist (nos. 1322-1419).
3. a day or evening of prayer;
4. communal celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation;
5. review of the Rite of Confirmation (cf. the Guidelines for Celebration);
6. rehearsal for the celebration of Confirmation.

Note:

- *The components and length of time for immediate preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation is determined by the parish.*
- *Immediate preparation should be adapted to the needs of persons with developmental disabilities.*

314 Sponsors

1. As far as possible, there should be a sponsor for each of those confirmed (*Rite of Confirmation*, 5). It is not recommended that two or more candidates share the same sponsor.
2. To be a Confirmation sponsor, a person must:
 - a. be at least 16 years of age and sufficiently mature for this responsibility;
 - b. be a Catholic who has been confirmed, has already received first Eucharist and is leading a life in harmony with the faith and the role to be undertaken;
 - c. not be a parent of the candidate; and
 - d. not be prohibited by law from exercising the role of sponsor.

[See Canon 893 with reference to Canon 874; *Rite of Confirmation*, 6.]

Note:

- *Each candidate may have only one sponsor and the sponsor does not have to be of the same gender as the candidate.*
- *It is desirable that one of the baptismal godparents also be the sponsor at Confirmation. This expresses more clearly the relationship between Baptism and Confirmation and also makes the function and responsibility of the sponsor more effective. Nonetheless, the choice of a special sponsor for Confirmation is not excluded.*
- *Sponsors should be chosen because they will be able to be present for the scheduled celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation and available thereafter to help the newly confirmed fulfill their baptismal promises.*
- *If from the same parish or locality, it is recommended that sponsors, along with parents, join the candidates on their faith journey during the period of immediate preparation.*

315 Confirmation Name

The new rite says nothing about taking a new name at Confirmation.

Therefore, candidates may retain their baptismal name rather than take a new one. This is desirable because it manifests an understanding of the fact that Confirmation "completes the grace of Baptism."

Nonetheless, a special Confirmation name may be taken if desired. In this case it should be the name of a saint whose life-style or virtues the candidate wishes to emulate.

316 Dress for the Sacrament of Confirmation

The dress encouraged for the candidates should not give the impression of a graduation. Regular dress attire is satisfactory. However, to emphasize the relationship between Confirmation and Baptism, a white garment or robe might be used at Confirmation, just as a white robe is used to clothe newly baptized.

The practice in some places of using stoles at Confirmation seems to have risen out of a desire to provide a symbol of Confirmation. However, the distinction between the universal priesthood of all the baptized and the ministerial priesthood of the ordained is blurred when the distinctive garb of ordained ministers is used in this manner. Therefore, stoles should not be used by the newly confirmed.

317 Record of Conferred Confirmation

The names of the confirmed with mention of the minister, the parents and the sponsors, the place and the date of the conferral of Confirmation are to be noted in the Confirmation register of the parish.

Notation of the conferral of Confirmation is also to be made in the baptismal register or sent to the church of baptism.

YOUTH MINISTRY PERSONNEL

- 320** Parish youth ministry shall be coordinated and facilitated in a manner appropriate to the size and resources of the parish. Each parish shall engage sufficiently trained ministers to ensure ministry with adolescents.

The Coordinator(s) of Youth Ministry may be either full-time, part-time or volunteer.

FORMATION, CERTIFICATION AND RENEWAL FOR COORDINATORS OF YOUTH MINISTRY

330 Training and ongoing formation of parish leadership in youth ministry requires that Coordinators of Youth Ministry (volunteer, part-time and full time):

1. Complete the diocesan competency-based youth ministry certification process or its equivalent within two years of the date of hire.
2. Maintain current certification by means of the Renewal of Certification for Coordinators of Youth Ministry or its equivalent.

Guidelines for Implementation:

- *Parishes should financially assist Coordinators of Youth Ministry in obtaining training and/or ongoing formation.*

331 All catechists of adolescents shall obtain California Catechist Certification by completing one of the following:

1. the Basic Catechist Formation Course offered through the diocese;
2. the certification courses (totaling 45 hours) offered through the San Diego Diocesan Institute for Adult Education and Ministry Formation; or
3. those specific courses or workshops, identified by means of an individual catechist profile evaluation, which remain necessary for certification.

332 All catechists of adolescents shall renew their certification every three years by completing 30 clock hours of diocesan designated or approved courses before the expiration date of their certification.

Note: In-service conducted at the local parish level, though valued for enriching catechists, does not ordinarily qualify for renewal credit. A description of in-service courses at the local level may be submitted to the Office for Catechetical Ministry in order to be approved for certification.

SPECIAL ACTIVITIES FOR YOUTH

340 Retreats programmed as part of comprehensive parish youth ministry must meet the following criteria:

1. There must be a retreat coordinator who is a trained Coordinator of Youth Ministry or a person with training, experience and proven competency in youth retreat work, to take primary responsibility and authority on the retreat.

2. There must be a spiritual director, a priest with diocesan faculties, or a qualified religious or lay person authorized to work in the diocese, actively involved in the planning and preparation for the retreat as well as present for it.
3. During day events there must be a minimum of one adult team member (21 years or older) for every ten persons under age 18 attending the retreat.
4. For overnight events there must be two adult team members per ten participants. At least half of these adult team members must be over 25, the others must be over 21.
5. Proof of liability insurance or a Certificate of Insurance should be provided upon request to any retreat facility, camp or other conference center used for children or youth activities or meetings.

Guidelines for Implementation:

- *Adult leaders on the retreat team should be psychologically, emotionally and spiritually well-balanced persons who are committed to Catholic youth and witness to this Christian commitment in their daily living and are*
- *Youth leaders on a retreat team should be carefully selected older adolescents or young adults, who are psychologically, emotionally and spiritually well-balanced and able to model a positive Catholic life-style.*
- *Additional chaperones to ensure that all situations are covered should be considered for day and overnight events that include minors with special needs.*

- 341** The Coordinator of Youth Ministry shall develop action plans for various emergencies that can arise while on overnight events. These plans shall be developed for emergencies such as fire, someone becoming lost, physical injury, drowning and earthquake.

Review of emergency action plans shall be required of all supervising adults.

Guidelines for Implementation:

- *Emergency action plans should be posted where adult team members have ready access to them.*

- 342** When sponsoring a youth activity off parish premises, there must be one (1) adult chaperon per ten (1) adolescents. On overnight events, there must be a minimum of one (1) adult chaperon sleeping in each of the rooms where the youth sleep.

Guidelines for Implementation:

- *A registered nurse (RN) or at minimum, a person with basic first aid and CPR certification, should be present for all parish-sponsored overnight youth experiences*
- *When sponsoring a swimming event at either a camp facility or a public pool, there should be a certified Red Cross Water Safety Instructor (WSI) on duty. Swimming events at a private home should be supervised by a person with a Red Cross Advanced Lifesaving Certificate. There should always be adequate additional adult supervision.*

MISCELLANEOUS

- 350** Parishes shall maintain accurate parish youth ministry records. They are the property of the parish.

Guidelines for Implementation:

- *Parish Youth Ministry records should include:*
 - *records of programs such as retreats, recreational/social programs, service programs, catechetical programs, etc.;*
 - *records of budget items, such as receipts, disbursements, petty cash, budget projections, etc.;*
 - *individual participant records such as sacramental history and program participation, etc.;*
 - *legal documents such as medical release forms, parent consent form ~, child abuse reporting forms, etc. which should be kept on file for one year; and*
 - *accident reports which should be kept on file for two years.*

**Preparing for Celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation
(check list)**

Time and Date of the Ceremony

Environment (flowers, banners, etc.)

Ministers: Deacon

Lectors

Extraordinary Ministers of Communion

Altar Servers

Hospitality

Music

Readings

General Intercessions

Worship Aid

Rehearsal

Reception