



**CONFIRMATION HANDBOOK
FOR PARENTS AND CANDIDATES**



Catholic Church of
st. **IGNATIUS**
Singapore

Dear Parents,

Welcome to the current Confirmation Year!

*Before anything else, please be advised that given the current circumstances, this year's program will be modified compared to previous years. We will be adopting a hybrid platform for the **2021-22** cohort subject to review depending on developments with regard to the pandemic. As we have learned, long term planning during a pandemic can be futile, so we beg your understanding and support as we undertake this year.

The Sacrament of Confirmation completes the initiation into the Christian Community, building on what was begun in Baptism and nourished in the Holy Eucharist. At Confirmation, before the Archbishop, each candidate will renew those baptismal promises.

We are delighted that you and your child will be a part of our program this year and we look forward to working with you to make this year a meaningful one, despite the challenges.

Like you, we are parents of Confirmation candidates. We share your enthusiasm in having our children grow in commitment to their Catholic faith during the Confirmation process. It is exciting that people from so many different countries and customs will be making this journey together.

We understand that you and your family have many work, school and social commitments. While this program may seem strict, it conforms as best possible to the customary 2 to 4 years of faith formation programs in a very compressed time frame. The CCD program at the Church of St. Ignatius, Singapore is blessed to have been granted an exception to deviate from the Singapore Archdiocese's 3-year program in order to serve the expatriate community. We are truly grateful to the Archdiocese of Singapore for this special dispensation. We appreciate your effort and sacrifices to have your child attend all the scheduled classes and required activities.

We hope this Parent Handbook will be an informative guide for you as the year progresses. Should you have any questions during the year, please feel free to contact one of the Confirmation Coordinators at CCDConfirmation@gmail.com or refer to the St. Ignatius website at www.stignatius.org.sg for information or answers to many frequently asked questions.

1. Course of Study

The four main topics will be

- (1) The Invitation Period
- (2) The Formation Period
- (3) The Reflection Period
- (4) The Mission Period.

In addition to the lessons based on Life Teens and chosen Confirmation programmes; two Social Mission Activities, an overnight Retreat and a study of the philosophy of the body are also components of the course.

2. Attendance and Behavior

Please refer to the current CCD Calendar for the first day of class. **Regular classes meet from 3:30pm to 5:20pm.**

Attendance is a must—it is not optional. You will note that the calendar is full. This course has been condensed from the normal 3-year requirement into just 9 months. We have made every attempt to accommodate the different school holiday schedules as best possible.

Class make-up policy. We understand, however, that an occasional class may be missed due to a family emergency, unforeseen important event, illness, or a compulsory school trip (not including sports and band trips which are expected to be passed on in favor of class attendance). Doctor's notes or school letters should be given to the Coordinators in the event of such an absence. ***All absences must be made up.***

In the event that more 2 regular classes are missed, please be aware that the Church has a policy of asking candidates to delay their Confirmation to the following year. At such a time the candidate and parents will be asked to meet with our spiritual advisor (a Jesuit Priest) to reassess their commitment to the CCD Confirmation program.

Notice to Coordinators of class absence and make-up. If your child is absent, ***it is the parent's responsibility and obligation to notify the Coordinators promptly of the date of and reason for the absence.*** It is also the parent's responsibility to arrange with the Coordinators for a make-up.

No make-up will be organized for Community Service and Retreat. To plan these events takes considerable time and effort by volunteers who organize speakers and make arrangements for community service venues. An important aspect of the Confirmation program is participating as a group in fellowship. Parents need to be aware that the dates for these events, once set, will not be changed.

*****Details on the Retreat and Service to be discussed and adapted to conditions deemed safe.***

Behavior. Inappropriate or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated out of respect for the catechist and fellow candidates. Good behavior is expected during classes, the community service events, the retreat and the masses. **Please note that there is a zero tolerance policy for hand phone use at any time during a class or event, even during breaks.** Hand phones on silent mode must be turned in to the catechist before class or to coordinators before events with no exception. Any hand phone use during CCD Confirmation program time will be considered an absence.

*****As we will be using a ZOOM platform, aside from handphones, we ask that the parents help us ensure that the child's zoom space be free from other distractions (video games..etc).***

Dress Code. With the exception of the Rite of Commitment and Confirmation Mass specific dress code, Candidates need to wear either trousers or shorts that are below the knee (no skirts) for all classes and events and will be required to wear the CCD Confirmation T-shirt they will be given for the Rite Of Commitment Mass, the two Community Service events, the Retreat and for the Confirmation Mass rehearsal. For the Confirmation Mass dress code requirements kindly see section 8 – Confirmation Mass Day.

*****In person events to be announced in due time*****

3. Rite of Commitment

This is an obligatory mass for all Confirmation candidates and parents to attend. The Rite of Commitment is the first official step the candidates take toward pledging themselves as Catholics. During this mass the candidates will renew their Baptismal Promises in front of the Church community. In addition, the parents and candidates will pledge themselves to the upcoming year and all the necessary Confirmation preparation. After the mass, the candidates will receive the Bible they will use during their instruction and will hand in a signed and witnessed certificate attesting to their commitment to continue on their Catholic faith journey.

It is important to reinforce to your child that Church is the House of God and they should dress respectfully. Dress code for Rite of Commitment Mass is as follows:

BOYS:

- Confirmation T-shirt
- Long pants (No SHORTS)
- No SANDALS (WITH OR WITHOUT SOCKS)

GIRLS:

- Confirmation T-shirt
- Long pants or capris below the knee (No SHORTS or SKIRTS)
- No Flip Flops

4. Christian Community Service

Candidates must participate in the two Community Service activities organized by the CCD Confirmation Program of the Church of St. Ignatius. To goal is do service among the poor and the needy within the local community as a cohesive group in fellowship with the other candidates. These CCD Confirmation organized events are mandatory to fulfill the requirements of the Confirmation program. The dates for these events are listed on the CCD Calendar on the website.

5. Retreat Day

The Retreat is designed for candidates from all Confirmation classes to get to know each other and bond spiritually while participating in various activities. There will be a spiritual leader helping the candidates to understand more about the concept of the Holy Spirit and the commitment the candidates are making to their faith.

6. Choosing a Confirmation Name and Sponsor

Candidates will be asked to choose a Saint's name/Confirmation name as well as a Sponsor.

Choosing a Confirmation Name:

Parents are encouraged to allow their children to pick his/her own Confirmation name. Candidates should be encouraged to research a saint whom they admire. The name chosen must be that of a recognized Catholic saint. If in doubt there are various websites you can check with such as:

- o www.catholic.org/saints
- o <http://saints.sqpn.com>
- o www.catholic-saints.info

You can also do a search on "Lists of Catholic Saints".

Choosing A Confirmation Sponsor:

Your child's sponsor must be a fully initiated Catholic. He or she must be a baptized Catholic and have made their First Holy Communion and their Confirmation.

According to Canon law, a parent cannot be his/her child's sponsor. Canon 874 from The Canon Law: Letter and Spirit forbids either parent of the candidate from undertaking the role of sponsor. The rationale for this rule is that the role of sponsors is to assist parents in carrying out their responsibilities and, if necessary, to make up for any failure of the parents in this regard. In addition, Canon 893 recommends that it is desirable that the sponsor chosen be the one who undertook this role at Baptism.

If, however, the candidate's actual sponsor cannot be here the day of Confirmation, a parent may stand in as a proxy.

7. Confirmation Rehearsal

Please refer to the current Confirmation Calendar for the date and time of the Confirmation Rehearsal. ***At least one parent must attend.*** Candidates with their sponsor (or proxy, if sponsor is not able) will meet in the Church at the designated time for the rehearsal. Please be punctual. It is mandatory for all candidates to attend the rehearsal. As participants are in the house of God they must dress accordingly:

BOYS:

- Confirmation T-shirt
- Long pants (No SHORTS)
- No SANDALS (WITH OR WITHOUT SOCKS)

GIRLS:

- Confirmation T-shirt
- Long pants or capris below the knee (No SHORTS or SKIRTS)
- No Flip Flops

8. Confirmation Day

All candidates will meet at a designated time at Ignatius Hall for optional individual professional photographs. Class photos will be taken immediately following the mass with the Archbishop, Co-Celebrants and Catechists. All candidates and sponsors/proxies need to be seated by 2:30 pm in their designated seats. Mass will begin at 3pm.

Photographs:

There will be an official photographer taking photos during the mass. *No one else is allowed to take photographs in church either during the mass or after the mass.* Please respect the Church of St. Ignatius' policy on photography in church.

Dress Code for Confirmation Mass:

The following is the dress code for the candidates required by the Archbishop for all Confirmation candidates at a Confirmation Mass. In addition, the dress code is a tradition in the parish of St. Ignatius. Out of respect for this Archdiocese and parish, we require this dress code.

BOYS:

- Long sleeve white shirt
- Tie (Preferred)
- Black or dark colored long dress pants (no cargo pants)
- Dark dress socks
- Dark dress shoes. NO SANDALS (WITH OR WITHOUT SOCKS), SNEAKERS, TENNIS SHOES, OR SPORT SHOES.
- Blazers or suits are fine

GIRLS:

- Simple white dress or white blouse and white skirt
- Length of dress should be no higher than slightly above the knee. Any length below the knee is acceptable.
- Shoes: White or light colored dress shoes or sandals
- NO EXPOSED STOMACHS
- NO SPAGHETTI STRAPS
- NO FLIP FLOPS
- NO LOW CUT NECK LINES (NO CLEAVAGE SHOWING)
- NO HALTER TOPS OR STRAPLESS DRESSES/TOPS**

In cases where a dress is strapless or has spaghetti straps, a matching white shawl/cardigan or shrug is acceptable to cover up with. Coordinators will have extra white shawls to wrap around girls in dresses with spaghetti straps, low necklines, strapless or halter tops and skirts that are too short.

BOYS AND GIRLS:

Hairstyle should be neat and presentable. No radical or distracting hairstyles.

The Archbishop will be anointing each child's forehead so girls and boys must have the forehead free of hair. The Archbishop does not want to push hair off the candidate's forehead in order to anoint the child.

SPONSORS:

Do not need to wear white. "Sunday best" attire is fine. No blue jeans, please.

The Archbishop is strict about the above dress code. The clothing your children will wear for this very special occasion should reflect their reverence for God and for the Church. As the Coordinators are parents of candidates, please take the responsibility to ensure your child is dressed in accordance with the dress code as stated above – no one wants to have to enforce the dress code on this special day.

Reception:

Immediately following mass there will be a short reception in Sacred Heart Hall with light refreshments. All families and candidates should attend. Candidates will receive a gift from the CCD Team, and a flower to give to their Sponsor. At that time, presentations will be made to the Catechists, our Spiritual Advisor and others involved closely in working behind the scenes.

Confirmation Certificates and Photos:

Each candidate will receive at the reception a Confirmation certificate. The Confirmation Certificate is an important document and should be kept safely. Please note that the Church office is not responsible for these documents as record of Confirmation is kept with the parish of the candidate's baptism.

Confirmation Certificates and Photo will normally be ready approximately 2 weeks after the Confirmation mass. If you know that you are leaving Singapore permanently, please make sure that the coordinators have a note of your new address. In the event that they are not ready for collection before you leave, it will be posted to you.

10. Costs

The cost is to be determined as we make adjustments for the online platform. Please keep in mind that tuition and administration are *free* as we are all volunteers. However, there are other expenses that must be taken into account.

11. Committees

As we are all volunteers we require parents to participate in an activity or on a committee or in other necessary roles and capacities to ensure the smooth administration of this program and, more importantly, to demonstrate to our children that this faith journey is important for our families. Please be generous with your time and talents and support when required.

12. Efficient Communication

The catechists and coordinators will be communicating with the parents primarily via e-mail. We would greatly appreciate it if you would return all e-mails and/or phone calls in a timely manner. We hope you will work with us to ensure that lines of communication are open and efficient.