

CONFIRMATION FAITH FORMATION HANDBOOK 2017-2018



Come Holy Spirit, enkindle the Fire of Your Love

Holy Trinity Parish
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Dear Parents and Candidates,

Confirmation is the strengthening and fullness of the Holy Spirit already received in Baptism. When we were baptized we became children of God. As children of God we share the life of God, the life of three persons in one love. The Spirit is the love between Father and Son. The Spirit acts in us urging us beyond our individual selves so we can bring Christ to others. Confirmation calls us to a great participation in the mission of Jesus and the Church. Through Confirmation our relationship with God is deepened and we are incorporated more completely into the body of Christ. Confirmation obliges us, as true witnesses of Christ, to spread and defend the faith by word and deed.

Confirmation is an exciting time for you and your family. It is the first time that a conscious decision will be made on the candidates own in regards to receiving a sacrament in the Catholic Church. As parents, it was your choice to have your child baptized and receive Reconciliation and Eucharist, receiving the sacrament of Confirmation will be their choice. We ask that you, as parents, join us in encouraging them to go through the preparation, and then give them the freedom to choose for themselves. We have found that the majority will realize they are ready by the time their "journey" is complete.

One question that is often asked, "Why has confirmation been moved to a time when a young person is already so busy with other things in his/her life?" The answer is very simple, but often hard to accept, "Because a young person is so busy with other things in his/her life!"

When someone reaches their mid teens, they begin to realize that life is bigger than themselves. They sense a need to reach beyond their own personal world and into the world of caring for others. In order to do this for Christ, we need the gift of grace in the Sacrament of Confirmation. The Sacrament of Confirmation strengthens the gifts of the Spirit received in baptism.

To be a Catholic Christian, we need to participate in Mass on Sunday to strengthen us to be people of action, people of service. Preparing for confirmation is a process of becoming a fully committed member of the Christian community, sensitive to how the Spirit is moving in one's life. The Spirit moves us to make wise and fair decisions, moves us to pray, and to connect with others and build community. The Spirit also stirs us to serve one another as Jesus did. Service is a way of life for committed Christians. In preparing for confirmation teens are helped in recognizing the service they already do and they are encouraged to try new ways to use their talents and interests in making a needed difference to people around them. As teens recognize the service they do makes a difference in others' lives, they gain strength in their commitment.

We are here for you and your family through this journey; please do not hesitate to call on us. Young people are a vibrant part of our Church, and we will make every effort to help you feel welcome in your parish faith community.

Sincerely,

*Ms. Michelle Angelo
Director of Faith Formation*

*Ms. Patricia Martin
Coordinator of Youth Ministry*

THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION

Confirmation is the Sacrament that completes Baptism; in it the gifts of Holy Spirit are sealed and strengthened in us. Anyone who freely decides to live a life as God's child and asks for God's Spirit under the signs of the imposition of hands and anointing with Chrism (holy oil) receives the strength to witness to God's love and might in word and deed. He/she is now a full-fledged responsible member of the Catholic Church. (Youth Catechism 203) Confirmation, like Baptism, imprints a spiritual mark or indelible character on the Christian soul; for this reason you can receive this sacrament only once.

Please note:

In order to participate in our confirmation program, each candidate must meet the following criteria:

1. Be a Registered Parishioner at Holy Trinity: The candidate's family must be registered parishioners of the parish
2. Be of High School Age: Each candidate must be in at least 9th grade of high school.
3. Has Completed the Proper Formal Catechetical Instruction: Each candidate must have completed a minimum of grades 7-8 in a parish catechetical program or a parochial school. Individuals who have not completed their earlier preparation and wish to enter the program will be treated on an individual basis.

INVITATION

At this time a letter is sent to the families of our parish youth who have completed through at least grades 7-8 of catechetical instruction, either in a parochial school or a parish religious education program. This letter invites the youth and their parents to an orientation meeting designed to help them begin the discerning process around the sacrament of confirmation. If a candidate discerns that they will indeed begin the process, they will sign up for the 2 year Confirmation Program and begin working toward fulfilling the requirements. The first year is considered the "Precatechumenate" and the second year is the "Catechumenate".

THE STRUCTURE OF THE CONFIRMATION PROCESS

The confirmation process models the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults, (R.C.I.A.) in preparing for, accepting, and committing our youth to full initiation into the Church. This process stresses total faith formation which includes participation in the life of the Church through:

WORD WORSHIP COMMUNITY SERVICE

WORD

All catechetical sessions will take place in the Holy Trinity Parish Center. Candidates will be required to attend five classes during their Level I year. The catechetical sessions complete the Chosen curriculum that the students used in Junior High. Two options, Summer and Fall, will be offered to complete this requirement.

Option I Summer

Classes will take place Monday-Friday, 10am to 12 Noon, June 26-June 30, 2017

Candidates meet together as a large group for class instruction and then will be divided into small faith sharing groups for discussion. Light refreshments will be served during all classes.

Option II

Fall- Sundays Class begins immediately following and end at 2:30pm

Classes will be held in the Parish Center first floor meeting room. Classes begin immediately following the 12pm Mass. All candidates are strongly encouraged to attend this Mass. Candidates meet together as a large group for class instruction and then will be divided into small faith sharing groups for discussion. Light refreshments will be served during all classes.

Class dates-October 1, October 22, November 19, December 10, and January 7

Attendance: Candidates should not plan on missing any sessions.

Confirmation Workbook and Interview

Level 1 (2017 Candidates ONLY)

In the fall of Level 2, candidates will schedule an interview with a member of the Confirmation team which is made up of the pastor, deacons, staff and catechists. A workbook will be distributed to candidates in January of their Level 1 year to help them prepare for this interview.

WORSHIP

Participate regularly in Sunday Eucharist - The Sunday Liturgy is the lifeblood of our faith. We gather as community for the greatest prayer of the Catholic Church, to worship God, the Father, God, the Son and God, the Holy Spirit. We break bread together to celebrate the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, who commanded us to "Do this in memory of me" (*Luke 22:19*). We proclaim our Catholic beliefs in the creed, we give thanks and share the gifts God has given us and we sing and listen to the Word of God proclaimed. Sunday Mass attendance is not optional for Candidates – this is the faith they will affirm!! It is an expected element of the Sacramental Preparation that Candidates participate in Sunday Liturgies each weekend with their families.

Liturgy Reflections

Level 2 (2017 Candidates ONLY)

Liturgy Reflection: Candidates are asked to complete 12 Liturgy Reflections over the 2 year formation period. It is suggested that they submit 6 each year. The reflections are due within four weeks of attendance. Blank Liturgy reflection sheets are in your folder and are also available on the parish website, www.htrcc.org, under the Confirmation tab on the Faith Formation page.

Level 1 Candidates are asked to participate in the Rite of Choice Mass. This will take place at a 12 Noon Eucharistic Celebration on a Sunday in Ordinary Time. This rite signifies the individual's choice to be a part of the Confirmation process. It provides an opportunity for the parish community to be connected to the celebration of Confirmation at an early stage. Parents and Sponsors (when possible) should attend with the candidates. *This year the Rite of Choice Mass will be celebrated at Noon on Sunday, January 7, 2018.*

Level 2 Candidates are asked to participate in the Rite of Enrollment. This rite takes place at a 12 Noon Eucharistic Celebration on a Sunday in Lent. It symbolizes the community's choosing, electing, approving these young people into its full membership as an adult, initiated Christian. Parents as well as Sponsors (when possible) should be present at this liturgy to symbolize their support and encouragement. The candidates present their letter of request for the sacrament to the pastor during the Rite of Enrollment. *This year the Rite of Enrollment Mass will be celebrated at Noon on Sunday, March 4, 2018.*

Participate in Reconciliation Services – There are communal Advent and Lenten Reconciliation Services in the church each year.

COMMUNITY

Our youth are asked to participate in Youth Ministry meetings, events and a retreat.

Community: A candidate will acquire 12 CYO units throughout the two year process and attend a Confirmation Retreat. Candidates should try to acquire 6 CYO units each year.

There will be a Confirmation retreat for candidates offered in February and a Parent-Teen Confirmation retreat will be offered in March. A retreat setting is an opportunity for candidates to reflect on their deepening relationship with Jesus Christ through the reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation. This retreat is a time for the candidates to nurture spiritual growth and to awaken their awareness of the Holy Spirit at work in their lives. A retreat is a concentrated experience that offers an environment for grappling with faith issues and learning new ways to pray. It is also an opportunity for the Candidates to build community with other teens of the parish. CYO meetings/events will take place from September through April on scheduled Sundays, Mondays, and Wednesday. There will be approximately 20 opportunities each year to gather with a Community of Faith and earn CYO units.

SERVICE

The connection between Confirmation and service is that each confirmed Christian has a calling and a responsibility to serve as a living example of Jesus' teaching to serve one another. God calls us to serve as we say, "Here I am Lord!" To serve others is a true gift for both the recipient and the giver. For Christians, young and old, service should be an attitude, a way of life. It is important not only to listen and understand the Word of God, but also to apply the lessons learned, through daily life and service to others. This is essential to living as a Christian and following in Jesus footsteps. These opportunities also give the candidates ways to explore how they can be helpful to our parish and the community.

Service: Candidates are asked to perform 12 hours of community service during the two year program and keep track of their hours on the service reflection form. The reflection form, asking the candidate how they were affected by their service should be handed in to the Youth Minister, Patricia Martin, when the service requirement has been fulfilled.

MISSION

The time of mission begins with one's commitment and acceptance of the Sacrament of Confirmation and is **unending**. It is during this time that the confirmed individual puts into practice the things learned during the formation process and begins to actively fulfill the responsibilities of a fully initiated Catholic Christian. The mission of the Church is to pray, preach the Word of God, help the poor, and do good works of service so that Jesus Christ might be glorified among all people.

SUMMARY OF CONFIRMATION PREPARATION PROGRAM

CONFIRMATION 2017-2018

ALL CANDIDATES WILL HAVE COMPLETED THE FOLLOWING BEFORE REQUESTING TO CELEBRATE THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION

- 1 1 day retreat (at Holy Trinity)
- 12 CYO units
- 12 Liturgy Reflections
- 12 Service Hours
- 5 Catechetical Classes from the Chosen program

Yearly Sample breakdown:

Year 1	Year 2
5 Catechetical Classes (summer or fall)	Confirmation Rehearsal
6 CYO units	6 CYO units
6 Service Hours	6 Service Hours
6 Liturgy Reflections	6 Liturgy Reflections
	1 Retreat

CONFIRMATION 2018-2019

ALL CANDIDATES WILL HAVE COMPLETED THE FOLLOWING BEFORE REQUESTING TO CELEBRATE THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION

- 1 1 day retreat (at Holy Trinity)
- 12 CYO units
- 12 Service Hours
- 5 Catechetical Classes from the Chosen program
- 1 Completion of Confirmation Workbook
- 1 Interview with member of the Confirmation Team

Yearly Sample breakdown:

Year 1	Year 2
5 Catechetical Classes (summer or fall)	Confirmation Rehearsal
6 CYO units	6 CYO units
6 Service Hours	6 Service Hours
1 Confirmation Workbook	1 Interview
	1 Retreat

Please remember that this is a readiness process. Candidates can complete the components as their schedule permits. For example, a candidate can perform service over the summer months; they can participate in classes in either summer or fall, and then earn CYO units the second half of the year, they can earn more CYO units in one year and do less the second, etc. The point is that they fulfill the requirements in a way that does not feel rushed and that fits into their schedule. We want our candidates to enjoy the preparation for Confirmation!

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What are the Fees?

Level 2 (2017-2018)

A Sacramental Fee for Confirmation Candidates is charged to cover additional costs associated with the Sacrament Program. *The fee is \$95 per year* and covers the catechetical costs of books, resources, supplies, copies, and CYO expenses for events, speakers, supplies, and meetings. This fee should be submitted each year with the registration form. There is a \$50.00 fee for retreats which is separate and should be submitted with a permission slip on/before the due of the retreat you would like to attend.

Level 1 (2017-2018) \$240-This fee is for the two year program. All Confirmation fees are included. There will be no fee in the second year of the program.

How will the Office of Faith Formation and Youth Ministry Communicate?

Communication is vitally important with busy family life. The Faith Formation Office and Youth Ministry Office use **email** as our primary communication. Our hope is that parents will assist their Candidates in attending classes and events and encourage their involvement and full participation. In order to assist families in planning we will post pertinent information on our website (www.htrcc.org), in the parish bulletin and will send emails regularly. Please make sure to read all emails that are sent by the parish office and notify us when your email has changed. Also, your folder includes event dates and forms, so we suggest that you keep it in a safe place and refer to it often.

When is the Confirmation Liturgy Celebrated?

Confirmation Liturgies are celebrated in the spring—usually in the Easter Season—in the 50 days between Easter and Pentecost Sunday.

Prior to Confirmation, all candidates should complete all components of the preparation program, submit a letter of request to the pastor, sponsor, and name forms. Attendance at the rehearsal for the Confirmation Liturgy is required by the candidate and if possible the sponsor. A parent may stand in at the rehearsal for a sponsor if the sponsor lives out of town.

Who Administers the Sacrament of Confirmation?

Confirmation is normally ministered by the Bishop who presides at the Mass, unless a priest is appointed by the Bishop to administer the Sacrament.

How is the Sacrament of Confirmation celebrated?

Except in the case of a person who is in immediate danger or death, confirmation is always celebrated at a mass. The priest or bishop first lays hands on the head of each confirmed, and then anoints each confirmed with Sacred Chrism while addressing each by name and saying, "Be sealed with the Holy Spirit." While this is happening, the sponsor places his or her hand on the right shoulder of the candidate being confirmed.

What is the Proper Attire for Confirmation Day?

The Bishop will be presiding at Confirmation Mass, proper attire is required. Please use MODESTY in choosing your outfit.

MEN: Dress Shirt and Tie, Dress Pants (no jeans)
Dress socks and shoes - Suit or Sport Jacket is optional

WOMEN: Dress or Skirt with Blouse or Pant Suit, Dress Shoes
Dress or skirt must be knee length or longer
Chest, back and shoulders MUST be covered

How do I know if I am ready for Confirmation?

- ◆ Expression of desire to receive the sacrament.
- ◆ A desire to assume fuller responsibility in the Church community and in the ministry and service aspects of parish life.
- ◆ A sense of unity with the parish community as evidenced by participation in the liturgy and the Eucharist, with an awareness of what is taking place.
- ◆ A basic understanding of the faith and a deepening awareness of Jesus and His teachings.
- ◆ A witnessing in the way the you live a Christian life. Your actions should reflect a loving reverence for God and His laws, and the precepts of the Church.
- ◆ Total participation in requirements of the formation process and all aspects of the Confirmation Program, including retreat, community, service components, liturgical celebrations and classes.

What's in a Name?

The tradition of selecting a saint's name for Confirmation grew out of a pre-Vatican II practice that asked Confirmandi to select a Saint's name to be invoked during the Rite of Confirmation. Some of your parents may have been required to do this. However, since Vatican II, this practice is no longer a required part of the Rite of Confirmation. The Church now invites candidates to keep the name received at Baptism. The church suggests that you use the name your parents gave to you at Baptism because Confirmation is the fullness or completion of the Sacrament of Baptism.

Whatever name you choose, your own, or a favorite saint, we ask that you do some research. We would like you to explore how this individual or this saint offers you encouragement to walk more closely with Christ.

Reflections on a Confirmation name, whether a chosen name or your baptismal name:

- Find out if you were named after a beloved family member or a favorite saint.
- Do you have a patron saint that you go to with prayers?
- Is there a saint that portrays virtues that you admire?
- Pray, reflect and let the Holy Spirit guide you in your search.

How should I Select a Confirmation Sponsor?

Choice of a Confirmation Sponsor deserves considerable thought. This is not an honorary reward for a special relative or friend; the sponsor is someone called upon to pray, console, consult, discuss, direct and occasionally, correct Candidates who have made choices that conflict with Church teaching. This is a lifelong relationship and as such should be chosen very carefully. Confirmation Sponsors are also an integral part of the reception of the Sacrament. A sponsor must be in a 'state of grace' in order to be a Sponsor during the actual Confirmation Liturgy. We recommend that Sponsors check parish schedules for dates and times when the Sacrament of Reconciliation is offered, if necessary, prior to the Confirmation Liturgy.

Church law (CIC, can. 874) specifies that godparents (and Confirmation sponsors) be at least 16 years old and themselves have been fully initiated, that is have received the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and First Communion, and be "living a life consistent with the office undertaken" and not the natural parents of the child.

Sponsors should be both role models and resource persons, individuals who are at ease with the practice of their faith and would normally be considered "active Catholics." They should be people who are comfortable with answering questions about their relationship with Christ as experienced in the Catholic communion, even if they are unsure about all the technicalities. They should be people who are interested in and will continue to support you in the years ahead.

Confirmation Sponsors:

Must be a practicing, Confirmed Catholic, at least 16 years old

Cannot be the Candidate's parents

Attend Mass and receives Eucharist on a regular basis. If not Holy Trinity parishioners, will be expected to obtain a sponsor letter or sponsor certificate from their own parish.

What is expected of Parents?

We strongly encourage parents to be actively involved with their son/daughters preparation for this sacrament. We ask parents to:

- Attend weekly liturgy (Sunday Mass) with the teen
- Be faith role models for their teen
- Pray for their teen as well as all others participating in this process
- Discuss the materials presented to the teen on a weekly basis
- Provide transportation to meetings and events
- Attend parent Meetings as they arise

What should I write in my Letter of Request?

The letter must be typed, checked for grammar and spelling. The letter must be in a white envelope addressed to Rev. Anthony Randazzo and presented during the Rite of Enrollment.

State the reasons why you want to be confirmed:

Talk about your personal relationship with God, and include your relationship with the Church, specifically your parish church of Holy Trinity.

How do you plan to share your time and talents with this parish community?

What does being a member of this parish community, and the Church, mean to you?

State the reasons why you think you should be confirmed:

This part of the letter should outline and explain in detail what you have done in preparation for confirmation. Here you should include all aspects of your preparation.

Describe what you learned in your classes.

Describe your involvement in Youth Ministry and your retreat experience.

Describe how your service has helped you better understand what it means to serve others.

Describe how you have grown in your prayer life, especially your participation in Sunday Eucharist.

As you can see, this letter requires prayer and reflection, both on what you have done and what you will do after confirmation.

Youth Ministry Notes on Confirmation (from Renewing the Vision)

ARTICLE 2 THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION

1309

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 actions, 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 confirmandi.

1319

A candidate for Confirmation who has attained the age of reason must profess the faith, be in the state of grace, have the intention of receiving the sacrament, and be prepared to assume the role of disciple and witness to Christ, both within the ecclesial community and in temporal affairs.

RENEWING THE VISION

The first goal of youth ministry is “to empower young people to live as disciples of Jesus Christ in our world today.” (RTV 9).

- *Proclaiming the Good News of Jesus through witness and word to young people.*
- *Enabling young people to live as disciples through their involvement in service, ministry, and leadership opportunities.*
- *Providing young people the faith skills for discipleship.*

The second goal is “to draw young people to responsible participation in the life, mission, and work of the Catholic faith community.” (RTV 11).

- *Being a ‘youth friendly’ community that welcomes young people, values their participation, and calls forth their gifts.*
- *Integrating young people into the liturgical, pastoral, and ministerial life of the parish community.*
- *Creating opportunities for young people to enter into healthy relationships of trust and respect with their peers and with adults.*
- *Promoting Catholic identity and religious literacy through programs of adolescent catechesis.*

The third goal of youth ministry is “to foster the total personal and spiritual growth of each young person.” (RTV 15).

- *Enabling young people to develop a personal relationship with Jesus.*
- *Actively supporting positive youth development and fostering healthy values and life skills.*
- *Supporting families of young people by providing resources, programs, and services.*
- *Providing opportunities to experience and express caring, service, and compassion for others.*

YOUTH MINISTRY/CYO DISCIPLINARY POLICY

While trying to create fun, relevant, and exciting activities for CYO participants, we must also create a safe environment where they can grow and exercise their faith. Therefore, we have created policies to deal with problems in the following areas. These policies are not meant to curb the enjoyment or creativity of participants but are provided to let everyone know what behavior is expected. We expect everyone to learn, remember, and abide by the policies, but we do not anticipate having to use the disciplinary actions outlined (though we are prepared to do so). We have found that when participants know what is expected of them, we have very few problems and are able to create the warm and nurturing environment described above. Also, **participants may not come late or leave early from any meeting, event, trip or retreat.** If a participant cannot give their full participation on any given date or time, they are asked to choose another possibility.

1. Disruptions during meetings

We are able to have a good time, joke, and have fun in our meetings. Some participants, however, occasionally take it too far and disrupt our meetings, causing others to be distracted from the events teaching. In these cases, we follow these progressive disciplinary steps:

- Disruptive participants will be separated from their friends. We will move the disruptive person to another seat, away from their friends.
- After being separated on any given week, if the participant continues with the negative behavior, the person will be given a warning and then if the behavior continues they will be asked to leave the meeting and an adult worker will phone the parents/guardians to pick up the participant early.
- If, when the participant returns the next time, he or she continues the disruptive pattern, the person will be given a cooling off period away from youth ministry activities for two weeks.
- If, the participant causes further disruption when returning from a cooling off period, he or she will be suspended indefinitely.

2. Participants who are under the influence of or in possession of illegal drugs, alcohol or possessing a weapon

If a participant comes to any youth ministry activity and a.) is noticeably under the influence of drugs or alcohol or b.) has possession of illegal drugs, alcohol or weapons, we will immediately report the incident to the participant's parents, send the participant home, and enforce a cooling off period from all youth ministry activities for two to four weeks depending on the severity of the situation. If recommended by the church leadership and/or required by law, the police and/or other authorities will also be contacted. Professional counseling will be recommended.

3. Leaving the supervisory presence of the youth ministry staff (i.e. leaving the youth room, leaving the church, leaving the group during trips, etc.)

Sometimes participants try to leave the supervisory presence of adult workers so they can avoid group activities, talk on a cell phone, smoke, couple off, or leave the premises. We cannot allow this behavior because parents trust us to be responsible custodians of their children, and we can't be responsible when participants have left our presence.

Therefore, participants are not permitted to leave the youth room during our meetings. Those who leave the youth room, church premises or group on a trip will face the following progression of disciplinary steps: On the first offense, the participant's parents will be notified and the participant will be given a cooling off period from youth activities for two weeks. Parents may be asked to pick up the student from the trip wherever the group may be. If there is a second offense, the participant will be suspended indefinitely or banned from one or more future trips.

4. Divisiveness and arguing

We do not tolerate arguing and contention that affects the overall unity and mission of the group. Even small pockets of division have major effects on the group, destroying the collective witness of the Body of Christ. When disruptive division or arguing occurs, both parties will be asked to meet with the youth ministry staff to mediate the conflict. Participants who will not own up to their roles in the conflicts and will not attempt to exist peaceably with the other participants will face the same disciplinary steps discussed below in section five. Typically, we allow participants' emotions to cool for one week before we take any disciplinary action for lack of reconciliation.

5. Physical Bullying or Fighting

Would you send your child to a meeting knowing there's a good chance he or she will get assaulted? Not likely. Parents need to know they are leaving their child in a safe environment. To that end, we do not permit physical fighting--period. Participants who engage in physical bullying or fighting will face the following steps:

- The participant will be asked to leave the meeting or activity and an adult worker will phone the parents/guardians to pick up the participant early. The situation will be discussed with the parents and the participant will be given a cooling off period away from all youth ministry activities for two weeks.
- If there is a second offense, the participant will be suspended indefinitely.

6. Physical Displays of Affection, Sexual Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct

We do not permit tickling, wrestling, piggyback rides or inappropriate touching. In addition, physical displays of affection such as kissing, sitting on laps, and lying or sleeping next to each other are inappropriate and being isolated or alone with another participant is not allowed.

Participants who offend these policies will be counseled by the youth ministry staff and the parents/guardians will be notified. If there is another offense, the participant will be given a cooling off period from youth activities for two weeks.

Participants who engage in sexual harassment or sexual misconduct will be counseled by the youth ministry staff, their parents will be notified, and the participant will be sent home. In addition, depending on the severity of the situation, there will be a two to four week suspension from youth ministry activities. The church leadership will also be notified. If recommended by the church leadership and/or required by law, the police and/or other authorities will also be contacted.

7. Inappropriate Clothing

Participants are not permitted to wear clothing that is sexually suggestive or spiritually degrading. T-shirts or other clothing with evil, vulgar, illegal, or inappropriate content will not be permitted. In addition there should be: no midriffs, no low-cut tops, no spaghetti straps (tank tops must have straps at least two fingers wide), no see through clothing, and no sagging pants (no boxers, thongs or underwear showing).

- Those deemed to be wearing inappropriate clothing by the youth ministry staff to youth activities or trips will be given a large, over-sized t-shirt to wear over their clothes.
- The parents of repeat offenders will be notified. If the inappropriate dress continues, further disciplinary actions including suspension may be taken.

8. Use of Electronic Devices

Electronic devices tend to cause disruptions in our meetings, quarrels between participants, or the isolation of individuals. Therefore, the use of cell phones, iPods, cameras or other personal electronic or entertainment devices is prohibited during activities and services.

- If participants choose to bring such devices, they do so at their own risk. The youth ministry staff does not take responsibility for the safe return of these items.
- Devices used during undesignated times, whether on the church premises or on trips, will be confiscated until the end of the service, trip or event.

9. Return after Suspension from Youth Activities

Participant wishing to return to youth ministry activities after a cooling off period or suspension will be asked to meet with the youth minister and/or youth ministry staff before returning so that appropriate behavior expectations may be reviewed.

Did you know? ZORACH V. CLAUSON - 343 U.S. 306 (1952)

This US Supreme Court case ruled that it is not unconstitutional for a public school student to attend religious instruction at a parochial school or church event even if this should conflict with the public school schedule. "Public school schedule" has been interpreted to include sporting events, band competitions, school plays, and any other school sponsored event. Any type of "punishment" for missing or leaving an event early is NOT permitted and is a violation of the law. Therefore school personnel cannot:

- Threaten the student in any way (example: removal from the team)
- Mock or make fun of a child's religious convictions
- Point out the reason why a student is not present or leaving early to other student or staff
- Place a penalty such as "extra laps", "benching," or any other type of action, which is placed upon-the student, because of his/her absence or early dismissal.

If your family has a problem with a teacher or coach, please do not hesitate to call our office.