

Confirmation Handbook 2023-2024



SEALED

American Martyrs Youth Ministry Confirmation Program

“Remember, then, that you received a spiritual seal, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of knowledge and reverence, the spirit of [awe and wonder]. Keep safe what you received. God the Father sealed you, Christ the Lord strengthened you and sent the Spirit into your hearts as the pledge of what is to come.”

— St. Ambrose

Hannah Madril - Director of Youth Ministry and Confirmation
hannah.madril@americanmartyrs.org
(310) 546-4734

What is AMYM and LifeTeen?

AMYM stands for American Martyrs Youth Ministry.

Life Teen is a program that started off as a model for how Youth Ministry is done in our Catholic Church, but now it is described as a movement of the Holy Spirit that is igniting our Catholic faith in communities around the world.

The most important part of our ministry in AMYM is the **SEALED** program, preparing for the Sacrament of Confirmation.



AMYM serves all high school age teens, freshmen-seniors, through teen focused events like Life Nights, service projects, and retreats. The hope is for our teens to feel at home in their parish community and to be active participants in their Church.

The Confirmation Process

American Martyrs Confirmation program seeks to provide high school teenagers with the theological and spiritual foundation that will inspire them to live their faith with courage and zeal.

Our Confirmation program **SEALED** consists of a minimum of two years in faith formation. Any teen in high school who has been baptized is welcome to begin preparation for this Sacrament. In the 2023-2024 Sacramental year, we will have 8 classes in Year 1 and Year 2.

Our monthly Sunday group gatherings are an hour and a half long.

Candidates will:

- Gather for their classes 3:15-4:45 on scheduled Sundays
- Respectfully engage in small group discussion with peers, guided by an adult Core leader
- Complete any Confirmation material during each class
- Attend the Sunday 5pm Mass with on days of scheduled class or LifeNight events

We ask that each candidate and their family make attending the 5pm Mass a priority every Sunday.

LifeTeen, Chosen, and DecisionPoint Confirmation material are approved by the USCCB (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops) and follow Archdiocesan requirements.

SEALED Commitment and Program Details

- 1.) All candidates must attend two (2) years of Confirmation formation. There are eight (8) sessions throughout the academic year.
- 2.) Candidates are required to attend **ALL meetings with no absences**.
(If a candidate must miss a class, please email Hannah and your child's small group leader **prior** to the meeting. Candidates must attend a meeting to discuss a make up lesson for each missed class.)
- 3.) All candidates must complete **five (5) hours of AMC Campus Ministry** each year and submit their **Parish Reflection Form** before the end of each year.
(Parish Service is performed with and through any American Martyrs Ministry.)
- 4.) All candidates are required to participate in and attend the 5pm Mass as an integral part of each **SEALED** session.
- 5.) All candidates must attend one (1) **LifeNight** during each year of formation.
- 6.) Year 2 candidates must attend a **SEALED** American Martyrs Confirmation Retreat or attend another parish retreat experience during the Year 2 Confirmation process.
- 7.) Year 2 candidates will be interviewed by a Core member at the end of Year 2. This helps to discern the growth of the candidate throughout the two-year process.
(Sign up information for the interview will be included in our monthly emails.)

Attendance

Participating fully in the process means that candidates must attend **all 8 SEALED** meetings each year. Sunday 5pm Mass is a required aspect of the Confirmation class experience. If a candidate misses more than two Sunday classes, we must take careful consideration and evaluate whether or not the teen should postpone further preparation until the next year. If a candidate must miss a class, please email Hannah and your child's small group leader with extenuating circumstance **prior** to the meeting.

Make Up Policy

In the case of missed class, email the Director of Youth Ministry and Confirmation, Hannah, to set up a meeting. This meeting is where it will be determined what can be done to make up for the missed class.

The Role of the Confirmation Sponsor

The sponsor has a significant role in the faith development of the candidate.

The sponsor should be at least 18 years of age, a mature person of faith, and a confirmed Catholic in good standing. The sponsor must complete the Sponsor Form with a signature from their Parish Pastor.

Candidates should choose their sponsor in the beginning of Year 1 of Confirmation.

The sponsor **cannot be the parent** of the one to be confirmed.

A sponsor is someone who reflects Catholic values in word, worship, and service.

The sponsor participates in activities during the Confirmation process and meets personally with his/her candidate to guide the discernment process the candidate is undertaking.

The sponsor is required to attend both the sponsor session and the second Confirmation practice held the week of Confirmation.

Sponsor Guide

- When appropriate or scheduled, attend meetings with your candidate.
- Keep in touch outside of required meetings. Their faith journey is ongoing and your involvement will show them they are important and worthy of your time.
- Invite your candidate to Mass. Remember example is powerful.
- If you sense that a candidate had a difficult time understanding what was said or experienced at a group session, do not hesitate to ask if you can help. If you don't know how to respond or are not sure what the church teaches don't make it up. They will remember your answers. Make sure you are finding the information together. This will help them learn how to find answers as they continue to grow in your faith
- In accompanying your candidate for two years, there will sometimes be the need to listen to what is troubling your candidate. Take the initiative in responding to needs.
- Pray daily for all the candidates, but in particular for your candidate.
- Invite the candidate to parish functions other than the Sunday Liturgy. Perhaps ask your candidate to volunteer for a ministry with you within American Martyrs Catholic Community. Be sure to discuss your experience afterward.

Sponsor Form

Name of Sponsor (printed): _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Are you registered member of this Parish? Yes No

If not, which Parish are you registered with? _____

Have you sponsored someone before? Yes No

For which Sacrament? _____

Do you still communicate with this person? Yes No

What, do you believe, are the qualifications to be a sponsor?

Do you feel comfortable sharing your faith experiences with the youth and the Confirmation community? _____

What are your hopes for this Confirmation process?

Name of the candidate you wish to sponsor:

Are you able to attend the meetings scheduled for the sponsor participation? Yes No

Will you communicate with the candidate at least once a month to review their progress? Yes No

Can you commit yourself to journey the 2 years with the candidate? Yes No

Sponsor Pledge

I believe that _____ is ready for confirmation.

Candidate's First and Last Name

- I fully understand the preparation process and the covenant.
- The Director of this process will have my complete cooperation and support.
- I will help my candidate in any way I can.
- I will be supportive in service projects.
- I recognize this as a time of re-commitment in my own faith life.
- I pray that the holy spirit will guide and direct us during this time of preparation.

Sponsor's Signature

Date

Parish Priest's Signature

Date

Partnering with Parents

As the primary educators of their children, we ask that parents, along with sponsors, be strongly involved in the faith life and discernment process of their teen.

Parental involvement requires being a role model in reflecting Catholic values through prayer, worship and service. Weekly attendance at Mass is very important for our teens to witness.

Please remember that a **SEALED 1** teens and parents are required to attend a Family Interview in August or September and **SEALED 2** parents will attend the second Confirmation practice during the week of Confirmation. Parents are encouraged to engage in active conversations about faith and the Confirmation process throughout the journey.

Parent volunteers are needed! If you want to join the Core Team, assist with our Retreats, help with LifeNights or if you have any way of sharing your time, talent, or treasure with AMYM, we would like to know!

Communication with Parents

Monthly emails will be sent to all parents with program updates, event reminders and parish service opportunities for teens.

Facebook and Instagram updates can help provide parents and teens with friendly reminders and important information.

Facebook: American Martyrs-YM

Instagram: amc_ym

Please be sure to check the weekly church bulletin for updates.

The AMYM Life Teen website is vital to staying up to date with monthly assignments, events and service opportunities. An up-to-date calendar can also be found on the website. amym.americanmartyrs.org

Would You Like to Help?

If you would like to volunteer for any event(s) this year please leave your information below:

Parent Name: _____

Teen's Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

E-mail: _____

What would you like to do? Please check all that apply.

- Loaves and Fishes- Driving food to St. Lawrence Brindisi in the month of March*
- Life Night Core Member – Help provide and serve dinner for Life Nights once a month*
- Confirmation Core Member- Help lead small group discussions*
- Youth Day Carpool – Help carpool teens to Los Angeles Youth Day at the Anaheim Convention Center on February 15, 2024*
- Retreat Chaperone – Help chaperone and assist with Fall or Winter Retreat logistics*

(Please return this document to the SRE Office or email a copy to the Director of Confirmation)

AMC Campus Ministry - Parish Opportunities

During the Confirmation process, the candidates will be guided in understanding ministry as a way to live out Gospel values. Candidates must complete at least five (5) Campus Ministry hours on their own within the American Martyrs community. The deadline for AMC Campus Ministry is April 30, 2024 for **SEALED 2** Candidates and May 29, 2024 for **SEALED 1** Candidates.

The following opportunities are recommended:

Parish Fair Booth Oct 21-22, 2023

Look to sign up online at the American Martyrs Church website when our Parish Fair returns – An email will be sent to all families with sign up details.

Loaves and Fishes Food Drive

Food collection on March 9 & 10, 16 & 17, and 23 & 24

Sign ups will take place prior to the food drive. Teens will distribute shopping lists and collect bags of donated food before and after all Masses during the month of March.

AMC Campus Ministry Project

We are so excited to invite teens in the **SEALED** program to complete an AMC Campus Ministry Project during the year. We ask that each teen participate in one of the outreach activities offered, and experience the joy in serving others. We hope that this experience is beautiful and moving! More details will follow.

Code of Conduct

As a model of our greater Church community, the School of Religious Education seeks to provide each student with an atmosphere of loving trust. The teens are expected to arrive on time, ready to participate and follow directions given to them by the Adult Core leader. Please note that teens may be asked to leave the program at the discretion of the coordinator for any of the following reasons:

- Participating in actions gravely harmful to the moral and/or spiritual welfare of others, including misuse of social media.
- Habitual profanity or vulgarity.
- Assault, battery, or any threat of force or violence directed toward others.
- Possession, use of, or sale of tobacco, narcotics, or alcohol.
- Open, persistent defiance/disrespect of leaders and/or staff.
- Stealing and dishonesty.
- Cutting, defacing, or vandalizing in any way property belonging to the church, school, or any other person.

In the event of disciplinary action, the Confirmation Coordinator will call the parents for immediate pickup of the teen. This will be followed by a conference with parents, teen, our Pastor and Director of Confirmation.

Dress Code and Phone Policy

- Students are expected to wear appropriate and modest clothing to all classes and Masses.
- Confirmation students are encouraged to leave their phones at home. *Core Members will collect phones before class and return cell phones at the end of every class if teens decide to bring them.

Mass Etiquette

1. No food and drink in Church.
2. Please take your hats off as a sign of respect.
3. Don't chew gum in church.
4. Dress modestly and appropriately. Wear your Sunday Best. We believe that God comes down to meet us at every Mass. So, why would we not dress up?
5. Cell phones should never be used in Mass for calls or texting. The exceptions are emergencies.
6. When we enter and leave Church, bow toward the Tabernacle and Altar.
7. Please be quiet while in church. Once you enter the sanctuary - it is not the time or place to visit with those around you. If you must talk do so as quietly and briefly as possible. Remember that your conversation might be disturbing someone who is in prayer, which is much more important.
8. Bow before receiving Holy Communion.
9. Do not receive from the chalice if you are sick.
10. Do not leave early. We should stay to the end of the recession and the hymn that accompanies it.
11. Pray after Mass, if you feel called to do so.
12. Leave quietly. We encourage you to visit with others, but please do so once you are outside of the main sanctuary of the church so you won't disturb others who want to stay and pray. Please leave quietly and then have a visit afterward.