

Preparation Time

“It is required of those to be confirmed that they . . . are sufficiently instructed in the Christian Faith . . .”

1979 Book of Common Prayer, p. 860.

Due to the comprehensive and encompassing content of incorporating best practices for equipping candidates for Confirmation, it is recommended that two years be dedicated to confirmation preparation. At a minimum, instruction should take place over the course of one academic year (September – May). It has been shown candidates are more ready for Confirmation when their congregation has been more intentional about taking the time, energy, and integrity in providing instruction and formation programs for adolescents. With parishes engaged in mission trips and on-going service projects, longer, as opposed to short term, preparation time prepares individuals much better.

Rationale:

“Christians are made, not born,” said Tertullian. Following Jesus is challenging work for the Church. Many factors in modern culture seem to conspire against the Church in its efforts to grow disciples. A commitment to follow Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord requires more personal investment than a perfunctory 6-8 weeks of instruction classes. The Rite of Confirmation is not “graduation” in which one has completed a course of study. William Willimon (“Making Christians in a Secular World,” *The Christian Century*, Oct. 22, 1986) speaks of Confirmation as nothing less than giving people the equipment they need to be disciples. Christianity is a way of life together . . . it is experiential, personal, engaging . . . becoming disciples of Jesus through our lifestyle, beliefs and values. Confirmation (and its preparation) continues and strengthens Christian growth that has already begun. It is learning a way of being that will remain with one forever.

In order to examine and experience a comprehensive preparation program, confirmands need adequate time for building community, learning, reflecting on and applying their faith. This cannot be accomplished in 6-8 weeks. The components of preparation can take a variety of forms and can occur at various times: Sunday “education hour,” weekend-retreats, afternoon or evening activities, mission trips, and special events.

Adapted from the 2006 Confirmation Guidelines adopted by the Diocese of Connecticut (during the tenure of The Rt. Rev. Andrew Smith, Diocesan). Copyright ©2020 *The Confirmation Collaborative* c/o sharonepearson@gmail.com