



INSTITUTE FOR EVANGELIZATION
*Office of Family, Youth
& Young Adult Ministry*
ARCHDIOCESE OF BALTIMORE

Confirmation at Age 9: Understanding the Implementation Process

Every parish/pastorate in the Archdiocese of Baltimore will be placed into two groupings:

1. A numbered “**Wave**,” which indicates the timeline to be followed when transitioning age 9 as the standard age for Confirmation. *If your parish or pastorate would like to begin the transition process earlier than indicated, please contact the Office of Family, Youth, and Young Adult Ministry for further details on approval for accelerated implementation.*
2. A color-coded “**Group**,” which indicates the geographical groupings of pastorates by which the Office of Family, Youth, and Young Adult Ministry will be supporting the transition process. Note that these geographical Groups may or may not map neatly onto existing geographical groupings, such as counties or regional groupings of pastors; however, they have been intentionally designed to minimize confusion among Catholics living in the surrounding communities as the new norms are phased in across the Archdiocese.

OFYYAM will contact pastors regarding their Wave and Group designations in the coming days.

WAVES answer the question: When will our pastorate move toward this new norm?

At this time, pastorate leadership (clergy and staff) are urged to become familiar with the implementation timeline (*below*), which is organized into three Waves.

Additionally, any leaders who are not yet familiar with the [2022 Confirmation Guidelines](#) and the subsequent [Confirmation Preparation Framework](#) (which specifies that immediate preparation consists of 6-8 sessions) should do so now. Please disregard the prior standard age of Confirmation indicated in 2022 Guidelines; all other elements of those Guidelines are still in effect.

GROUPS answer the question: How will our pastorate (& neighbors) make the change?

The Office of Family, Youth, and Young Adult Ministry (OFYYAM) will meet with and resource pastorates in the context of their color-coded geographical Groups, in collaboration with the work of the Office of Parish Renewal.

These Group conversations could be strategic, tactical, catechetical, pastoral, theological, and practical in nature, depending upon the needs of the Group and individual pastorates within the Group. Particular attention will be paid to factors such as scale, culture, staffing, catechetical materials, and resources.

Group members are also encouraged to collaborate and communicate with one another regarding their implementation processes, in addition to participating in formal OFYYAM Group gatherings.

One more question: How will the influx of candidates actually be Confirmed?

At this time, it is expected that the Archbishop and his Auxiliary Bishops will confer the Sacrament of Confirmation on all candidates throughout the implementation process. The specific liturgical arrangements will be determined collaboratively between the pastorates, OFYYAM, and the Bishops' Office.

Timeline of Implementation for Age 9 Confirmation:

	Wave 1 Pastorates	Wave 2 Pastorates	Wave 3 Pastorates
2025-2026	YEAR ONE	<i>Pre-Implementation: Focus on developing an ecosystem of family faith formation & aligning current Confirmation preparation processes to the 2022 Guidelines.</i>	<i>Pre-Implementation: Focus on developing an ecosystem of family faith formation & aligning current Confirmation preparation processes to the 2022 Guidelines.</i>
2026-2027	YEAR TWO	YEAR ONE	
2027-2028	YEAR THREE	YEAR TWO	YEAR ONE
2028-2029	Continue with the new norms for all formation.	YEAR THREE	YEAR TWO
2029-2030		Continue with the new norms for all formation.	YEAR THREE

YEAR ONE: Run two simultaneous Confirmation immediate preparation processes (both comprising 6-8 sessions and including parent formation elements, aligned with the 2022 Confirmation Guidelines and accompanying Framework).

- Track 1: 9-year-olds & their older siblings, with intentional focus on parent formation
- Track 2: Current age cohort at the parish/pastorate (i.e., beginning at grade 8 – 11, depending upon what has been typical previously)

YEAR TWO: Begin to “close the gap” between Track 1 & 2.

- Small pastorates may find that they have “closed the gap” in the first year of implementation.
- Larger pastorates may find that it will take the full 3-year phase-in to properly form & accompany the intervening age groups.
- All pastorates must begin to intentionally expand post-Confirmation youth ministry/catechesis to accompany the greater number of fully-initiated “tweens” & teens.

YEAR THREE: By year 3 of implementation, the 9-year-old “track” is now the normative process of Confirmation preparation.

- Older “tweens” & teens seeking Confirmation should be accompanied & formed according to the norms of the OCIA Adapted for Children/Teens.
- Invest additional resources (*time, money, personnel*) into fostering robust youth ministry.