

# **CONFIRMATION CATECHESIS**

## **“Confirmed in the Spirit”**

**Who is the Holy Spirit?** The Holy Spirit is God, the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity. (The Spirit is the love between the Father and the Son.)

**When does the Holy Spirit first come to us?** The Spirit first comes to us at Baptism, when we receive sanctifying grace, or God’s very life within us

**How does the Holy Spirit help us?** The Spirit strengthens us and makes us holy. The Spirit enables us to love, spread, and defend our faith.

## **“Confirmed in Discipleship”**

**Who is a Christian?** A Christian is a follower of Jesus Christ.

**When do we become Christians?** We become Christians at Baptism, when we are adopted as sons and daughters of God and members of the Church.

**What is the Sacrament of Confirmation?** The Sacrament of Confirmation is the sacrament of initiation that seals what happened at Baptism. Through it, the Spirit and His gifts are strengthened, and we are linked more closely to Christ and the Church. We become adults in the Church through the Sacrament of Confirmation.

In describing the birth of the Church,

a) **Why did Jesus promise to send the Holy Spirit?**

Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit to help His followers and to make them holy.

b) **When was this promise fulfilled?** This promise was fulfilled on Pentecost.

c) **Who first received the Spirit?** The Apostles and Mary received the Spirit.

d) **Where were they when they received the Spirit?** Upper room in Jerusalem.

e) **In what form did the Spirit come upon them?** As tongues of fire

**Name the four characteristics of the early Christians.**

a) community – living and praying together ; sharing common bonds

b) message - learning from the Apostles; proclaiming the Good News

c) worship – praying in the Temple; breaking bread (celebration of the Mass) as Jesus commanded them to do

d) service – loving one another; caring for the poor, orphaned, widow etc.

**What are sacraments?** “The sacraments are efficacious signs of grace, instituted by Christ and entrusted to the Church, by which divine life is dispensed to us (Catechism #1131).” Sacraments are outward signs of inward grace instituted by Christ and given to the Church for the sanctification of her members. They are special encounters with Christ that help us grow in grace.

**Why did Jesus give his Church the sacraments?** Jesus gave His Church the sacraments to continue His saving work and to build up the community of believers.

**What are the three Sacraments of Initiation?** The three Sacraments of Initiation are Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist. We are adopted as children of God in Baptism, strengthened in Confirmation, and nourished by the Eucharist.

**How does Confirmation help us?**

- a) increases the life of the Spirit within us;
- b) strengthens us to profess, defend, and spread the faith;
- c) empowers us to give witness to Jesus and to carry on His mission;
- d) links us more closely with Christ and the Christian community.

**Why can Baptism and Confirmation be celebrated only once?** At Baptism and Confirmation you are marked with a permanent character that nothing can remove so there is no need to receive it more than once.

**What are the signs of Confirmation?** The signs of Confirmation are the laying on of hands, anointing on the forehead with oil (chrism) by the bishop and the words “Be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

**What is chrism and when is it consecrated?** Chrism is perfumed oil. It is usually consecrated at the Chrism Mass on Holy Thursday in the Cathedral.

**Where do the words “Be sealed” come from and what do they mean?**

These words “Be sealed” communicate that God Himself has placed His stamp on us. It can be thought of as a family seal. It was common in the past for families to have seals that were specific to their family and served as a form of identification. In Confirmation, God marks us as His own.

**What special preparation should a candidate make to receive Confirmation?**

- a) pray and celebrate the sacraments,
- b) read and live the Scriptures, particularly the Gospels,
- c) be guided and supported by Catholic Christians,
- d) and study the faith.

**What is the role of a sponsor?** The role of a sponsor is to help the candidate live his or her faith and be a good example of Catholic Christian life. The sponsor presents the candidate to the bishop for anointing.

**What are the requirements to be a sponsor at Confirmation?** To be a sponsor at Confirmation, a person must be

- a) a practicing Catholic;
- b) at least 16 years old;
- c) fully initiated by Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist in the Catholic Church;
- d) and, if married, in a valid marriage.

### **“Confirmed in Holiness”**

**Name and define the gifts of the Holy Spirit.** The gifts of the Holy Spirit are wisdom, understanding, right judgment (counsel), knowledge, courage (fortitude), reverence (piety), and wonder and awe (fear of the Lord).

- a) **The gift of wisdom** enables you to see life from God’s point of view, recognizing the real value of persons, events, and things.
- b) **The gift of understanding**, gives you insight into the truths of faith and being a follower of Jesus. It helps you to make right choices in your relationships with God and others.
- c) **The gift of right judgment**, or counsel, helps you seek advice and to be open to the advice of others. Right judgment also helps you give and receive advice.
- d) **The gift of knowledge** helps you to know what God asks of you and how you should respond. As you come to know God, you come to know who you are and the true value of things through the experiences of your life.
- e) **The gift of courage**, or fortitude, enables you to stand up for your beliefs and to live as a follower of Christ. Courage helps you undertake challenging tasks in the service of God and be faithful to ordinary duties.

f) **The gift of reverence**, or piety, helps you love and worship God. Reverence leads to prayer and to a deep respect for God, for his people, and for all creation.

g) **The gift of wonder and awe**, sometimes called fear of the Lord, helps you recognize the greatness of God and your dependence on God. This gift helps you avoid anything that would separate you from God's incredible love for you.

## “Confirmed in Grace”

**Who is the ordinary minister of Confirmation?** The bishop, the successor of the Apostles, is the ordinary minister of Confirmation.

**How many times does the Rite of Confirmation call for the laying on of hands?** The Rite of Confirmation calls for the laying on of hands once.

**When does this laying on of hands occur?** This occurs when the bishop and all the ministers of the sacrament extend their hands over the group of candidates and invoke the Holy Spirit.

**When does the Bishop actually confirm the candidates?** The bishop places his hand on the forehead of the individual candidates as he anoints them with chrism. This is when each candidate is actually confirmed.

**What does the bishop say and do when he confirms a candidate?** The bishop traces the sign of the cross with chrism on the candidate's forehead and says, “[ Name], be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit.”