

Holy Spirit and Confirmation

(see pages 183-203 of the Candidate's Handbook)

BACKGROUND

Confirmation is often called the "sacrament of the Holy Spirit." For this reason it is important for teens to study the Third Person of the Holy Trinity at the time of their preparation for the sacrament of Confirmation.

At Confirmation, the bishop anoints the forehead of each candidate with chrism, saying, "Be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit." Confirmation celebrates the presence of the Holy Spirit in the life of the person being confirmed and in the Church that has nurtured his or her faith. Also, the presiding bishop calls on God the Father and God the Son not only to send the Holy Spirit upon the candidates, but also to bestow on them the seven gifts of the Spirit: wisdom, understanding, right judgment, courage, knowledge, reverence, and wonder and awe in God's presence.

The lessons of this chapter deal first and foremost with providing an understanding of the Holy Spirit, the last of the Persons of the Trinity to be revealed. (In fact, it was at the Council of Constantinople in 381 that the Church clearly proclaimed the divinity of the Holy Spirit, that the Holy Spirit is God, the Lord and Giver of Life.) The lessons trace the Church's understanding of the Holy Spirit, beginning with several examples from scripture leading to Christ's sending of the Spirit at Pentecost.

How is the Spirit shared? The lessons focus on the effects of grace received at Confirmation, which brings a special outpouring of the Holy Spirit. In Confirmation, the graces of Baptism are perfected. Like Baptism, Confirmation is given only once because it imprints on the person a spiritual mark or indelible character that cannot be removed.

Finally, the lessons focus on the traditional seven gifts of the Spirit, looking at some of the ways these gifts apply and are an aid in the life of the confirmed Catholic.

NAME _____

THE HOLY SPIRIT IN SCRIPTURE

For each passage, write a sentence telling what it says about the Holy Spirit.

Genesis 1:1-2

Genesis 2:7

Exodus 19:16-19

Ezekiel 37:1-14

Luke 1:26-35

John 14:16-17

John 20:21-23

NAME _____

CONFIRMATION IN SCRIPTURE

Read the following passages. Briefly summarize each passage and explain what it tells about the origins of the sacrament of Confirmation.

Acts 8:14-17

Acts 19:1-6

2 Corinthians 1:21-22

NAME _____

COMMITMENT TO FAITH

Finish each sentence. What will you do in each of these areas after receiving the sacrament of Confirmation?

I will continue my Catholic education by . . .

I will practice Christian service by . . .

I will participate in liturgy by . . .

I will work continue to follow the commandments, especially in the most difficult area of . . .

I will become involved in the parish ministry of . . .

I will improve my practice of personal prayer by . . .

I will publicly witness to my Catholic faith by . . .



The Fruits & Gifts of the Spirit

Cut apart the sections of this resource and give each one to the appropriate group, as directed in step E.



The *Fruits* of the Holy Spirit

The tradition of the Catholic church lists twelve fruits of the Holy Spirit, based on those listed in Galatians 5:22–23 and other passages.

charity

joy

peace

patience

kindness

goodness

generosity

gentleness

faithfulness

modesty

self-control

chastity



The *Gifts* of the Holy Spirit

The tradition of the Catholic church lists seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, based on those listed in Isaiah 11:1–2.

wisdom

understanding

counsel, or knowledge

fortitude, or moral courage

right judgment

piety, or reverence

fear of the Lord, or wonder and awe in God's presence

Living the Christian Life

Listed below are some characteristics of Christian discipleship that were discussed in this session. Place a check in the column that most accurately describes your self-evaluation in each category.

Yes, that's me.

I do pretty well.

I'm just okay.

I need a lot of work.

I'm just not interested.

Characteristics

	Yes, that's me.	I do pretty well.	I'm just okay.	I need a lot of work.	I'm just not interested.
1. Disciples believe in Jesus Christ—even though they're skeptical sometimes.					
2. Disciples are willing, open, and teachable—even when the lessons are hard.					
3. Disciples are searching for a deeper relationship with God—even though they sometimes ignore God.					
4. Disciples share faith by word and example—even when people aren't listening or watching.					
5. Disciples make time for prayer—even when it's just one more thing to fit into an already too busy schedule.					
6. Disciples worship with other people—even when they don't really want to.					
7. Disciples are grateful for what God has done for them—even though they want more.					
8. Disciples know the spirit of God is with them—even when the spirit seems absent.					
9. Disciples care for other people and serve them—even those that are hard to love.					
10. Disciples want to know more about God—even when it's not the popular thing to do.					

If I were to grade myself on living the Christian life right now, I would give myself the following grade (circle one):

- A** = I try hard, and I'm good at it.
- B** = I do pretty well most of the time.
- C** = I'm pretty average when it comes to living the spiritual life.
- D** = I'm willing and I have my good moments, but they're few and far between.
- F** = I've got a lot of thinking and a lot of work to do.
- W** = I'm just not interested.

Y or N

Am I happy with the grade I gave myself?

REFERENCES/FAQ

References from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* for the Frequently Asked Questions include:

Is the Holy Spirit equal to the Father and Son? (CCC, 253-256)

The Holy Spirit is equal to the Father and Son because he is God. Because of the nature of the Blessed Trinity, the Holy Spirit is entirely in the Father and the Son just as the Father is entirely in the Son and the Holy Spirit and the Son is entirely in the Father and the Holy Spirit.

What is the sin against the Holy Spirit, spoken of in Matthew 12:31-32, that cannot be forgiven? (CCC, 1864)

The sin against the Holy Spirit that Jesus speaks of is attributing works of the Spirit of God to Satan, exactly what Jesus' enemies had done when they said Jesus' power over demons came from Satan. God's mercy has no limits. But anyone who deliberately rejects God's mercy, his offer of forgiveness, and the salvation offered by the Holy Spirit by refusing to repent is guilty of the eternal sin.

Why is Pentecost sometimes called the birthday of the Church? (CCC, 767, 1076)

It was at Pentecost, through the coming of the Holy Spirit, that God completed all covenants with humanity. On Pentecost, the Holy Spirit united all of Jesus' disciples into one community of faith, the Church.

Is reception of the sacrament of Confirmation necessary for salvation? (CCC, 1306)

A person who has been baptized, but not confirmed can certainly be saved. But the Church teaches that Christian initiation is incomplete without reception of Confirmation and Eucharist. It follows, according to Church teaching, that all the faithful are obliged to be confirmed at an appropriate time.

At what age does the Church teach that Confirmation should be celebrated? (CCC, 1307-1310)

Canon law teaches that the sacrament of Confirmation should be conferred around the age of discretion (about seven years old) unless the bishops determine there is another more appropriate age or the person is in danger of death. In 2001 the bishops in the United States decreed that Confirmation in the Latin Rite dioceses of the United States will be between "the age of discretion and about sixteen years of age."

Why are children who are baptized at Easter also confirmed? (CCC, 1291, 1298)

Any child who has reached the age of discretion is considered to be sufficiently mature in the matters of faith and capable of nurturing a personal faith life and following his or her conscience. For that reason, their initiation follows the adult form in which they receive all three sacraments of initiation at the Easter vigil.

Can my parent be my Confirmation sponsor? (CCC, 1255, 1311)

No, the Church sees two distinct and important roles for parents and sponsors. In fact, it is recommended that the Confirmation sponsor be the same as the baptismal sponsor to continue to help your parents nurture your faith life.

FEATURES/LESSON IDEAS

A Ask the teens to write ten answers to the question "What's important now?" related to events in their daily lives for the coming semester. For example,

"What's important now?"

To make the basketball team.