

Our Vocation: Life in the Spirit

“Catechesis has to reveal in all clarity the joy and the demands of the way of Christ.” Formation for the “newness of life” in Christ should include catechesis on:

- the Holy Spirit, the interior Master of prayer and life
- grace
- the Beatitudes
- sin and forgiveness
- the human virtues
- the Christian virtues of faith, hope, and charity
- the two-fold commandment of charity set forth in the Decalogue (Ten Commandments)
- the Church

(CCC nn. 1697, 741)

Above all, “The first and last point of reference of this catechesis will always be Jesus Christ Himself, who is the ‘Way, and the Truth, and the Life’” (CCC n. 1698).

Spiritual Retreat

To deepen their relationship with Christ and the Church, young people are to participate in a spiritual retreat focused on lifelong discipleship and commitment to living the Christian faith.

Service Projects

Christians are called to serve God by serving others, especially those in need. Confirmandi should participate in service to the parish, the wider community, and the universal Church.

Sponsor and Parish Mentor

Each confirmandi is to have a sponsor. It is also recommended that each young person be paired with a parish mentor who can provide encouragement when the sponsor cannot be present. Sponsors should:

- be at least sixteen years old;
- not be the confirmandi’s natural or adoptive parent (a parent or other baptized, confirmed Catholic may serve as a proxy if needed);

- be fully initiated into the Catholic Church (Baptism, Penance, Confirmation, and Eucharist);
- live a life consistent with the Catholic faith; and
- be free of any canonical impediment.

Sponsors, together with parents and family members, should continue supporting the newly confirmed in growing in faith, worship, charity, and service.

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Preparation for Confirmation is to include a communal Rite of Reconciliation for confirmandi, parents, and sponsors. Individual Confession is necessary to prepare the confirmandi to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation worthily.

Confirmation Name

Confirmandi should prayerfully choose their Baptismal name, a Christian name, or a derivative of a Christian name that reflects their faith. Choosing the name of a saint is encouraged. They should know the life and witness of their chosen saint or understand the meaning of the name in relation to the Catholic faith. Their patron saint becomes a lifelong friend and intercessor, inspiring them to grow in holiness.

Celebration of the Sacrament

Candidates should dress modestly and appropriately for the celebration of Confirmation. Hairstyles, jewelry, and clothing should reflect reverence and avoid drawing undue attention to oneself.

Confirmation Strengthens Us to Bear Witness

The Sacrament of Confirmation strengthens believers to bear witness to Jesus Christ. It is not a reward for what we have accomplished, but God’s free gift of grace that equips us to live as faithful disciples. With this grace comes the responsibility to cooperate with God’s love through word and action.

The Holy Spirit enlightens our minds to know Christ as “the Way, the Truth, and the Life” (Jn 14:6) and strengthens our hearts with the Gift of Fortitude to remain faithful amid life’s challenges.

Through the gifts of the Holy Spirit, the confirmed are empowered “to spread and defend the faith by word and action as His true witnesses, to confess the name of Christ boldly, and never to be ashamed of the Cross” (CCC n. 1303).



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Send Forth Your Spirit



**THE SACRAMENT OF
CONFIRMATION**





Why is the Sacrament of Confirmation necessary in the Catholic Church?

In the Sacrament of Baptism, we are reborn into new life in Christ by receiving sanctifying grace, a share in God’s divine life. Because Original Sin separates us from God, Baptism restores us to Him. Through Baptism, the Blessed Trinity dwells within our soul, making us adopted children of God and members of the Catholic Church.

At Baptism, the Holy Spirit enriches us with the three theological virtues—Faith, Hope, and Charity—which enable us to believe in God, trust in His promises, and love Him and our neighbor. We also receive the seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit: Wisdom, Understanding, Right Counsel, Fortitude, Knowledge, Piety, and Fear of the Lord. These gifts help us discern and follow God’s will, leading to a life of holiness, joy, and peace.

The virtues and gifts received in Baptism are given for our personal sanctification. In the Sacrament of Confirmation, the Holy Spirit strengthens these gifts so that we may become faithful witnesses of Jesus Christ, living our faith openly and courageously.

Today’s culture often tells young people that their worth depends on appearance, popularity, or possessions. The Gospel teaches the opposite: our true dignity comes from being beloved children of God, created in His image and called to eternal life. They also encounter a society that often values self-interest over self-giving love. Yet lasting joy and purpose come from loving and serving God and others—in friendship, service, and, for some, in the lifelong vocation of marriage. We were created by God and for God, and our fulfillment is found in knowing, loving, and serving Him.

The graces of Confirmation also strengthen us in the moral virtues of prudence, justice, fortitude, and

temperance. These virtues are guided by Faith, Hope, and Charity and perfected by the Gifts of the Holy Spirit. Included within temperance is chastity, which helps us honor the dignity of every person and guards against treating ourselves or others as objects.

The virtues and gifts strengthened in Confirmation are essential for helping young people know who they are in Christ, protect their dignity, and remain faithful disciples. Confirmation is not the end of faith formation or a graduation from religious education. Rather, it deepens the grace first received at Baptism and equips the individual for a more mature and public witness to Christ.

Parents, as the primary educators of their children, play an essential role in this lifelong journey of faith. In partnership with their pastor and parish community, they are encouraged to provide ongoing faith formation, opportunities for prayer, Scripture study, and friendships with other faithful Catholics. As young people grow in their understanding of the faith, they become better prepared to make wise decisions, defend what they believe, and confidently share the hope found in Jesus Christ. In this way, they continue growing toward the full maturity of Christian discipleship.



Guidelines for the Sacrament of Confirmation

Involvement of the Family

“In every program of religious education and in every Catholic school, the primacy of parents as educators in the faith is to be respected and stressed. Especially at the time of preparation for the reception of a Sacrament, parents should be fully engaged in the renewal of their own understanding of that Sacrament” (Synod V Acts n. 146).

Parents are the primary educators of their children in the faith. Their active participation in Sunday Mass, regular Reconciliation, daily family prayer, and Scripture reading helps foster a home where the Gospel is lived and faith is strengthened.

Period of Preparation

Young people need sufficient time to prepare for Confirmation so they can be open and receptive to the work of the Holy Spirit.

“Preparation for Confirmation should aim at leading the Christian toward a more intimate union with Christ and a more lively familiarity with the Holy Spirit—His actions, His gifts and His promptings—in order to be more capable of assuming the apostolic responsibilities of Christian life. To this end, catechesis for Confirmation should strive to awaken a sense of belonging to the Church of Jesus Christ, the universal Church as well as the parish community” (CCC 1309).

A minimum preparation period of one year is required. If the pastor deems it appropriate, preparation may be extended to two years.

As temples of the Holy Spirit, Christians are sanctified through His work. The Holy Spirit:

- Teaches us to pray to the Father.
- Inspires us to bear the fruits of charity.
- Heals the wounds of sin and renews us interiorly through a spiritual transformation.
- Enlightens and strengthens us to live as children of light.

Elements of Preparation

God created us to know, love, and serve Him in this life so that we may be united with Him forever in Heaven. We come to know the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit through the teachings of the Church and a life of daily prayer. We demonstrate our love for God by living the faith and serving our neighbors, especially those in need.

Canon Law emphasizes the importance of proper formation. Canon 885 §1 requires that Confirmation be conferred on those who properly and reasonably seek it. Canon 889 §2 states that candidates must have the use of reason, be suitably instructed,

properly disposed, and able to renew their baptismal promises.

Preparation should therefore provide a comprehensive formation that enables candidates to:

- Develop a more intimate union with Jesus Christ in daily prayer (CCC 1309; Synod V Acts n. 149).
- Cultivate a relationship with the Holy Spirit as well as have a more lively familiarity with His actions, His gifts and His promptings in order to be capable of assuming the apostolic responsibilities.
- Be committed to living a Sacramental Life, above all by participating in Sunday Mass each week and receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation frequently.
- Comprehend how to live life in the Holy Spirit.
- Affirm Church teachings organized under the heading: Theology of the Body.
- Study the norms regarding Marriage and the Christian Life, especially the issues that form a divide between young Catholics and their culture.
- Grasp the Church’s moral teachings on bioethical issues, in particular understanding the great harm and misery caused by abortion and contraception.

Personal Commitment

Candidates for Confirmation should recognize the seriousness of their commitment and participate fully in their formation. Confirmandi are expected to:

- Attend Sunday Mass faithfully.
- Pray daily.
- Live according to the Ten Commandments
- Attend all preparation sessions.
- Know the Apostles’ Creed by heart in preparation for renewing their Baptismal Promises during the celebration of Confirmation.