

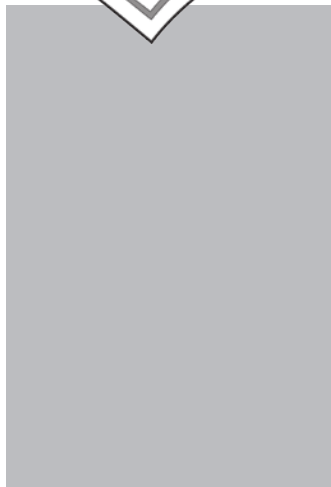
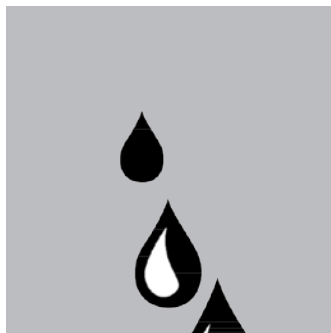


The Restored Order

Preparing for Confirmation and Eucharist

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Using This Resource

This material was originally offered in the *Eucharist: Do this in memory of me* Program Director's Manual as a special session for those parishes who celebrate the restored order of the Sacraments of Initiation. It has been revised and updated to serve RCL Benziger customers who use any one of the four RCL Benziger Sacrament preparation series:



Eucharist: We Give Thanks and Praise
(primary and intermediate)
Use this session after Chapter 1.

Eucharist: Do this in memory of me.
Use this session after Chapter 1.

The Gift of Eucharist
Use this session after Chapter 1.

We Celebrate the Eucharist
Use this session after Chapter 1.



It is truly our honor to serve you as you accompany children and youth on the formative journey that will lead them to fullness of life in the Spirit, to the rich banquet that is the Eucharist, and to their call to be Christ's disciples in the world today.



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For the Program Director

RESTORED ORDER: Preparing for Confirmation and Eucharist

These materials are for parishes that celebrate the restored order of the Sacraments of Initiation by celebrating Confirmation and Eucharist together or Confirmation prior to Eucharist.

This section includes:

- **Initial Letter to Parents**

- **The Restored Order:
The Historical and Theological Vision**

This handout can be given to parents and catechists to help them better understand the celebration of the restored order of the Sacraments of Initiation.

- **An Optional Lesson:
We Are Sealed with the Spirit**

—This lesson is included for those parishes that celebrate Confirmation and Eucharist together and would like an additional resource for their preparation period.

—This optional lesson is best used after the first chapter of all RCL Benziger Eucharist programs.

—The optional chapter for younger children begins on page 7. It is followed by guide notes for catechists and guide notes for parents.

—The optional chapter for older children begins on page 21. It is followed by guide notes for catechists and guide notes for parents.

- **Celebrating Confirmation**

- **Role of Godparents and Sponsors**

This handout can be used with parents and catechists.

- **Frequently Asked Questions**

This handout can be given to parents and catechists to help them better understand the celebration of the restored order of the Sacraments of Initiation.



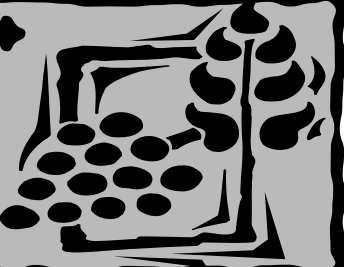
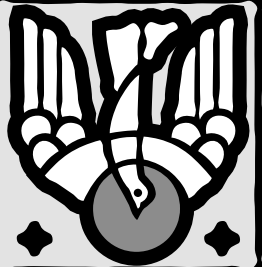
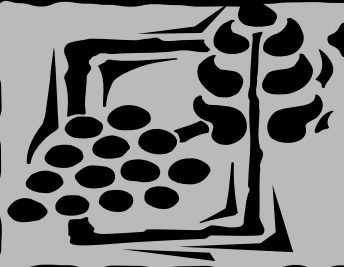
Dear Parents,

It probably seems like only yesterday that you presented your child for Baptism. At that time, the gathered assembly promised to journey with you as you brought your child up in faith. Today the community of faith continues to stand with you as you journey with your child through the process of preparing for the celebration of Confirmation and First Communion.

As parents, you have a unique role in the religious formation of your child. The Church views your role as both a privilege and a responsibility. It is within your family that your child has first come to faith. It is within your family that your child will continue to live out that faith and witness the daily example of Catholics.

Your child's Eucharist book provides many opportunities for you to share in this time of Sacrament preparation. Take time to review each lesson with your child, entering into discussion, and sharing in prayer and reflection on God's Word throughout his or her preparation for the celebration of Confirmation and First Holy Communion.

Enjoy the time you and your child spend together. Keep your child in your prayers as you, together with the entire Christian community, prepare to welcome your child to a lifetime of being nourished at the Table of the Lord.



The Restored Order: The Historical and Theological Vision

What is the restored order of the Sacraments?

Several dioceses in the United States have restored the order of the celebration of the Sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist. This means that Catholics who were baptized in infancy receive Confirmation *before* First Holy Communion, *not after*. The two Sacraments are most often celebrated at the same Mass. Confirmation is celebrated after the homily.

This restored order emphasizes the integral unity of the Sacraments of Initiation, with Eucharist as the culmination of Christian initiation (see *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 1212, 1275, and 1322).

Why do they call it restored order?

During the first five hundred years or so of the history of the Roman Catholic Church (and still today in the Christian churches of the East), the Sacraments of Christian Initiation were celebrated in an invariable sequence: Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist. And it was almost always the case that all three Sacraments were celebrated together at the same time, even with infants.

In 1910 Pope Pius X invited young children to Holy Communion with the one requirement: that they be able to distinguish ordinary bread from the consecrated bread at Mass. This change had one drawback: Confirmation as a Sacrament of Initiation was lost.

Isn't Confirmation a Sacrament of maturity that should come after First Holy Communion as a child grows older?

Although this is what many Catholics understand the Sacrament of Confirmation to be, Confirmation is actually the completion of Baptism through the fullness of the gift of the Holy Spirit. Celebrating Confirmation after Baptism but before Eucharist better expresses its role as the completion of Baptism.

It is also good to note that the maturity level required for receiving any of the Sacraments of Christian Initiation is only what is age-appropriate.

When we are used to a different practice after more than a thousand years, why is the Church now going back to the original sequence?

Restored order is more than just a fascination with the way it used to be. In fact, there are some very significant theological and liturgical reasons for restoring the integrity of the three Sacraments of Christian Initiation—all celebrated in proper order, even at the same time.

The RCIA (*Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*) requires that children and adults in the catechumenate receive all three Sacraments together, even if the children are younger than the age at which the Catholic children of the parish are routinely confirmed.

Putting the celebration of Confirmation between Baptism and Eucharist better expresses its role as the completion of Baptism. As a matter of fact, the Sacrament that is the culmination of a person's Christian initiation is the Eucharist, not Confirmation.

Theologically, it is the gift of the Holy Spirit given in all its fullness at Confirmation that best prepares one to receive Eucharist, and thus to be most fully joined to the Body of Christ.

Is it wrong, then, to be confirmed after receiving Eucharist?

No. The Church has many ways of celebrating the mysteries of God's love in the Sacraments. However, the *National Directory for Catechesis* 36A states: "Christian initiation is celebrated in Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist."



Faith Focus

What did Jesus say about the Holy Spirit?



Together as a Family

Share the Gospel story about Jesus reading from the scroll of the prophet Isaiah. One at a time, name the works that Jesus said the Spirit would help him do. Talk about ways that your family might continue those works.

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The Spirit of the Lord

In the Bible we read about Jesus blessing people. Read this Bible story. Discover how God blessed Jesus to help Jesus with his work on Earth.

One day Jesus went back to Nazareth, the village where he grew up. While he was there, Jesus went to the building where the people gathered to worship God. This building was called a synagogue.

When the time came to read the Scriptures, Jesus took the Scriptures and read to the people:

The Spirit of God is with me. The Spirit will help me to bring good news to the poor. The Spirit will help me to heal the people who are suffering and not free. The Spirit will help me to announce to all people that God always loves them and is always with them.

Everyone who was listening was amazed at Jesus' words.

Based on Luke 4:14–21

**Jesus read the Scriptures to the people.
What did Jesus say about the Holy Spirit?**

The Gifts of the Holy Spirit

God promised that the Spirit of God would always help us live as God's people. Jesus reminded his disciples of God's promise. He said that his Father would give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him.

The Holy Spirit would be our advocate (John 14:16). An advocate is always there to help people. The Holy Spirit helps every follower of Jesus and of the Church.

The Holy Spirit gives us seven special gifts to help us live as followers of Jesus. The Gifts of the Holy Spirit are wisdom, understanding, right judgment, courage, knowledge, reverence, and wonder and awe in the presence of God.



Faith Focus

How is the Holy Spirit at work in your life today?



What We See and Hear

The bishop or the priest delegated by the bishop extends his hands over the heads of those to be confirmed. Using this ancient ritual action, he prays that God the Father will bless the candidates for Confirmation by strengthening them with the seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit.



Together as a Family

Talk about ways that each of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit might help the members of your family continue the work of Christ. Pray to the Holy Spirit at family mealtimes and other family prayer times.

At the time of your Confirmation, the bishop speaks about the Holy Spirit and the Spirit's work in your life. He will use these or similar words:

*Christ gives many gifts to his Church.
The Spirit gives these gifts to the members
of Christ's Body, the Church. Use the gifts
the Holy Spirit gives you. Help people as
Jesus did.* Based on Rite of Confirmation 22

The bishop and all the priests extend their hands over those to be confirmed. The bishop asks God to send the Gifts of the Holy Spirit upon those who will be confirmed.

Next, the bishop places his right hand on top of the head of each person to be confirmed and anoints each person's forehead with Sacred Chrism, saying,

*(Name), be sealed with the
Gift of the Holy Spirit.*

The Holy Spirit teaches us and strengthens us to live as disciples of Jesus. We use the Gifts of the Holy Spirit to continue the work of Jesus.

How do the gifts God blesses us with at Confirmation help us live as disciples of Jesus?

What Difference Does This Make in My Life?

At Confirmation the Holy Spirit strengthens us with seven special gifts to live our Baptism.

Read about each of the seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit. Put a check next to the gift or gifts that can help you live as a follower of Jesus. Choose one gift and write or draw how it can help you to live your faith in Jesus Christ.


My Faith Choice

This week ask the Holy Spirit to help you use the gifts that he has given to you.

Wisdom

helps you to love God with all your heart.

Understanding

helps you to learn about your faith in God.

Right Judgment

helps you to make decisions to live the faith.

Courage

helps you to love God and others, especially when it is difficult.

Knowledge

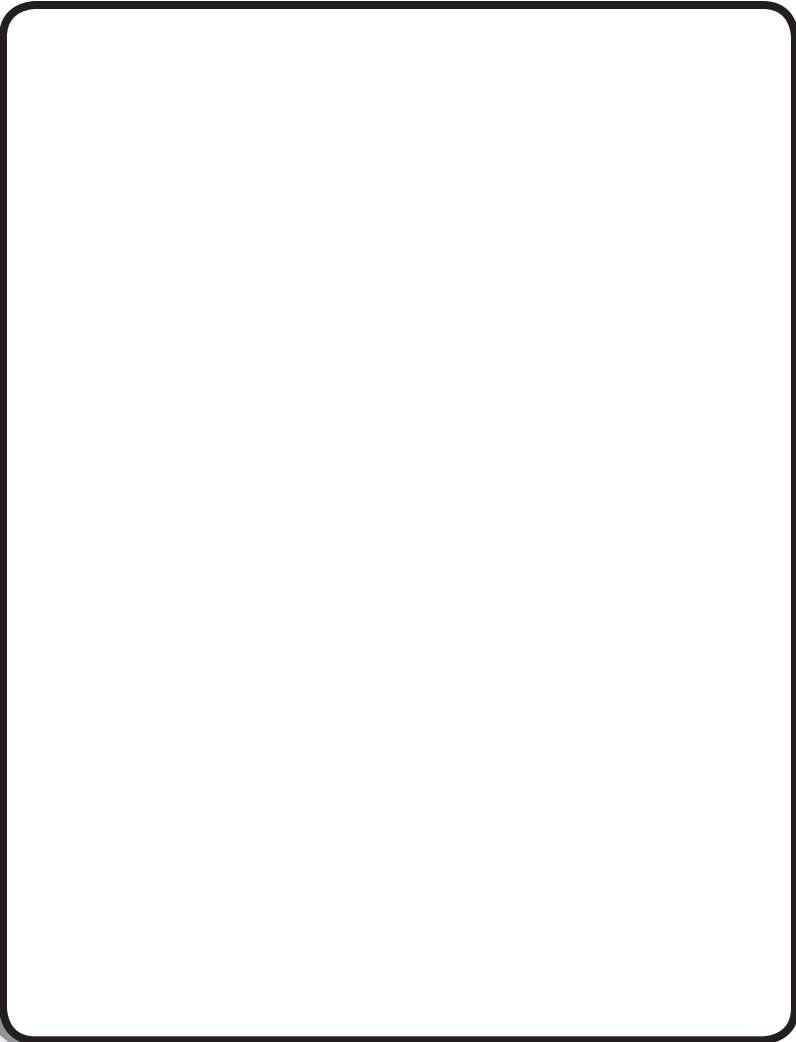
helps you to see yourself and others as images of God.

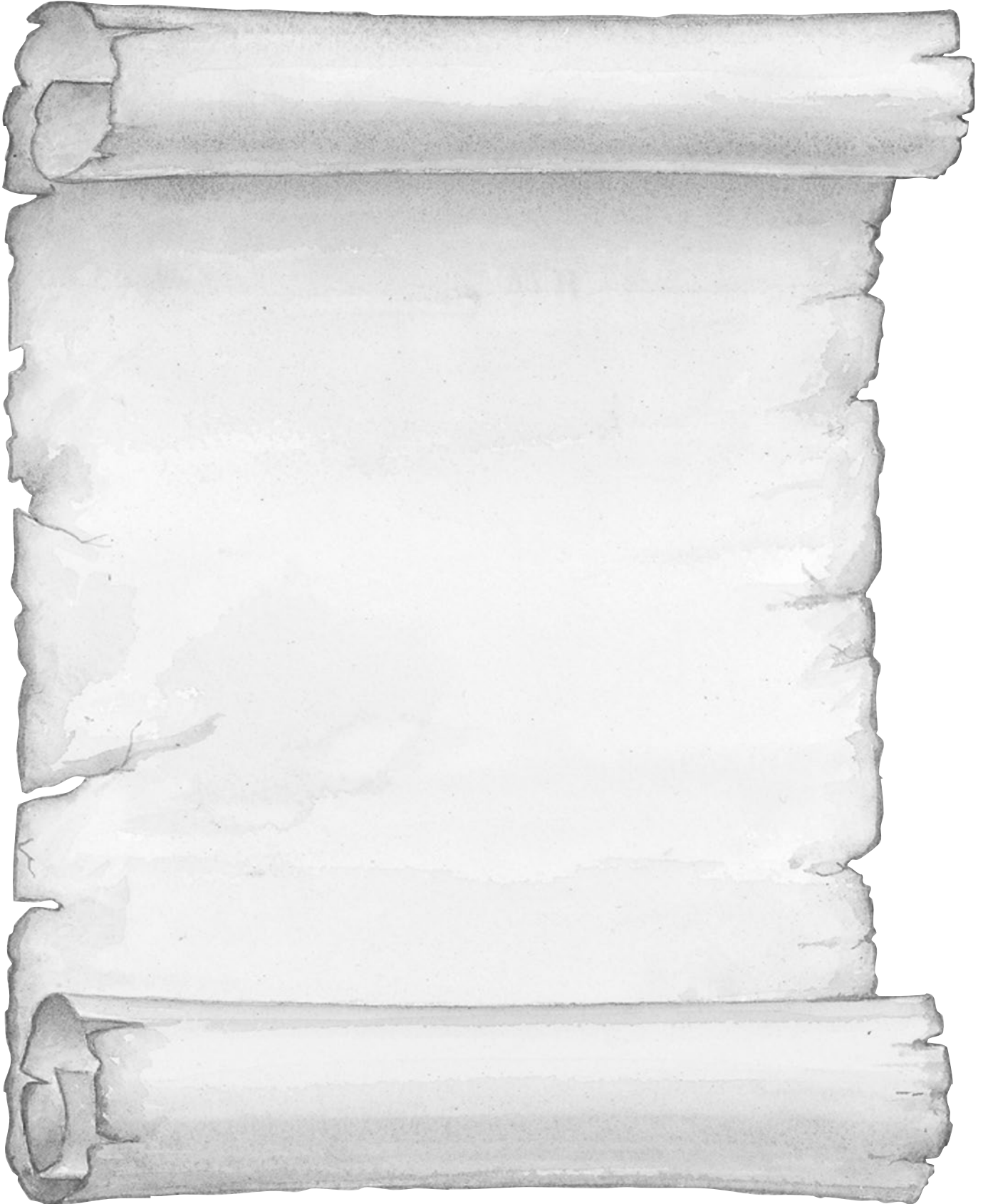
Reverence

helps you to honor and respect God, and all people as children and images of God.

Wonder and Awe

helps you to trust and obey God.







Together as a Family

Remembering Together

In this lesson your child learned that Confirmation strengthens us to live our Baptism. The Holy Spirit strengthens the baptized with seven special gifts to live as children of God and disciples of Jesus Christ. This week discuss these or similar questions with your child:

- What Gifts of the Holy Spirit do we see active in each member of our family?
- What Gifts of the Holy Spirit are most active in our family as a whole?
- What Gifts of the Holy Spirit do we need to work on as a family?
- How can the Gifts of the Holy Spirit help us live as a Christian family?

Sharing Together

Choose one of the following activities to do together or design a similar activity of your own:

- Place pieces of paper, with one gift of the Holy Spirit written on each piece, in a basket. Place the basket near the doorway of your home. Each morning have each family member take a piece of paper from the basket, read it, place it back in the basket, and strive to use that gift several times during the day.
- Name a situation in the world that you learn about from watching TV or a DVD that goes against what Jesus taught. As a family, talk about what Gifts of the Holy Spirit might help people to work together to change the situation to be more in keeping with what Jesus taught.

Praying Together

Pray this prayer or a similar prayer at family meals or at other family prayer times this week:

LEADER: Holy Spirit, gift of the Father and the Son,

ALL: be with us.

LEADER: Holy Spirit, our helper,

ALL: be with us.

LEADER: Holy Spirit, our teacher,

ALL: be with us.

LEADER: Come, Holy Spirit,
set our hearts on fire
with the power of your love.

ALL: Amen.

Getting Ready Together

Use [Celebrating Confirmation](#) (pages 33-37) to review the Rite of Confirmation with your son or daughter. Together review the assembly's responses and actions. This will help your child participate more actively and fully in the celebration of the Sacrament.

After the Celebration

Again use *Celebrating Confirmation* to go through the Rite of Confirmation with your son or daughter. Invite your child to talk about his or her experience. Share what it was like for you. Talk about what it means to your child to have been blessed by God with the Gifts of the Holy Spirit.



Visit the RCL Benziger Sacraments
Web site at RCLBSacraments.com

For the Catechist: We Are Sealed with the Spirit

Background

The Giver of Life

The Holy Spirit is the Giver of Life. We are incapable of faith without the Holy Spirit first awakening faith within us. We are incapable of being touched by Christ without the Holy Spirit first touching us. We are incapable of praying without the Holy Spirit's influence. We see the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the Church, in the Communion of Saints, in the forgiveness of sins, in the resurrection of the body, and in life everlasting. The Holy Spirit is truly the giver of life.

Remember how Jesus' mission was empowered? Referring to Isaiah the prophet, Jesus declared:

*"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me . . ."*

LUKE 4:18

In Baptism and Confirmation we are joined to Christ, and we are anointed and filled with the Holy Spirit. Confirmation completes Baptism and strengthens us to make Christ's mission our own. It increases in us the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, which are so necessary to living a truly successful life on Earth. The Gifts of the Holy Spirit keep our eyes focused on God. They guide us in remaining faithful to our baptismal promises.

More background: For further reading and reflection see *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 731–741.

First Thoughts

Gifts and Talents

We believe that every person is a unique creation of God. Each person: has a unique personality; a variety of gifts and talents, which Scripture names as charisms; and a personal call, or vocation, from God. As catechists we are privileged to assist the children whom God and their parents have entrusted to us.

Recognizing the Gifts of the Spirit

We need to see the children with eyes of faith; we need to listen to the children with ears of faith. We need to help the children become aware of the wonder of the gift of the Holy Spirit working in their lives, who helps them discover and develop and use the gifts that are such an integral part of who they are as children of God.



Overview



Faith Focus

The Sacrament of Confirmation strengthens us with the fullness of the gift of the Holy Spirit.



Objectives

After completing the lesson, the children being blessed should be able to:

- Describe their experience of the ritual action of having hands placed on the top of their head, having their name called, and being blessed.
- Retell and share their understanding of the Scripture story *The Spirit of the Lord*.
- Understand and appreciate more fully how the Holy Spirit is at work in our lives today.
- Understand what Jesus told us about the Holy Spirit.
- Appreciate the difference that the seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit can make in their lives.
- Choose to ask the Holy Spirit to help them use the gift that he has given to them.



Enriching

These are some additional resources for enhancing the presentation of this lesson and for helping families participate in the preparation of their children for the Sacrament:

- Either of RCL Benziger's *Eucharist* music CDs.
- CD player
- Scripture play [The Spirit of the Lord](#)
- Book

—*My First Holy Communion : Sunday Mass and Daily Prayers* (revised edition, 2011) by Melissa Musick Nussbaum (Liturgy Training Publications). An invitation to learn and love the words that we say and sing at Mass.



Materials Needed

Prior to meeting with the children gather these or any other materials you might need:

- [Handout pages](#) for the optional lesson, one set for each child
- Prayer table covered with a red cloth (optional)
- CD of instrumental music, and lyrics and music for a hymn related to the theme of the opening ritual
- CD player
- Bibles (one for each child, or one per 2 children)
- Photographs of the children (optional)



Visit the RCL Benziger Sacraments Web site at RCLBSacraments.com

Sharing the Holy Spirit

Celebrate

Opening Ritual

Gathering

Gather the group around the Paschal (Easter) candle in church. Invite everyone to settle themselves and to become aware of God's presence.

Alternative: Play a recording of instrumental music or an appropriate song from either of RCL Benziger's Eucharist music CDs. Gather the group in the prayer area around a table on which there is a large candle. Invite everyone to settle themselves and to become aware of God's presence.

LEADER: Let us begin with the sign of our faith,
the Sign of the Cross.

ALL: In the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

LEADER: God, our loving Father,
thank you for being with us always.
Open our hearts to the Holy Spirit.
Help us share the Gifts of the Holy Spirit
with others.
We ask this through your Son, Jesus Christ.

ALL: Amen.

Scripture Reading

LEADER: Let us ask the Holy Spirit to help us listen attentively to the Bible, God's own Word to us.

READER: A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

ALL: *Reverently make the sign of the cross on their forehead, lips, and over their heart and then say,*
Glory to you, O Lord.

READER: *Proclaim Luke 4:14–21. Conclude the reading, saying,*
The Gospel of the Lord.

ALL: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Reflection

LEADER: *Take the open Bible from the reader. Reverently close it and place it on the prayer table. Invite all to sit in silence for a few moments. Then continue as follows.*

RITUAL

LEADER: Luke tells us that the Holy Spirit came upon Jesus and anointed him. The same Spirit came upon us in our Baptism. The gift of the Holy Spirit will be strengthened in Confirmation. At your Confirmation, the whole community will pray that the gift of the Holy Spirit will strengthen you to live your faith in Jesus Christ.

Invite the children by name to come forward, one at a time. Lay both your hands on the child's head, saying, (Name), the Holy Spirit is with you.

CHILD: Amen.

Closing Prayer

LEADER: God, our loving Father,
we thank you for the Gifts of the Holy Spirit.
Help us remember to share the Holy Spirit
with others.

We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

ALL: Amen.

Opening Ritual: Sharing the Holy Spirit

Reflect

After celebrating the Opening Ritual, guide those present in a reflection on their experience of the ritual action of the laying on of hands. Invite responses to the question: What was it like for you when hands were placed on your head as the words “The Holy Spirit is with you” were spoken?

Discover

Facilitate the children’s connection of the experience of the ritual action with their daily lives. Invite responses to the questions:

- When have you been chosen for a special task? How were you chosen?
- God has given each of us special gifts. As Catholics we have been chosen to use our gifts to help others. How do you see people in our parish helping others?

Apply

- Explain that the Church uses two forms of the gesture, or ritual action, of the laying on of hands in the celebration of the Sacraments and the sacramentals of the Church. For example:
 - At the conclusion of Mass, the priest extends his hands over the people and asks God’s blessing on them.
 - During the praying of the prayer of absolution in Penance and Reconciliation, the priest holds his hand over or places his hand on the head of the penitent.
- Demonstrate the two forms of the gesture, or ritual action, of the laying on of hands.

Scripture: The Spirit of the Lord

Objective

Tell the Gospel story about Jesus reading Scripture in the synagogue at Nazareth and reflect on its meaning.

Connect

Continue to recall the experience of the Opening Ritual. Invite one or more volunteers to demonstrate the two forms of the gesture of the laying on of hands. Emphasize that this ritual action has been used by the Church from its very beginning.

Discover

- Present the opening paragraph on the handout [We Are Sealed with the Spirit](#).
- Read the Faith Focus question aloud to the children but do not invite responses at this time.
- Read aloud or have a volunteer read aloud the Scripture story, which is based on Luke 4:14–21.

Reflect

Invite the children to close their eyes and imagine that they are in the synagogue in Nazareth. They are listening to Jesus reading the Scriptures.

Ask and discuss:

- What do you see?
- What do you hear?

Apply

- Reread the Faith Focus question to the group. This time invite responses from several volunteers. Make sure all who wish to respond are given the opportunity.
- Create a Holy Spirit bulletin board. Use the words “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me” (from Luke 4:18) as the title of the display. Distribute materials so that each person can illustrate the bulletin board with their own choice of colors, symbols, words, and drawings to depict how the Holy Spirit helps them live as followers of Jesus. Alternative: Invite each person to attach a photograph of himself or herself around the title.

At Home

Point out the Together as a Family activity. Encourage the children to share the activity with their families.

Doctrine/Liturgy: The Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Objective

Help the children reflect on the celebration of Confirmation.

Connect

Present the opening paragraph on [The Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#) page. Share that while we do not see or hear the Holy Spirit, the Spirit is always with us, just as the Spirit was with Jesus.

Discover

- Have everyone turn to the Gifts of the Holy Spirit handout page. Point out the Faith Focus question and ask a volunteer to read it aloud.

- Present the next paragraph, which is about Jesus’ promise to send the Spirit. Print the word *advocate* on the board or on a flip chart. Ask for ideas on ways an advocate might help people.
- Share What We See and Hear. Then present the next paragraph, which is about the seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit.
- Briefly explain that the Gifts of the Holy Spirit help us live as followers of Jesus. After giving one or two examples (there is a description of each of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit on the What Difference Does This Make in My Life? page), present the text on the celebration of Confirmation.
- Invite volunteers to explain why God blesses us with special gifts at Confirmation.

Reflect

Invite an open discussion of the question “Why is it important to remember that God blesses us with special gifts at Confirmation?”

Apply

- Brainstorm ideas about what children their age can do to live as followers of Jesus.
- Distribute copies of the handout of the illustration of [the scroll](#). Invite the children to think of one thing they and several of their friends can do together to live their Baptism. Have them draw a picture of or write inside the scroll what they can do.
- Display the finished activities in a place for all to see.

At Home

Point out the Together as a Family activity. Encourage the children to share the activity with their families.

Together as a Family:

What Difference Does This Make in My Life?

Objective

Decide to put our faith into action and make a difference.

Connect

Summarize

Invite volunteers to share their understanding of Luke 4:14–21. Emphasize the presence of the Holy Spirit in the lives of the children and in the life of the Church.

Reflect

Share a story of a person, living or deceased, who is living or who lived their faith in Jesus Christ. Relate how one or several Gifts of the Holy Spirit may have helped that person. For example, the gift of wonder and awe helped Saint Francis of Assisi trust in God's love for him.

Respond

Discover

- Ask the children to turn to the [What Difference Does This Make in My Life?](#) handout on page 11.
- Read the opening paragraph to the children.
- Have the children look at the activity and read the directions to it. Answer any questions the children may have. Then have them complete the activity. When everyone has completed it, invite a sharing of responses.

Choose

Share the faith choice activity. Invite the children to pray to the Holy Spirit, asking the Spirit to guide them in making their faith choice.

Together as a Family

Ask the children to turn to the [Together as a Family](#) page. Review the ideas on the page with the group. Encourage the children to share the page with their families. Before you send the children forth remind them to visit RCLBSacraments.com with their families.

Sending Forth Ritual

Play the vocal or instrumental recording of an appropriate song from one of RCL Benziger's Eucharist music CDs. Then invite the children to gather in the prayer center. Remind the children that the Eucharist is the center of Christian life. Emphasize that they have been preparing not simply for their First Eucharist, but for a life of sharing the Eucharist and being nourished at the table of the Lord.

Use this or a similar sending forth ritual:

LEADER: Let us be aware of God's presence.

We have been blessed with
the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Let us pray:

With the gift of wisdom,

ALL: strengthen us, Lord.

LEADER: With the gift of understanding,

ALL: strengthen us, Lord.

LEADER: With the gift of right judgment,

ALL: strengthen us, Lord.

LEADER: With the gift of courage,

ALL: strengthen us, Lord.

LEADER: With the gift of knowledge,

ALL: strengthen us, Lord.

LEADER: With the gift of reverence,

ALL: strengthen us, Lord.

LEADER: With the gift of wonder and awe,

ALL: strengthen us, Lord.

LEADER: Let us pray:

ALL: Come, Holy Spirit.

Fill our hearts with the fire of your love.

And we will renew the face of the Earth.

Guide Notes for Parents of Younger Children: We Are Sealed with the Spirit

Background Reflection

The Holy Spirit is the Giver of Life. We are incapable of faith without the Holy Spirit first awakening faith within us. We are incapable of being touched by Christ without the Holy Spirit first touching us. We are incapable of praying without the Holy Spirit's influence. We see the outpouring of the Spirit in the Church in the Communion of Saints, in the forgiveness of sins, in the resurrection of the body, and in life everlasting. The Holy Spirit is truly the giver of life.

In Baptism and Confirmation we are joined to Christ, who was anointed by the Spirit (see Luke 4:18), and anointed and filled with the Holy Spirit. Confirmation completes the grace of Baptism and strengthens us to make Christ's mission our own. It increases in us the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, which are so necessary for us in order to live a truly successful life on Earth. The Gifts of the Holy Spirit keep our eyes focused on God. They guide us in remaining faithful to our baptismal anointing and promises.

Sharing Together

What You Will Need

These are the items you will need for this lesson. Take the time to gather them in advance of meeting with your child:

- [Handouts for the optional lesson](#), We Are Sealed with the Spirit
- Opening family ritual [Sharing the Holy Spirit](#)
- Table covered with red cloth (optional)
- Bible

What You Will Learn

In your time together your family will deepen its understanding and living of the Church's faith. The faith theme of this lesson is: *The Sacrament of Confirmation strengthens us with the fullness of the Gift of the Holy Spirit.*

What You Will Do

Follow these simple steps to join with your son or daughter in preparation for the celebration of the Sacrament.

- Preparation: Read and reflect on the background reflection.
- **Step One: Celebrate the Ritual**
 - Celebrate the ritual [Sharing the Holy Spirit](#).
 - Use the [Sharing Together](#) page of the child's handout for the optional lesson.
 - Invite everyone to share what it was like to experience the family ritual.
- **Step Two: Share the Scripture Story**
 - Use [The Spirit of the Lord](#) page of the child's handout.
 - Point out the Faith Focus question. Ask your child to listen for the answer as you read the Scripture story.
 - Read the Scripture story [The Spirit of the Lord](#) (Luke 4:14–21).
 - Read, discuss, and complete the rest of the page. Pay special attention to [Together as a Family](#).
- **Step Three: Discover the Faith of the Church**
 - Use [The Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#) section of the child's handout.
 - Point out the Faith Focus question. Ask your child to listen for the answer as you read these pages.
 - Read, discuss, and complete the pages. Pay special attention to [Together as a Family](#).
- **Step Four: Make a Difference**
 - Read, discuss, and complete the [What Difference Does This Make in My Life?](#) page of the handout. Encourage everyone to share a faith choice.
 - Read, discuss, and complete the [Together as a Family](#) page of the handout. Choose one activity from [Sharing Together](#) that will help you live out your faith as a family.
- **Conclusion: Closing Prayer**

Conclude your time together with a family prayer of your own choosing.

The Spirit of the Lord

Opening Ritual

In the opening ritual hands were placed upon your head. What was it like for you when hands were placed on your head and you heard your name and the words “The Holy Spirit is with you”?

Bible Background

The gesture of the laying on of hands was used both by people living in Old Testament times and by the early Christians. This gesture, or ritual action, had many meanings. One important meaning that this gesture had and still has is that it is a sign of the giving of a blessing or a special gift. For example, in Acts 8:17 the Apostles Peter and John lay their hands on the newly baptized Samaritans who then received the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Think About It

When do you see the Church using the gesture of laying on of hands?

Reading the Word of God

Use a Bible to look up and read Luke 4:14–21. Discover what the Gospel writer tells us about Jesus and the Holy Spirit.

Think About It

What does Jesus say about the work of the Spirit of the Lord, or the Spirit of God?

Understanding the Word of God

Luke the Evangelist tells us what happened in the synagogue in

Nazareth. Jesus stood up and read a description of his public ministry from the scroll of the prophet Isaiah (see Isaiah 61:1–2, 58:6).

Isaiah the Prophet—Next to the Book of Psalms, the Book of the Prophet Isaiah is the most quoted writing of the Hebrew Scriptures in the New Testament. This shows the importance of the message of the prophet Isaiah to the early Christians for their understanding of Jesus and his work.

The Spirit—*Ruah* is the Hebrew word that means “breath” and “wind.” In English “spirit” translates *ruah*. If you use the images of breath and wind to think of the Holy Spirit, you can get some idea of the Holy Spirit’s life-giving, powerful, yet mysterious work in our lives.

The Giver of Life—Other Old Testament prophets, such as Ezekiel, spoke about a divine spirit who would be poured out into the hearts of people. This spirit would be the source of new life for God’s people (see Ezekiel 37:14). We bring life to the world when we use the gifts the Holy Spirit gives us.

Think About It

How might the images of breath and wind and giver of life help you understand the work of the Holy Spirit in your life?

Jesus Christ most fully revealed the role of the Holy Spirit in our lives.



Faith Focus

What did Jesus say about the Holy Spirit?

The Gifts of the Holy Spirit



Faith Focus

How is the Holy Spirit at work in your life today?



What We See and Hear

The bishop or the priest delegated by the bishop holds his hands high and extends them over the heads of those to be confirmed. Using this ancient ritual action, he prays that God the Father will bless the candidates for Confirmation by strengthening them with the seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is like your breathing and the wind. The Holy Spirit is always present with us. The Spirit is constantly at work sharing the life and love of God with us and helping us live our Baptism.

The Holy Spirit, Our Advocate

Jesus assured his disciples that his Father would give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him. He promised that the Holy Spirit would come to them and be their advocate. An advocate is one who stands by a person's side, speaking for them, standing up for them.

Think About It

What are examples of times in your life that you might need the help of the Holy Spirit as your advocate?

The Holy Spirit Alive in Us

At the time of your Confirmation, the bishop will speak to you about the Holy Spirit and the Spirit's work in your life. He will use these or similar words:

The gift of the Holy Spirit which you are to receive will be a spiritual sign and seal to make you more like Christ and more perfect members of his Church. . . . Be active members of the Church, alive in Jesus Christ. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit give your lives completely in the service of all, as did Christ, who came not to be served but to serve. *RITE OF CONFIRMATION 22*

Those to be confirmed then renew their baptismal promises.

Celebration of the Sacrament

The laying on of hands and the anointing with oil are the essential ritual actions used in this Sacrament.

The Laying On of Hands—The bishop and all the priests present use the ancient gesture of the laying on of hands. They hold up their hands and extend their hands over those to be confirmed. The bishop asks God the Father to send the Gifts of the Holy Spirit upon those who will be confirmed. The Gifts of the Holy Spirit are wisdom, understanding, counsel (right judgment), fortitude (courage), knowledge, piety (reverence), and fear of the Lord (wonder and awe).

Anointing with Sacred Chrism—Then the bishop places his right hand on top of the head of each of the candidates, one at a time, as he anoints their forehead with Sacred Chrism, saying,

(Name), be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit.

The person being confirmed replies, "Amen." Then the bishop and the newly confirmed exchange a sign of peace.

Think About It

How does the Holy Spirit help you be more like Christ?

The Holy Spirit teaches us and strengthens us to live as disciples of Christ. We use the Spirit's gifts to us to continue the work of Christ.

We Are Sealed with the Spirit

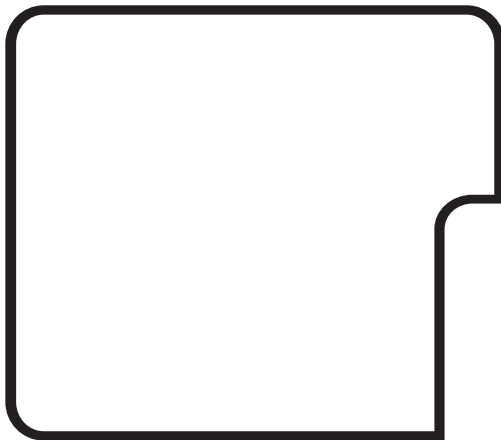
What Difference Does This Make in My Life?

At Confirmation we are sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit strengthens us with seven special gifts to live our Baptism.

Read and reflect on the description of each of the seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit. Choose one of the gifts. In the three panels, write about or illustrate a situation that shows how using that gift might enable a young person your age to live his or her faith in Jesus Christ.

My Faith Decision

This week ask the Holy Spirit to help you use the gifts that he has given to you.



Wisdom
enables you to value God above all creatures.

Understanding,
enables you to discover the meaning of the faith of the Church.

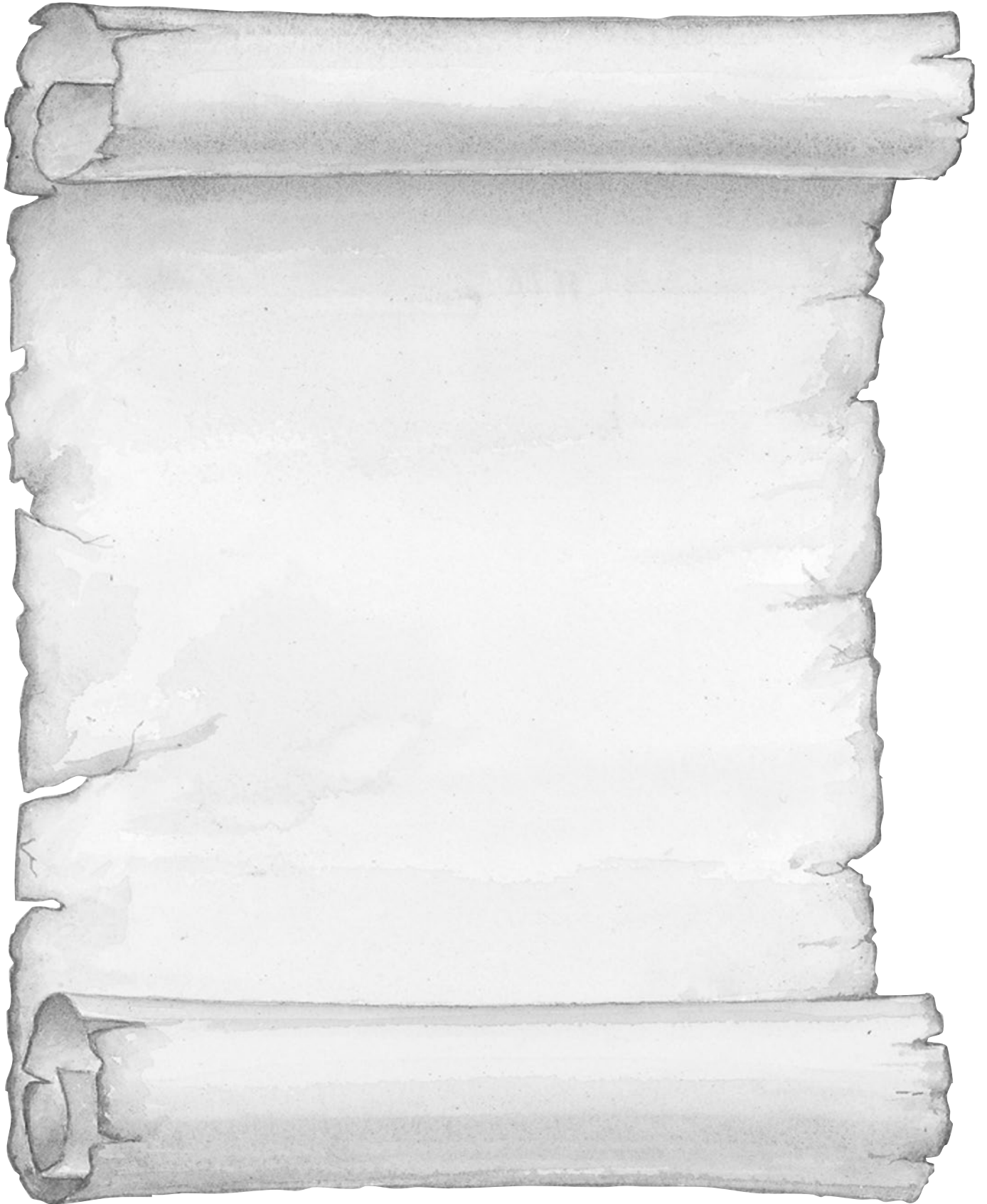
Counsel, or right judgment,
enables you to make practical decisions to live the faith.

Fortitude, or courage,
enables you to overcome obstacles that stand in the way of your loving God and others.

Fear of the Lord, or wonder and awe
enables you to acknowledge the greatness and power of God through your trust and obedience to God.

Piety, or reverence,
enables you to honor and respect God and all people as children and images of God.

Knowledge,
enables you to see God reflected in all creatures and to praise him.



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Together as a Family

Remembering Together

In this lesson your child learned that Confirmation strengthens us to live our Baptism. The Holy Spirit strengthens the baptized with seven special gifts to live as children of God and disciples of Jesus Christ. This week discuss these or similar questions with your child:

- What Gifts of the Holy Spirit do we see active in each member of our family?
- What Gifts of the Holy Spirit are most active in our family as a whole?
- What Gifts of the Holy Spirit do we need to work on as a family?
- How can the Gifts of the Holy Spirit help us live as a Christian family?

Sharing Together

Choose one of the following activities to do together or design a similar activity of your own:

- Place pieces of paper, with one gift of the Holy Spirit written on each piece, in a basket. Place the basket near the doorway of your home. Each morning have each family member take a piece of paper from the basket, read it, place it back in the basket, and strive to use that gift several times during the day.
- Name a situation in the world that you learn about from watching TV or a DVD that goes against what Jesus taught. As a family, talk about what Gifts of the Holy Spirit might help people to work together to change the situation to be more in keeping with what Jesus taught.

Praying Together

Pray this prayer or a similar prayer at family meals or at other family prayer times this week:

LEADER: Holy Spirit, gift of the Father and the Son,

ALL: be with us.

LEADER: Holy Spirit, our helper,

ALL: be with us.

LEADER: Holy Spirit, our teacher,

ALL: be with us.

LEADER: Come, Holy Spirit,
set our hearts on fire
with the power of your love.

ALL: Amen.

Getting Ready Together

Use [Celebrating Confirmation](#) (pages 33-37) to review the Rite of Confirmation with your son or daughter. Together review the assembly's responses and actions. This will help your child participate more actively and fully in the celebration of the Sacrament.

After the Celebration

Again use *Celebrating Confirmation*, to go through the Rite of Confirmation with your son or daughter. Invite your child to talk about his or her experience. Share what it was like for you. Talk about what it means to your child to have been blessed by God with the Gifts of the Holy Spirit.



Visit the RCL Benziger Sacraments
Web site at RCLBSacraments.com

For the Catechist We Are Sealed with the Spirit

Background

The Giver of Life

The Holy Spirit is the Giver of Life. We are incapable of faith without the Holy Spirit first awakening faith within us. We are incapable of being touched by Christ without the Holy Spirit first touching us. We are incapable of praying without the Holy Spirit's influence. We see the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the Church, in the Communion of Saints, in the forgiveness of sins, in the resurrection of the body, and in life everlasting. The Holy Spirit is truly the giver of life.

Remember how Jesus' mission was empowered? Referring to Isaiah the prophet, Jesus declared:

*"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
because he has anointed me . . ."*

LUKE 4:18

In Baptism and Confirmation we are joined to Christ, and we are anointed and filled with the Holy Spirit. Confirmation completes Baptism and strengthens us to make Christ's mission our own. It increases in us the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, which are so necessary to living a truly successful life on Earth. The Gifts of the Holy Spirit keep our eyes focused on God. They guide us in remaining faithful to our baptismal promises and lead us to the Eucharist.

More background: For further reading and reflection see *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 731–741.

First Thoughts

Gifts and Talents

We believe that every person is a unique creation of God. Each person has a unique personality; a variety of gifts and talents, which Scripture names as charisms; and each person has a personal call, or vocation, from God. As catechists we are privileged to assist the young people whom God and their parents have entrusted to us.

Recognizing the Gifts of the Spirit

We need to see the young people with eyes of faith; we need to listen to the young people with ears of faith. We need to help the young people become aware of the wonder of the gift of the Holy Spirit working in their lives, who helps them discover and develop and use the gifts that are such an integral part of who they are as children of God.



Overview



Faith Focus

The Sacrament of Confirmation strengthens us with the fullness of the gift of the Holy Spirit.



Objectives

After completing the lesson, the candidates being blessed should be able to:

- Describe their experience of the ritual action of having hands placed on the top of their head, having their name called, and being blessed.
- Retell and share their understanding of the Scripture story *The Spirit of the Lord*.
- Understand and appreciate more fully how the Holy Spirit is at work in our lives today.
- Understand what Jesus told us about the Holy Spirit.
- Appreciate the difference that the seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit can make in their lives.
- Choose to ask the Holy Spirit to help them use the gift that he has given to them.



Enriching

These are some additional resources for enhancing the presentation of this lesson and for helping families participate in the preparation of their children for the Sacrament:

- Either of RCL Benziger's *Eucharist* music CDs.
- CD player
- Scripture play [The Spirit of the Lord](#)



Materials Needed

Prior to meeting with the young people gather these or any other materials you might need:

- [Handout pages for the optional lesson](#), one set for each young person
- Prayer table covered with a red cloth (optional)
- CD of instrumental music, and lyrics and music for a hymn related to the theme of the opening ritual
- CD player
- Bibles (one for each child, or one per 2 children)
- Photographs of the young people (optional)



Visit the RCL Benziger Sacraments Web site at RCLBSacraments.com

Sharing the Holy Spirit

Celebrate

Opening Ritual

Gathering

Gather the group around the Paschal (Easter) candle in church. Invite the group to settle themselves and to become aware of God's presence.

Alternative: Play a recording of instrumental music or an appropriate hymn. Gather the young people in the prayer area around a table on which there is a large candle. Invite the young people to settle themselves and to become aware of God's presence.

LEADER: Let us begin with the sign of our faith, the Sign of the Cross.

ALL: In the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

LEADER: God, our loving Father,
thank you for being with us always.
Open our hearts to the Holy Spirit.
Help us share the Gifts of the Holy Spirit
with others.
We ask this through your Son, Jesus Christ.

ALL: Amen.

Scripture Reading

LEADER: Let us ask the Holy Spirit to help us listen attentively to the Bible, God's own Word to us.

READER: A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

ALL: *Reverently make the sign of the cross on their forehead, lips, and over their heart and then say,*
Glory to you, O Lord.

READER: *Proclaim Luke 4:14–21. Conclude the reading, saying,*
The Gospel of the Lord.

ALL: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

RITUAL

LEADER: Luke tells us that the Holy Spirit came upon Jesus and anointed him. The same Spirit came upon us in our Baptism. The gift of the Holy Spirit will be strengthened in Confirmation. At your Confirmation, the whole community will pray that the gift of the Holy Spirit will strengthen you to live your faith in Jesus Christ.

Invite the young people by name to come forward, one at a time. Lay both your hands on the young person's head, saying, (Name), the Holy Spirit is with you.

YOUNG PERSON: Amen.

Closing Prayer

LEADER: God, our loving Father,
we thank you for the Gifts of the Holy Spirit.
Help us remember to share the Holy Spirit
with others.
We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord.

ALL: Amen.

Opening Ritual: Sharing the Holy Spirit

Reflect

After celebrating the Opening Ritual, guide the young people in a reflection on their experience of the ritual action of the laying on of hands. Invite responses to the question: What was it like for you when hands were placed on your head as the words “The Holy Spirit is with you” were spoken?

Discover

Facilitate the young people’s connection of the experience of the ritual action with their daily lives. Invite responses to the questions:

- When have you been chosen for a special task?
- How were you chosen?
- How do you see people in our parish using their gifts to help others?

Apply

- Explain that the Church uses two forms of the gesture, or ritual action, of the laying on of hands in the celebration of the Sacraments and the sacramentals of the Church. For example:
 - At the conclusion of Mass, the priest extends his hands over the people and asks God’s blessing on them.
 - During the praying of the prayer of absolution in Penance and Reconciliation, the priest holds his hand over or places his hand on the head of the penitent.
- Demonstrate the two forms of the gesture, or ritual action, of the laying on of hands.

Scripture: The Spirit of the Lord

Objective

Tell the Gospel story about Jesus in the synagogue at Nazareth and reflect on its meaning.

Connect

Continue to recall the experience of the Opening Ritual. Invite one or more volunteers to demonstrate the two forms of the gesture of the laying on of hands. Emphasize that this ritual action has been used by the Church from its very beginning.

Discover

- Present and discuss Bible Background in The Spirit of the Lord section on the handout [We Are Sealed with the Spirit](#).
- Emphasize that from the earliest days of the Church the ritual action of laying on of hands has been connected with the giving of the gift of the Holy Spirit.
- Share the Faith Focus question. Proclaim or have a volunteer proclaim Luke 4:14–21.

Reflect

Invite the young people to visualize that they are in the synagogue in Nazareth. Jesus is reading from the scroll of the prophet Isaiah. Emphasize that Jesus chose this reading to describe his work on Earth. Ask and discuss:

- How did Jesus describe the connection between the work he was sent to do and the Holy Spirit?
- Why do you need the help of the Holy Spirit to do these works?

If journal writing is part of your process, have the young people write their reflections to the second question in their journals.

Apply

- Distribute the We Are Sealed with the Spirit handout. Present and discuss Understanding the Word of God, using the Think About It question.
- Create a Holy Spirit bulletin board. Include the words “I will put my spirit in you that you may come to life” (Ezekiel 37:14) and the traditional symbols used by the Church for the Holy Spirit—for example, water, fire, cloud, light, hand, and dove (see *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 694–701). Distribute materials so that the young people can decorate a bulletin board to express the Church’s belief about the Holy Spirit.

At Home

Encourage the young people to share what they have learned with their families.

Doctrine/Liturgy: The Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Objective

Help the young people prepare to participate in the celebration of Confirmation.

Connect

Print the names of the seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit on the board or on a flip chart. Present the opening paragraph of The Gifts of the Holy Spirit page.

Discover

- Have everyone turn to the Gifts of the Holy Spirit handout. Ask the young people to quietly read the Faith Focus question.
- Have each of the young people work with a partner to read and discuss the sections The Holy Spirit, Our Advocate and The Holy Spirit Alive in Us.

- Invite a general sharing of the individual group discussions.
- Present and discuss the section Celebration of the Sacrament.

Reflect

Invite an open discussion of the Think About It question that concludes the section. If journal writing is part of your process, allow time for the young people to write their personal reflections in their journals.

Apply

- Share the What We See and Hear.
- Involve the young people in an activity that will help them identify the gifts that others see in them and the gifts that they see in themselves.
 - Distribute copies of the handout of the illustration of [the scroll](#).
 - Tape a copy of the scroll on each participant’s back, including your own.
 - Ask everyone to walk around the room and write on each other’s scroll a positive quality that they see in that person.
 - Play a recording of appropriate instrumental music.
 - When everyone has completed the activity, have each person sit down, read the qualities listed in their scroll, and choose one of those qualities.
 - Conclude by having everyone write a letter to the Holy Spirit (in their journals if journal writing is part of your process), asking the Holy Spirit to help them use that gift to tell others about God’s love.

At Home

Encourage the young people to share what they have learned with their families.

Together as Family: What Difference Does This Make in My Life?

Objective

Decide to put our faith into action and make a difference.

Connect

Summarize

Invite volunteers to share their understanding of Luke 4:14–21. Emphasize the presence of the Holy Spirit in the lives of the children and in the life of the Church.

Reflect

Share a story of a person, living or deceased, who is living or who lived their faith in Jesus Christ. Relate how one or several Gifts of the Holy Spirit may have helped that person. For example, the gift of wonder and awe helped Saint Francis of Assisi marvel in God's love for him.

Respond

Discover

- Ask the young people to turn to the What Difference Does This Make in My Life? handout and read the opening paragraph.
- Have the young people look at the activity and read the directions to it. Answer any questions. Then have them complete the activity. When everyone has completed it, invite a sharing of responses.

Choose

Share the faith decision activity. Invite the young people to think about some of the situations that they might be dealing with. Encourage them to pray to the Holy Spirit before making decisions about those situations.

Together as a Family

Ask the young people to turn to the [Together as a Family](#) handout. Review the ideas on the page with the group. Encourage the young people to share the page with their families. Before you send the young people forth remind them to visit [RCLBSacraments.com](#).

Sending Forth Ritual

Play the vocal or instrumental recording of an appropriate song from either of RCL Benziger's Eucharist music CDs. Then invite the young people to gather in the prayer center. Remind the young people that the Eucharist is the center of Christian life. Emphasize that they have been preparing not simply for their first Eucharist, but for a life of sharing the Eucharist and being nourished at the table of the Lord. Use this or a similar sending forth ritual:

LEADER: We have been blessed with
the gift of the Holy Spirit.
Let us pray:

With the gift of wisdom,
ALL: strengthen us, Lord.

LEADER: With the gift of understanding,
ALL: strengthen us, Lord.

LEADER: With the gift of right judgment,
ALL: strengthen us, Lord.

LEADER: With the gift of courage,
ALL: strengthen us, Lord.

LEADER: With the gift of knowledge,
ALL: strengthen us, Lord.

LEADER: With the gift of reverence,
ALL: strengthen us, Lord.

LEADER: With the gift of wonder and awe,
ALL: strengthen us, Lord.

LEADER: Let us pray:
ALL: Come, Holy Spirit.
Fill our hearts with the fire of your love.
And we will renew the face of the Earth.
Amen.

Guide Notes for Parents of Older Children: We Are Sealed with the Spirit

Background Reflection

The Holy Spirit is the Giver of Life. We are incapable of faith without the Holy Spirit first awakening faith within us. We are incapable of being touched by Christ without the Holy Spirit first touching us. We are incapable of praying without the Holy Spirit's influence. We see the outpouring of the Spirit in the Church in the Communion of Saints, in the forgiveness of sins, in the resurrection of the body, and in life everlasting. The Holy Spirit is truly the giver of life.

In Baptism and Confirmation we are joined to Christ, who was anointed by the Spirit (see Luke 4:18), and anointed and filled with the Holy Spirit. Confirmation completes the grace of Baptism and strengthens us to make Christ's mission our own. It increases in us the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, which are so necessary for us in order to live a truly successful life on Earth. The Gifts of the Holy Spirit keep our eyes focused on God. They guide us in remaining faithful to our baptismal anointing and promises.

Sharing Together

What You Will Need

These are the items you will need for this lesson. Take the time to gather them in advance of meeting with your child:

- [Handouts for the optional lesson](#), We Are Sealed with the Spirit
- Opening family ritual Sharing the Holy Spirit
- Table covered with red cloth (optional)
- Bible

What You Will Learn

In your time together your family will deepen its understanding and living of the Church's faith. The faith theme of this lesson is: *The Sacrament of Confirmation strengthens us with the fullness of the Gift of the Holy Spirit.*

What You Will Do

Follow these simple steps to join with your son or daughter in preparation for the celebration of the Sacrament.

- Preparation: Read and reflect on the background reflection.
- **Step One: Celebrate the Ritual**
 - Celebrate the ritual Sharing the Holy Spirit.
 - Use the Opening Ritual section of the first page of the handout for the optional chapter to share what it was like to experience the family ritual.
- **Step Two: Share the Scripture Story**
 - Use The Spirit of the Lord section of the first page of the handout for the optional lesson.
 - Point out the Faith Focus question and together discover the answer as you proclaim the Scripture story.
 - Read and talk about the Bible Background section. Then read and share your understanding of the Scripture story Jesus in the Synagogue at Nazareth (Luke 4:14–21). Use the Think About It questions to guide your faith sharing.
- **Step Three: Discover the Faith of the Church**
 - Use The Gifts of the Holy Spirit handout.
 - Point out the Faith Focus question. Then read and discuss the handout, using the Think About It questions to guide your faith sharing.
- **Step Four: Make a Difference**
 - Choose to make a difference in your own lives and in the lives of others by living as followers of Jesus. Suggested activities are found on the What Difference Does This Make in My Life? handout.
 - Enrich your time together. Read and discuss the Together as a Family handout. Choose one activity from Sharing Together that will help you live out your faith as a family.
- **Conclusion: Closing Prayer**

Conclude your time together with a family prayer of your own choosing.



A Take Home Handout for Families: Celebrating Confirmation

The bishop is the ordinary minister of Confirmation. The bishop administers the Sacrament so that there may be a clear connection to the first pouring out of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost. After the Apostles were filled with the Holy Spirit, they gave the Spirit to the people through the laying on of hands. The bishop may, however, delegate a priest to administer this Sacrament. The priest delegated often is the pastor of the parish of the candidates.

The celebration of the Rite of Confirmation takes place within Mass after the proclamation of the Gospel during the Liturgy of the Word. Celebrating Confirmation within Mass expresses the clear connection between Confirmation and the other Sacraments of Christian Initiation.

Liturgy of the Word

Through the proclamation of the Word of God, the work of the Holy Spirit flows out upon the Church and upon all those who are baptized. The celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation begins after the Gospel reading.

The Liturgy of Confirmation

Presentation of the Candidates

The candidates for Confirmation are presented to the bishop, according to the local custom, after the proclamation of the Gospel. If possible, each candidate is called by name. The candidates are accompanied by one of their sponsors and stand before the celebrant.

Homily or Instruction

The bishop gives a brief homily, leading the whole assembly to a deeper understanding of the mystery of Confirmation.

Renewal of Baptismal Promises

The Sacrament of Confirmation completes our Baptism. Prior to the celebration of Confirmation the candidates renew their baptismal promises, which were made by their parents and godparents, if the candidates were baptized as infants. The candidates stand and the bishop questions them.



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BISHOP: Do you reject Satan and all his works
and all his empty promises?

CANDIDATES: I do.

BISHOP: Do you believe in God the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth?

CANDIDATES: I do.

BISHOP: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was born of the Virgin Mary,
was crucified, died, and was buried,
rose from the dead,
and is now seated at the right hand
of the Father?

CANDIDATES: I do.

BISHOP: Do you believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord, the giver of life,
who came upon the apostles at Pentecost
and today is given to you sacramentally
in Confirmation?

CANDIDATES: I do.

BISHOP: Do you believe in the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting?

CANDIDATES: I do.

*The bishop confirms their profession of faith by proclaiming the faith
of the Church.*

BISHOP: This is our faith. This is the faith of the Church.
We are proud to profess it in Christ Jesus our Lord.

ALL: Amen.



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The Laying On of Hands

BISHOP: *The bishop stands, faces the people, and with hands joined says,
My dear friends:*

*in baptism God our Father gave the new birth of eternal life
to his chosen sons and daughters.*

*Let us pray to our Father
that he will pour out the Holy Spirit
to strengthen his sons and daughters with his gifts
and anoint them to be more like Christ the Son of God.*

ALL: *Pray in silence for a short time.*

BISHOP: *The bishop joined by the priests who may be accompanying
him for the celebration of the Sacrament lay hands upon
all the candidates by extending their hands over them. The
bishop alone prays aloud:*

*All-powerful God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
by water and the Holy Spirit
you freed your sons and daughters from sin
and gave them new life.*

*Send your Holy Spirit upon them
to be their Helper and Guide.*

*Give them the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of right judgment and courage,
the spirit of knowledge and reverence.*

*Fill them with the spirit of wonder and awe in your presence.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.*

ALL: Amen.

The Anointing with Chrism

*Each candidate goes to the bishop. The sponsor, the one who presented
the candidate, places his or her right hand on the candidate's shoulder. The
sponsor or the candidate gives the name to the bishop.*

BISHOP: *The bishop dips his right thumb in the chrism. He makes the
sign of the cross on the forehead of the one to be confirmed,
saying, (Name), be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit.*

NEWLY CONFIRMED: Amen.

BISHOP: Peace be with you.

NEWLY CONFIRMED: And with your spirit.



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General Intercessions

The bishop leads us in praying for all people, using these or similar words:

- BISHOP:** My dear friends:
Let us be one in prayer to God our Father
as we are one in the faith, hope, and love his Spirit gives.
- DEACON:** *The deacon or minister then prays for all people.*
- ALL:** *We can respond to each prayer in several ways. For example, after each prayer, we might respond,*
Lord, hear our prayer.
- BISHOP:** *At the conclusion of the general intercessions, the bishop prays this or another prayer:*
God our Father,
you sent your Holy Spirit upon the apostles,
and through them and their successors
you give the Spirit to your people.
May his work begun at Pentecost
continue to grow in the hearts of all who believe.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
- ALL:** Amen.

Liturgy of the Eucharist

The Liturgy of the Eucharist is celebrated according to the Order of the Mass. Great importance should be attached to the saying of the Lord's Prayer. Those to be confirmed will recite it together with the assembly because it is the Spirit who prays in us and in the Spirit the Christian says, "Abba, Father."

Concluding Rite

Blessing

A special final blessing is used at the conclusion of Mass.

- BISHOP:** God our Father
made you his children by water and the Holy Spirit:
may he bless you and watch over you with his fatherly love.
- ALL:** Amen.



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BISHOP: Jesus Christ the Son of God
promised that the Spirit of truth
would be with his Church for ever:
may he bless you and give you courage
in professing the true faith.

ALL: Amen.

BISHOP: The Holy Spirit
came down upon the disciples
and set their hearts on fire with love:
may he bless you,
keep you one in faith and love
and bring you to the joy of God's kingdom.

ALL: Amen.

BISHOP: May almighty God bless you,
the Father, and the Son, + and the Holy Spirit.

ALL: Amen.

Prayer over the People

In place of the blessing, this special prayer over the people may be used.

DEACON

OR MINISTER: Bow down for the blessing.

BISHOP: God our Father,
complete the work you have begun
and keep the gifts of your Holy Spirit
active in the hearts of your people.
Make them ready to live his Gospel
and eager to do his will.
May they never be ashamed
to proclaim to all the world Christ crucified
living and reigning for ever and ever.

ALL: Amen.

BISHOP: And may the blessing of almighty God
the Father, and the Son, + and the Holy Spirit
come upon you and remain with you for ever.

ALL: Amen.



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Role of Godparents and Sponsors

What is a godparent/sponsor to do?

In many cultures the role of godparent/sponsor is part of a highly developed set of traditions associated with family and kinship ties of great importance. In other cultures, being asked to be a godparent/sponsor may be a flattering experience, but it comes with no significant expectations that any real responsibility is involved. Gone are the days when in the popular imagination the primary expectation of a godparent was to raise a child in the Catholic faith should both of the child's parents die.

What does the Church have to say about the role of godparents/sponsors?

It may be helpful to remember that originally there was no such thing as a Confirmation sponsor apart from the baptismal godparents, since both Baptism and Confirmation were celebrated at the same time. Only when the celebration of the two Sacraments became separated did the role of Confirmation sponsor evolve.

Even then there was a popular expectation that the same individuals who served as godparents at Baptism would function as sponsors at Confirmation. Today the Church encourages—but does not require—that those to be confirmed choose as their sponsor one of their original godparents.

In order to understand the role of godparent/sponsor, we need to divest ourselves of the very individualistic and privatized way of thinking about Sacraments that has become so commonplace today. The earliest (and best) tradition of the Church understood that Sacraments are public realities, that they are experiences that impact the entire community of faith, and that their celebration is always a communal occasion to celebrate the faith of the entire Church. The phrase “private

Baptism,” which is so easily used today, would be simply incomprehensible to a community that truly understood how every Sacrament affects the entire Body of Christ.

With such a perspective, it is easy to understand the role of godparent/sponsor as one who represents the larger community into which the candidate is being initiated. The whole community has a stake in this person growing into the fullness of Christ. And so it is logical to expect that a representative of that community would be present to support and encourage not only parents but the individual being initiated as well.

How can the role of mentor help us understand the role of godparent/sponsor?

Today the word mentor has many of the rich associations that godparent/sponsor once enjoyed. The Christian faith requires the development of skills for Christian living, and apprenticeship seems an apt metaphor for how those skills are best learned.

In a highly mobile society such as ours, it makes sense to choose someone with family ties for this role, since one's relationship to members of a local community are often likely to be disrupted by relocation. However, those chosen for the role of godparent/sponsor should understand that this is not just an honor bestowed because of family ties.

First and foremost, the godparent/sponsor stands as a representative of the larger Christian community, offering support in the faith journey of a lifetime, witnessing by example the skills required for a life of virtue, and coaching the person being initiated on how to grow into the fullness of life in Christ.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why is our parish celebrating Confirmation and First Communion at the same event?

In the early Church Christian initiation was celebrated together as a single event. The person was immersed into the waters of Baptism, anointed with Chrism, and shared in the Eucharistic meal. Over time, and for many reasons, the celebration of these Sacramental rituals became separated from one another.

In the renewal of the Sacraments that was mandated by the Second Vatican Council, the Church was invited to restore the celebrations of the Sacraments of Christian Initiation to their original order—Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist. This restored order helps us recognize that sharing in the Eucharist completes our initiation into the Church.

What does the Church say about linking these two Sacraments?

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* articulates the inseparable nature of the Sacraments of Initiation as follows: “Christian initiation is accomplished by three sacraments together: Baptism which is the beginning of new life; Confirmation which is its strengthening; and the Eucharist which nourishes the disciple with Christ’s Body and Blood for his transformation in Christ” (CCC 1275).

Doesn’t the Church require a certain age for Confirmation?

Both the *Rite of Confirmation* (11) and the *Code of Canon Law* (Canon 891) set the age of discretion (age seven) as the age for Confirmation. The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has named a broad range of ages—between the age of discretion (considered to be about age seven) and about sixteen years of age. Within that range, local bishops may determine their own diocesan policy. Thus, the age for Confirmation may vary from diocese to diocese, sometimes even from parish to parish.

Regardless of age, Confirmation is always a Sacrament of Initiation. The important thing to remember is that

Sacraments are not about age alone; they are about growing in faith, about sharing in God’s grace.

How will my child be preparing for Confirmation?

In the restored order Confirmation preparation is integrated into the preparation for First Eucharist. The close connection between Baptism and Confirmation is emphasized and the importance of Eucharist as the culmination of Christian initiation is recognized.

Will my child be learning about the Holy Spirit?

Naturally, as your child continues to participate in religious education, he or she will continue to learn more and more about the Holy Spirit’s action in our lives. Your child’s Eucharist book teaches about the power of the Holy Spirit and the special Gifts of the Holy Spirit. Just as your child was first empowered by the Holy Spirit in Baptism, your child will continue to grow in the Holy Spirit through the grace of Confirmation.

How will I know if my child is ready for Confirmation?

Readiness for Confirmation cannot be separated from readiness for First Eucharist, and Sacrament readiness is never just about learning; but, more significantly, it is about faith. As your child prepares for Confirmation and First Eucharist, here are three things to keep in mind:

- Sacraments are always a beginning. As your child matures in faith, he or she will grow in his or her understanding of Confirmation and experience of the Eucharist.
- The Eucharist is the culmination of the three Sacraments of Initiation. Your child is now welcomed as a fully participating member of the Church.
- At any age, completion of the Sacraments of Initiation—Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist—in no way signals graduation. Rather it is the beginning of a lifetime of being nourished at the table of the Lord.

Additional Resources: Preparing for the Scripture Play

The Scripture play can be used as another way to tell the story found in the Bible. Young people often read these stories from the Bible or hear them read. Their vivid imaginations can picture what the scene might have been like. Encourage the young people to use their imagination and take part in this play. Here are some tips for using the play:



1 Be flexible and creative.

You can make this play as simple or as involved as you choose. It can be adapted in many different ways depending on your group situation and the time you have. Reading a play gives several volunteers an opportunity to tell a Bible story. Young people can be assigned the various parts, and the play can be read in front of the group with minimal action and costumes. With a little planning, you can add costumes and simple actions and have the young perform the play. The play could be presented for parents or for other groups of children. As you read these plays, think of ways you can use them.

2 Enhance the script.

Young people love to use their imagination to tell a story in their own words. Encourage them to add some of their own dialogue to the play when it is called for.



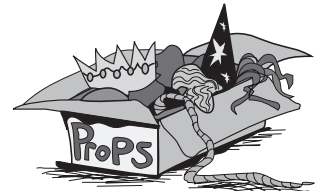
3 Consider costumes.

Simple costumes can be used for this play. Look around your home and you can find many things that can be used for costumes. Bathrobes and towels can easily be made into tunics. Old sheets and large pieces of material can be draped around the young people and fashioned into outfits and costumes. Large sheets of paper or paper bags can be decorated to make costumes that identify the characters. Having each young person decorate a hat with the name of the character is another way to identify each character in the play.



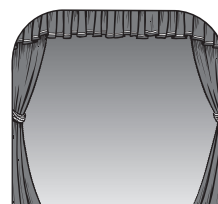
4 Add props.

Young people love to imagine and use make-believe things. Sometimes you can simply have the children imagine the props. Other times the props can be simple things that are easy to find, such as a tablecloth or a basket. Look around your room or your home for items you can use as props. Young people can also draw things that represent the props that are needed in the plays.



5 Set the scene.

Most of the settings can be simply imagined. If time permits, you may have the young people draw a background scene for the play on a large piece of mural paper. Often one young person holding up a simple sign can tell the setting of the play.



Additional Resources: The Spirit of the Lord (A Scripture Play)

Based on Luke 4:14–21

Speaking Characters Narrator 1
Narrator 2
Narrator 3
Narrator 4
Narrator 5
Jesus

Nonspeaking Characters Groups of townspeople
Townspeople of Nazareth

Assign the young people to small groups. Each group will represent a town in Galilee that Jesus visited. The group of people from Nazareth should be the largest group.

Narrator 1 Jesus was filled with the power of the Holy Spirit and returned to Galilee. News spread throughout the whole countryside that Jesus was in the area.

The people in each group are very excited as they talk together. Jesus walks to each group and spends some time with the people. The people stop talking and listen intently to what Jesus has to say.

Narrator 2 Jesus traveled throughout Galilee and in every village that he visited many people came out to see him. Jesus began to teach the people in their synagogues. He was praised by everyone.

Jesus walks to the largest group. All the people in this group are gathered in the synagogue to worship God. In a prominent place is a parchment scroll.

Narrator 3 Soon Jesus came to Nazareth, the village where he had been brought up. When he was there, Jesus went to the synagogue, the building where people gathered to worship God.

Jesus stands in front of the crowd of people. An attendant reverently hands him a scroll of the Scriptures. Jesus reads from the scroll of the prophet Isaiah.

Jesus The Spirit of God is with me. The Spirit of God will help me to bring Good News to the poor. The Spirit will help me to heal the people who are suffering and not free. The Spirit will help me to announce to all people that God always loves them and is always with them.

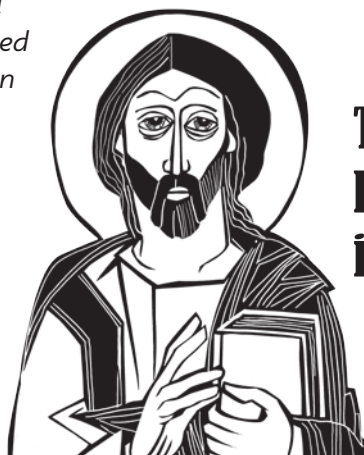
Narrator 4 Jesus then rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant. Everyone in the synagogue was quiet. They looked at Jesus and waited for him to explain the Scripture readings.

Then Jesus speaks to them.

Jesus Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.

People in the synagogue look at each other with an expression of surprise and amazement.

Narrator 5 Everyone who was listening to Jesus was totally amazed at his words.



**Today this Scripture
has been fulfilled
in your hearing.**

Prayer of the Faithful

The Prayer of the Faithful, or Universal Prayer, encompass the prayers of the community. Here are some suggestions of petitions for inclusion in your parish's Prayer of the Faithful during the time of Sacrament preparation.

PETITION: For the young people of the parish who are preparing for Confirmation and Eucharist, that, as they remember their Baptism, they will look forward to feasting with us at the Eucharistic table.
Let us pray to the Lord.

RESPONSE: Lord, hear our prayer.

PETITION: For the young people of the parish who are preparing for Confirmation and Eucharist, that, as they follow the Cross of Christ, they may grow in faith and love.
Let us pray to the Lord.

RESPONSE: Lord, hear our prayer.

PETITION: For the young people of the parish who are preparing for Confirmation and Eucharist, that, as they listen to the Word of God, they may be open to the presence of the Holy Spirit.
Let us pray to the Lord.

RESPONSE: Lord, hear our prayer.

PETITION: For the young people of the parish who are preparing for Confirmation and Eucharist, that they come to know God as the source of all goodness and blessings.
Let us pray to the Lord.

RESPONSE: Lord, hear our prayer.

PETITION: For the young people of the parish who are preparing for Confirmation and Eucharist, that, as they journey with us to the table, they may remember Jesus is always with us.
Let us pray to the Lord.

RESPONSE: Lord, hear our prayer.

PETITION: For the young people of the parish who are preparing for Confirmation and Eucharist, that, through the celebration of the Eucharist, they may be strengthened in their union with Christ and the Church.
Let us pray to the Lord.

RESPONSE: Lord, hear our prayer.

PETITION: For the young people of the parish who are preparing for Confirmation and Eucharist, that, as they are anointed and sealed with the Holy Spirit, they may remember to always share the Gifts of the Spirit with others.

Let us pray to the Lord.

RESPONSE: Lord, hear our prayer.

PETITION: For the parents, families, godparents, and sponsors of those preparing to celebrate Confirmation and Eucharist, that they may always follow Jesus and be an example for others.

Let us pray to the Lord.

RESPONSE: Lord, hear our prayer.

PETITION: For our parish community, that we may always bear witness to Jesus, especially to the children and young people preparing to celebrate Confirmation and Eucharist.

Let us pray to the Lord.

RESPONSE: Lord, hear our prayer.

PETITION: For the young people of the parish who have recently celebrated Confirmation and Eucharist, that, as they share the Eucharist with us each week, they may also share in the mission of Christ to the world.

Let us pray to the Lord.

RESPONSE: Lord, hear our prayer.

