

Confirmed in

grace

What can you do now that you couldn't do when you were seven? How are things different for you now? What do you like best about who you are now?

"Lord, send us your Holy Spirit to help us walk in unity of faith and grow in the strength of his love to the full stature of Christ." —*Rite of Confirmation*



Baptized in the Holy Spirit

While Apollos was in Corinth, Paul traveled through the interior of the country and came [down] to Ephesus where he found some disciples. He said to them, "Did you receive the holy Spirit when you became believers?" They answered him, "We have never even heard that there is a holy Spirit." He said, "How were you baptized?" They replied, "With the baptism of John." Paul then said, "John baptized with a baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, in Jesus." When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul laid [his] hands on them, the holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied.

Acts of the Apostles 19:1-6

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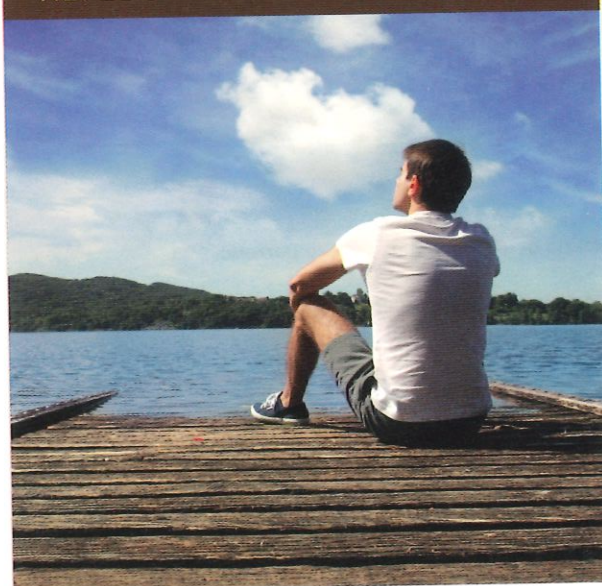
Understanding Scripture

Paul's mission was to preach the Good News of Jesus to the Gentiles. In the Scripture passage above, Paul meets some Jews who had been followers of John the Baptist and then followers of Jesus. But they had only been baptized by John, as Jesus had been. Their baptism of repentance by John needed to be completed by Baptism into the life, Death, Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus. With this Baptism they would receive the Holy Spirit. After they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, Paul laid his hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit. This gift was expressed in the wondrous acts they were then capable of performing.

Scripture and You

You were probably baptized as an infant and haven't thought much about it since then. Like the believers above, you may have taken your Baptism for granted. But in your preparation for Confirmation, you have been asked to think more seriously about what your Baptism means to you. You received the Holy Spirit at your Baptism, and he will be strengthened in you through the Sacrament of Confirmation.

REFLECTING ON GOD'S WORD



Take a few moments to quiet yourself. Imagine that you are back at the day of your Baptism. Your parents and godparents are there with you as the priest baptizes you. Give thanks to God for your Baptism and for the gift of the Holy Spirit you received at that time. Speak to God silently about whatever you would like.

As You Grow

Your life has changed as you've grown older and matured. You've learned things, developed skills, and become more independent. With this growth comes additional privileges and responsibilities. For example, very little was expected of you as a baby. But you were asked to do a great deal more as a seven-year-old, and even more now.

Spiritual Growth

Just as you grow in strength, size, and intelligence, so are you called to grow in the Holy Spirit. At Baptism you received the gift of grace, or divine life. As you've grown, you've been called to recognize God's love for you and the great gifts he has given you. Now you are ready to accept the responsibilities and privileges that are yours because of your Baptism. Now you have the opportunity to live out your anointing by the Holy Spirit, and to share more fully in the mission of Jesus.

Confirmation

Confirmation celebrates the gift of the Spirit that you received in Baptism. To be confirmed you "should be in the state of grace (that is, without serious sin), be well prepared by catechesis and prayer, and be committed to the responsibilities entailed by the Sacrament." (*United States Catholic Catechism for Adults*, Chapter 16) In Confirmation the Spirit gives you strength to live by God's teachings more fully, to imitate Christ more closely, and to express your faith more courageously. You are bound more closely to the Church in Confirmation so you must be ready to assume the role of disciple and witness to him. The whole community celebrates with you as you commit to Jesus and his Church. The community prays that the Spirit will bless you with the grace you need to grow in Christ. Confirmation is celebrated during the Eucharist to express more clearly the unity of the Sacraments of Initiation.

ART LINK



Holy Spirit, Cerezo Barredo, 1995.

Espiritu Santo, Cerezo Barredo, 1995.

The bishop is the ordinary minister of Confirmation. He receives the fullness of the Sacrament of Holy Orders and shares in the apostolic responsibility and mission of the whole Church.

The Rite of Confirmation

The Rite of Confirmation includes the following parts: the Presentation of the Candidates, Homily, Renewal of Baptismal Promises, Laying On of Hands, Anointing with Chrism, and Prayer of the Faithful.



The Confirmation Mass

Like other liturgical celebrations in which you have participated, the Mass for your Confirmation follows a set pattern. It begins with the **Collect**, or opening prayer.

Presentation of the Candidates

After the Scripture readings, you are presented to the bishop for Confirmation. You are called by name or as a group. By standing before the bishop, you give witness to your desire to declare yourself a Christian and to live as one.

Homily

After the pastor presents you to the bishop, you are seated and the bishop speaks to you and to the congregation in his Homily. In the Homily the bishop explains how the Scripture readings reveal a deeper understanding of the mystery of Confirmation.

Renewal of Baptismal Promises

At the end of the Homily, you publicly renew your baptismal promises by standing and affirming your commitment as a follower of Jesus. You are asked if you reject Satan and all his works. You respond, "I do" to this and to all the basic statements of what we believe as Catholics.



MY TURN Sending the Spirit

Any of the following can serve as the opening prayer for the Rite of Confirmation. Which of these prayers best summarizes what your Confirmation means to you? Why?

1. God of power and mercy, send your Holy Spirit to live in our hearts and make us temples of his glory.
2. Lord, fulfill your promise: send the Holy Spirit to make us witnesses before the world to the Good News proclaimed by Jesus Christ our Lord.
3. Lord, send us your Holy Spirit to help us walk in unity of faith and grow in the strength of his love to the full stature of Christ.
4. Lord, fulfill the promise given by your Son and send the Holy Spirit to enlighten our minds and lead us to all truth.



After your profession of faith, the bishop invites everyone to pray with him. He 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.*

Laying On of Hands

As the bishop extends his hands over you in the Rite of Confirmation, your parents, sponsors, and the entire congregation are united in focusing on one thought: Come, Holy Spirit.

The bishop prays,

*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.

MY TURN

The Spirit's Gifts

Which of the Spirit's gifts listed in the prayer will most help you? In what ways?

Anointing with Chrism

In the Rite of Confirmation, you come before the bishop with your sponsor, and your sponsor places his or her hand on your right shoulder. You or your sponsor tells the bishop your Confirmation name.

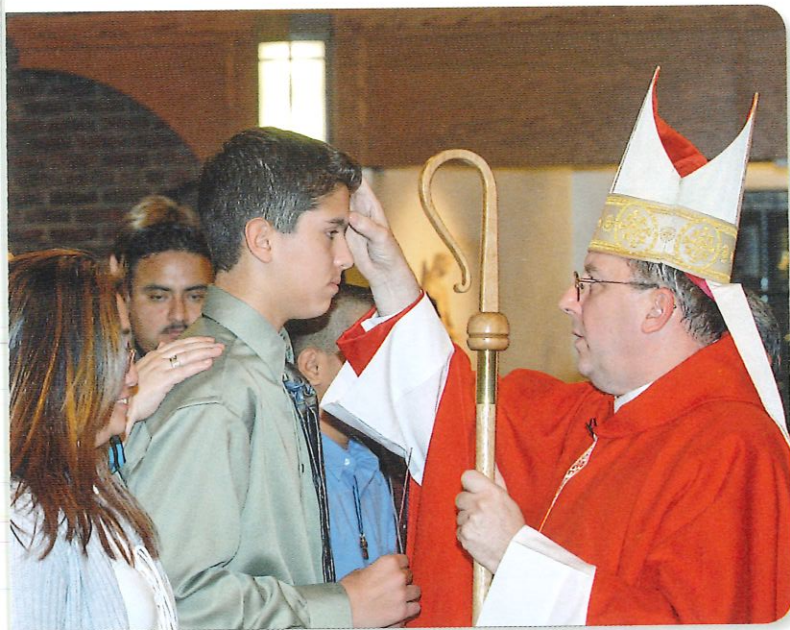
The bishop confirms you by anointing you with Chrism, done by the laying on of the hand, and with the words, "[Name], be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit."

You respond, "Amen."

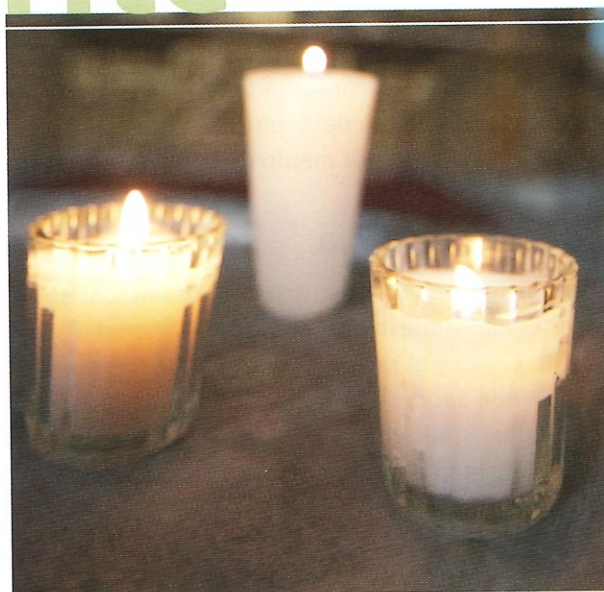
Then the bishop extends to you a sign of peace and says, "Peace be with you."

You respond, "And with your spirit."

With the bishop's anointing, you receive an **indelible**, or permanent, character that signifies the way you are sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit. The Gift helps you become more like Christ and commissions you to live your prophetic mission to be a witness to him in all circumstances and at the very heart of the human community.



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Rite

At Confirmation you receive and celebrate the transforming grace of the Holy Spirit.

Meaning

At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came to the first Apostles and appeared as tongues of fire above their heads.

Daily Life

The Gift of the Holy Spirit awakens in us new strength and purpose. We can tap into that strength whenever we are faced with a difficult decision or task.

Life of Faith

The Sacrament of Confirmation sets our hearts afire. We pray that we may use the gifts we have received, feel strengthened, give abundant fruits, and be faithful followers of Christ.

irmed

Prayer of the Faithful

The Mass continues with intercessions offered for all our needs. In the liturgy you and the other newly confirmed, who have been united in the Gift of the Spirit, are bound together in the worship of the Father through his Son, Jesus Christ.

The Mass Continues

You are joined more closely with one another in praying the Lord's Prayer, in sharing the sign of Christ's peace, and in receiving the Body and Blood of Christ in Holy Communion. When you participate in the Eucharist, you celebrate the life of faith that has been confirmed in you through the action of the Holy Spirit.

The Mass ends with a solemn final blessing prayer over all the people in the assembly. The bishop extends his hands over all and prays the following blessing, or one similar to it.

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.

Response: Amen.

Bishop: Jesus Christ the Son of God promised that the Spirit of truth will be with his Church for



ever: may he bless you and give you courage in professing the true faith.

Response: 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.

Response: Amen.

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

Response: Amen.

MY TURN Blessed by the Trinity

1. Review the prayer of solemn final blessing above. Write what each Person of the Trinity did for us or for the disciples.

2. Write what each Person of the Trinity will do for us.

Living Your Commitment

When you are anointed, sealed, and blessed in Confirmation, you assume the role of witness to Jesus in the Church and in the world. By cooperating with the Holy Spirit, you will grow in the knowledge and love of Jesus.

The effects of Confirmation are many.

- You are united closer to Christ.
- The Gifts of the Holy Spirit you received in Baptism are sealed and strengthened.
- You are filled with the Holy Spirit, who will help you accept the new responsibilities you have as a Christian.
- You are better able to participate in the worship and apostolic life of the Church.

What can you add to this list?

Your preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation is drawing to a close. Take time to thank God and your sponsor for supporting you and guiding you during this special time.



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WITNESS



Led By the Spirit: Saint Ignatius of Loyola

Ignatius was the youngest son in a noble family in Spain. He joined the military and defended his country for several years. At the age of 30, he was seriously injured in battle. During his recovery, Ignatius asked for some books to read. The only books that could be found were on the life of Christ and the lives of the saints. Reading and thinking about these lives moved Ignatius deeply. He contemplated his own life and experienced a religious conversion. Led by the Spirit, Ignatius decided to give up his military life, return to school, and dedicate his life to God. At the University of Paris, he met six young men who joined him in forming a religious community. They took the three traditional vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, plus a fourth vow of obedience to the pope. The community's main work was teaching; the priests became great missionaries and were a strong force in fighting false teachings. Today this community is known as the Society of Jesus, or the Jesuits. Ignatius taught that we can find God in all things; God is in everything we see, hear, and do. Saint Ignatius of Loyola's feast day is July 31.

Care for God's Creation

Saint Ignatius taught that God can be found in everyone, in every place, and in everything. When we learn to pay more attention to God, we become more thankful and reverent, and through this we become more devoted to God, more deeply in love with our Creator. Our faith has always urged moderation in the use of material goods. We must not allow our desires for more material things to overtake our concern for the basic needs of people and the environment. A life focused less on material gain may remind us that we are more than what we own. A greater awareness of justice and the common good and a renewed sense of restraint on our part can make an essential contribution to our care for God's creation.

God's Great Love

God's love is everywhere and in everything. As you complete your preparation for Confirmation, remember that the Holy Spirit is always with you, accompanying you on your faith journey.

Call to Prayer

You will soon receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. Your relationship with God will be stronger. Thank God for his guidance during this important time.



pray

God's Kind and Generous Love

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

Leader: As the day of Confirmation approaches, let us listen to God's Word and pray for one another.

... Paul traveled through the interior of the country and came [down] to Ephesus where he found some disciples. He said to them, "Did you receive the holy Spirit when you became believers?" They answered him, "We have never even heard that there is a holy Spirit." He said, "How were you baptized?" They replied, "With the baptism of John." Paul then said, "John baptized with a baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, in Jesus." When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul laid [his] hands on them, the holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied.

Acts of the Apostles 19:1–6

All: Thanks be to God.

Leader: Let us pray for all those preparing for Confirmation. May they remain faithful to God, give bold witness to the Gospel, and become heirs in the hope of eternal life.

Reader 1: For all of us, sons and daughters of God, that confirmed by the gift of the Spirit we will give witness to Christ by lives built on faith and love. Let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader 2: For our parents and godparents, who lead us in faith, that by word and example they may always encourage us to follow the way of Jesus. Let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Reader 3: For all members of the Church, that God, who gathers us together by the Holy Spirit, may help us grow in unity of faith and love until Jesus, his Son, returns in glory. Let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader: May the work of the Holy Spirit begun at Pentecost continue to grow in the hearts of all who believe.

All: Amen.

Leader: Today we celebrate the next step in building our relationship with God. Let us think about all we have learned and gained in growing closer to God through preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation.

All: Loving God, through your gifts we are prepared to serve as people for you and people for others. We are ready, Lord, to live out our responsibilities as confirmed Catholics.
Amen.

summary

FAITH SUMMARY

In Confirmation the Spirit empowers us to live God's life more fully and witness to our faith more courageously.

REMEMBER

What is the connection between the Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation?

The Sacrament of Confirmation perfects baptismal grace, affirms the responsibilities and privileges that you received in Baptism, and celebrates the gift of the Spirit given to you at Baptism.

Why does the Rite of Confirmation take place during a Mass?

When you receive the Eucharist, you participate in and celebrate the faith life that has been confirmed in you through the Holy Spirit. Celebrating Confirmation during the Eucharist expresses the unity of the Sacraments of Initiation.

What are the main parts of the Rite of Confirmation?

The main parts of the Rite of Confirmation are the Presentation of the Candidates, Homily, Renewal of Baptismal Promises, Laying On of Hands, Anointing with Chrism, and the Prayer of the Faithful.

Words to Know

Collect

indelible

What do you express when you stand before the bishop during the presentation of candidates?

When you stand before the bishop, you give witness to your desire to declare yourself ready to be a disciple and witness of Christ and to live according to his example of love for God and others.

What does the bishop do to confirm you?

The bishop anoints you on the forehead with Chrism and says: "[Name], be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit."

MY CONFIRMATION JOURNAL

Use your journal to enter more deeply into this chapter. Quietly spend time reflecting and recording on journal pages 71–80. Be sure to complete pages 81–83 at the end of your journal.

REACH OUT

1. How do you plan to "live out" your Confirmation? What are your hopes and goals as a Confirmed Catholic? How will you put into practice what you have learned? Write about it.
2. Below are some suggested readings for Confirmation. Which reading speaks the most to you? Why? Write about it.
 - Isaiah 11:1–4
 - Acts of the Apostles 1:3–8
 - Ezekiel 36:24–28
 - Ephesians 4:1–6

WITH MY SPONSOR

Arrange with your sponsor to share your insights, questions, and ideas from this chapter and how they relate to your conversations from the *Faith to Faith* magazine.

Loving God, through the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, we can better serve others. We are ready, Lord, to live out our responsibilities as confirmed Catholics. Amen.



review

CELEBRATING CONFIRMATION

Number the steps in the Confirmation Mass in the order they occur.

- _____ 1. Homily
- _____ 2. Readings from Scripture
- _____ 3. Laying On of Hands
- _____ 4. Prayer of the Faithful
- _____ 5. Renewal of Baptismal Promises
- _____ 6. Presentation of the Candidates
- _____ 7. Anointing with Chrism



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CONFIRMATION CROSSING

Use the clues to complete this crossword puzzle about the Rite of Confirmation.

Across

6. Three of these—Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist—initiate you as a Christian.
7. The bishop anoints you with this.
8. You become more like Christ when you grow this way.
9. The Spirit keeps them active in you.

Down

1. During the laying on of hands, the bishop _____.
2. You declare yourself this.
3. The Spirit helps you become more like him.
4. Confirmation takes place during this celebration to express the unity of the Sacraments of Initiation.
5. another word for the permanent character you receive

