

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

viii	<b>Abbreviations used for the Books of the Bible</b>	27	The Celebration of Baptism
viii	<b>General Abbreviations</b>	27	Matter
ix	<b>Foreword</b>	27	Form
x	<b>Introduction</b>	27	Minister
141	<b>Art and Photo Credits</b>	27	The Rite of Baptism
144	<b>Index</b>	29	The Necessity of Baptism
		30	Conclusion
		31	<i>Sidebar:</i> St. Francis Xavier (1506-1552)
		32	What's Next?
		32	Discussion Questions
1	<b>Chapter 1:</b> <b>Efficacious Signs of Grace</b>	33	<b>Chapter 4:</b> <b>The Sacrament of Confirmation</b>
2	Efficacious Signs of Grace	34	Review of Chapter 3
3	Defining Sacrament	34	The Descent of the Holy Spirit
3	Sacraments as Efficacious Signs	36	Scriptural Basis
6	Channels of Grace or Divine Life	36	Old Testament Roots
7	The Kinds of Grace	36	Instituted By Christ
8	Instituted by Christ and Entrusted to the Church	37	Celebrating Confirmation
9	<i>Sidebar:</i> Maximilian Kolbe, Saint of Auschwitz (1894-1941)	37	Who May Receive Confirmation?
10	Conclusion	37	Matter, Form, and Minister
10	Discussion Questions	38	Confirmation Sponsor
		39	<i>Sidebar:</i> A Good Soldier for Christ
11	<b>Chapter 2:</b> <b>Celebrating the Sacraments</b>	39	Effects of Confirmation
12	Review of Chapter 1	40	Conclusion
13	Why We "Celebrate"	41	<i>Sidebar:</i> St. Andre Bessette (1845-1937)
13	Visible Rites	42	<i>Sidebar:</i> An Examination of Conscience Based on the Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation
14	Proper Graces	42	What's Next?
15	Disposition Counts	42	Discussion Questions
16	Preparation Is the Key		
17	Christ and His Church as Sacraments	43	<b>Chapter 5:</b> <b>The Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, Part 1</b>
18	Conclusion	44	Review of Chapter 4
19	<i>Sidebar:</i> Bl. Otto Neururer (1882-1940)	45	Sacrifice: A Little Background
20	What's Next?	45	The Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist
20	Discussion Questions	45	Old Testament Roots
		46	Instituted by Christ
21	<b>Chapter 3:</b> <b>The Sacrament of Baptism</b>	48	The Real Presence
22	Review of Chapter 2	49	One Single Sacrifice
22	The Scriptural Basis for Baptism	50	The Eucharist as "Thanksgiving"
22	Jewish Rites of Purification at the Time of Christ	50	Conclusion
22	Baptism Prefigured in the Old Testament	51	<i>Sidebar:</i> St. Cyril of Jerusalem (ca. 315-386)
23	Baptism in the New Testament	52	What's Next?
24	The Sacrament of Baptism	52	Discussion Questions
26	Effects of Baptism		
26	Weakness Remains		

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>53 Chapter 6:</b> <b>The Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, Part 2</b>	<b>75 Chapter 8:</b> <b>The Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick</b>
54 Review of Chapter 5	76 Review of Chapter 7
54 Celebrating the Eucharist	76 What is the Anointing of the Sick?
54 Requirements to Receive Holy Communion.	76 Old Testament Roots
56 Why Can't Non-Catholics Receive Holy Communion?	78 Healing in the Gospels
56 Matter, Form, and Minister	80 Instituted by Christ
57 The Structure of the Mass	80 Celebration of the Anointing of the Sick
57 The Liturgy of the Word	80 Who May Receive the Anointing of the Sick?
57 The Liturgy of the Eucharist	80 Matter, Form, and Minister
58 Eucharistic Obligations	81 The Rite of the Anointing of the Sick
58 <i>Sidebar:</i> Examination of Conscience for the Eucharist	81 Effects of the Anointing of the Sick
59 Effects of the Eucharist	82 Conclusion
59 Eucharistic Adoration	83 <i>Sidebar:</i> Peter Claver (1581-1654): Saint to the Slaves
61 <i>Sidebar:</i> Pope St. Pius X (1835-1914): Pope of the Blessed Sacrament	84 What's Next?
62 Conclusion	84 Discussion Questions
62 What's Next?	
62 Discussion Questions	
<b>63 Chapter 7:</b> <b>The Sacrament of Penance</b>	<b>85 Chapter 9:</b> <b>The Sacrament of Holy Orders</b>
64 Review of Chapter 6	86 Review of Chapter 8
64 The Sacrament of Penance	87 What is the Sacrament of Holy Orders?
66 The Nature of Sin	87 The Common Priesthood of the Faithful
66 Mortal Sins	87 The Ministerial Priesthood
67 Venial Sins	88 The Priesthood in the Old Testament
67 Sins of Commission and Omission	88 The New Testament Priesthood Instituted by Christ
67 Penance in Scripture	89 The Order of Bishop, Priest, and Deacon
67 Old Testament Roots	89 Bishop
67 Instituted by Christ	90 Priests
68 Celebrating Penance	90 Deacons
68 Matter, Form, and Minister	91 Celebrating Holy Orders
70 The Rite of Penance	91 Matter, Form, and Minister
70 In the Western Church	91 The Rite of Holy Orders
71 In the Eastern Churches	91 The Eastern Churches
72 Effects of Penance	92 Effects of the Sacrament of Holy Orders
72 Conclusion	92 Conclusion
73 <i>Sidebar:</i> St. John Nepomucene: Saint of the Seal of Confession	93 <i>Sidebar:</i> Current Issues: Celibacy, Male Priesthood
74 What's Next?	94 <i>Sidebar:</i> Pope Bl. John Paul II: Deacon, Priest, Bishop, Pope
74 Discussion Questions	96 What's Next?
	96 Discussion Questions

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

97	<b>Chapter 10: The Sacrament of Matrimony</b>	133	<b>Chapter 13: Challenges To The Sacraments</b>
98	Review of Chapter 9	134	Review of Chapter 12
98	The Sacrament of Matrimony	135	How do we know Christ really instituted the Sacraments? Where are they in the Bible?
100	Old Testament Roots	136	Can't a person go directly to God without the help of the Church or a priest? Who needs the Sacraments?
101	Instituted by Christ	136	Can't God forgive us directly when we are sorry for sinning? Who needs Confession?
102	Celebrating Matrimony	137	Aren't the Sacraments just celebrations to mark significant moments in our lives?
103	Matter, Form, and Minister	138	What's wrong with my Protestant friend receiving Holy Communion in a Catholic Church or me going to communion at my friend's Protestant worship service?
104	The Rite of Matrimony	139	How do we know that any of the Sacraments really work? For example, if a person dies after receiving the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick, does that mean it did not work?
104	The Effects of Matrimony	140	Discussion Questions
106	Conclusion		
107	<i>Sidebar:</i> Married Witnesses: Georges and Pauline Vanier		
108	What's Next?		
108	Discussion Questions		
109	<b>Chapter 11: The Liturgy</b>		
110	Review of Chapter 10		
110	"Celebrating" the Liturgy		
111	The Origin of the Liturgy		
112	Actions of Jesus Christ		
113	The Lord's Day of Worship		
115	Where We Worship		
115	How We Pray and Worship		
117	Liturgy of the Hours (Divine Office)		
118	Conclusion		
119	<i>Sidebar:</i> St. Katharine Drexel (1858-1955)		
120	What's Next?		
120	Discussion Questions		
121	<b>Chapter 12: Sacramentals</b>		
122	Review of Chapter 11		
122	What Are Sacramentals?		
123	Holy Water		
124	Statues, Icons, and Other Holy Images		
125	The Rosary		
126	The Stations of the Cross		
128	Relics and Their Veneration		
128	Medals and Scapulars		
129	Pilgrimages and Processions		
130	Sacramentals in the Home		
130	<i>Sidebar:</i> Bl. Chiara Badano (1971-1990)		
132	Conclusion		
132	What's Next?		
132	Discussion Questions		

# The Sacraments

Source of Our Life in Christ



## Chapter 4

# The Sacrament of Confirmation



*Confirmation equips one  
for Christian maturity.*

## CHAPTER 4

# The Sacrament of Confirmation

### OPENING ACTIVITY

Incorporate Acts 8: 14-17 (see the text of this chapter) into the class's Opening Prayer.

Then write for a few minutes on what this passage reveals about the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Share responses.

### BASIC QUESTIONS

This chapter attempts to answer the following basic questions:

- ✦ What is the Sacrament of Confirmation?
- ✦ What is the Scriptural basis of the Sacrament of Confirmation?
- ✦ What is essential to the celebration of Confirmation?
- ✦ What are the effects of Confirmation?

### Focus Question 1:

How did the Jewish authorities' tactic of persecuting the first Christians have the opposite than intended effect?

### GUIDED EXERCISE

For your eyes only write for a few minutes about a situation you have been in or could be in, in which it would be difficult for you to live the Faith well.

### Review of Chapter 3:

- ✦ Baptism was prefigured in the Old Testament, most notably in the saving of Noah in the flood waters and in the Israelites' journey across the Red Sea. The word "baptize" comes from a Greek translation of a Hebrew word meaning "to plunge" and is applied to other religious rites.
- ✦ St. John the Baptist would baptize people as a symbol of their repentance; Christ would later institute the Sacrament of Baptism and command his Apostles to "make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."
- ✦ Water and the words of Baptism are the form and matter of the Sacrament. The ordinary minister is a priest or deacon, but anyone can baptize in an emergency as long as they do so with the right intention.
- ✦ Baptism cleanses us of all sin, including Original Sin; makes us members of the Church and of the Body of Christ; infuses us with the theological and moral virtues; makes us children of God; and gives us sanctifying grace, a share in the divine life, so that we may enter eternal life.

*In this chapter, we will study the Sacrament of Confirmation,  
another of the three Sacraments of Initiation.*

## THE DESCENT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

**H**ave you ever tried to put out a blazing fire? If a person were to make the mistake of merely stomping on the glowing embers, he or she might only send sparks flying in all directions. Instead of putting out one fire, many others could be started, and the flames would soon spread out of control.

This is similar to what happened as the result of the persecution of the first Christians.

After St. Stephen was stoned to death, the Jewish authorities increased the severity of their persecution of the followers of Christ. This caused most of the disciples to flee Jerusalem, with only the Apostles remaining behind.

So the dispersion of the followers of Christ led to the dispersion of the message of Christ. The disciples who fled Jerusalem were like the stomped-upon embers that set afire whatever they touched. To wherever they fled, they spread the Good News of salvation in spite of the constant threat to their very lives.

How could they do this? The "fire" that they possessed was the fire of the Holy Spirit they had received at Pentecost.

The deacon Philip went to Samaria, the territory between Judah and Galilee inhabited by the Samaritans, a people the Jews considered pagans and heretics. Philip preached the Gospel to them and worked wonders, healing many. Large numbers accepted his message and were baptized.



*The Martyrdom of St. Stephen by Stella.*

To be a follower of Christ—then and now—requires special grace and strength. The Sacrament of Confirmation gives one this special spiritual strength.

As St. Luke tells us:

Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent to them Peter and John, who came down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit; for it had not yet fallen on any of them, but they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit. (Acts 8: 14-17)

The Apostles wanted the Samaritan converts to have the gift of the Holy Spirit which they themselves had received at Pentecost. They wanted them to receive what we now call the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Confirmation is the Sacrament of Initiation by which God passes on the grace of Pentecost and perfects the grace received in Baptism. Whereas in Baptism we received a share in the divine life and the theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity (love), in Confirmation we receive increased gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit, which strengthen us to serve the Church and draw others to the friendship of God.

These gifts of strength are vital. The Jewish authorities tried to crush the newborn Church. For the next three centuries, the Roman authorities did the same thing as the Church spread. Throughout history, various régimes, governments, and other religions have tried to destroy the Church.

In many places in the world today, Christians are still severely persecuted, even put to death. In Western countries including the United States, the Church and faithful Catholics are often criticized for defending the teachings of Jesus Christ in respect to human life, marriage, war, and our obligation to the poor. To be a follower of Christ—then and now—requires special grace and strength. The Sacrament of Confirmation gives one this spiritual strength to defend and promote faith in Jesus Christ.

## KEY IDEAS

The key ideas of this chapter are:

- ✦ Confirmation is the second of the Sacraments of Initiation.
- ✦ Christ promised his Church the gift of the Holy Spirit and gave it to her at Pentecost. The Apostles conferred this gift to new converts through the laying on of hands.
- ✦ In Confirmation, the matter is anointing with Sacred Chrism and the laying on of hands; the form is the pronouncement of the words, "Be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit"; and the minister is the bishop or a delegated priest.
- ✦ Confirmation completes the graces of Baptism by a special outpouring of the gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit, seals or confirms the baptized in union with Christ, and equips them for apostolic life in the Church.

## Focus Question 2:

What did the Apostles Peter and John do for the new Christians in Samaria?

## Focus Question 3:

What graces does a person receive in the Sacrament of Confirmation?

## Focus Question 4:

Why is it necessary for Christians to be strengthened by the Holy Spirit?



*Sts. Peter and John Laying Their Hands upon the People.*

### Focus Question 5:

What is an Old Testament prophecy of Confirmation?

### Focus Question 6:

When did Isaiah's prophecy come true?

### Focus Question 7:

When did Christ institute Confirmation?

### FROM YouCat

*What is Confirmation?*

Confirmation is the sacrament that completes Baptism; in it the gift of the Holy Spirit is bestowed upon us. Anyone who freely decides to live a life as God's child and asks for God's Spirit under the signs of the imposition of hands and anointing with chrism receives the strength to witness to God's love and might in word and deed. He is now a fullfledged, responsible member of the Catholic Church. [1285–1314]

When a coach sends a soccer player onto the playing field, he puts his hand on his shoulder and gives him final instructions. We can understand Confirmation in a similar way. A hand is placed upon us. We step out onto the field of life. Through the Holy Spirit we know what we have to do and we have been given the power to do it. He has motivated us. His mission resounds in our ears. We sense his help. We will not betray his trust or disappoint him; we will win the game for him. We just have to want to do it and listen to him. 119, 120 (*YouCat* 203)

*All Christians seeking to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation normally undergo a period of preparation and catechesis.*



Pentecost by Zurbaran.

"You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you;..." (Acts 1:8)

## SCRIPTURAL BASIS

### Old Testament Roots

**I**saiah prophesied that the Spirit of the Lord would come to rest upon the Messiah, endowing him with important qualities.

**The Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him,  
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,  
the spirit of counsel and might,  
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.  
And his delight shall be in the fear of the LORD. (Is 11: 2-3)**

This prophecy was fulfilled when Christ was conceived by the Holy Spirit and was made visible at his Baptism in the Jordan, when the Holy Spirit descended upon him in the form of a dove (cf. Mt 3: 13-17; Lk 3: 21-22).

### Instituted by Christ

Christ promised an outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon his people. For example, he said to his Apostles:

**You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth. (Acts 1: 8)**

This promise was fulfilled at Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit descended upon the Apostles "as tongues of fire" (Acts 2: 3). This gave them the courage to preach the Good News to all people.

As we have seen, Sts. Peter and John went to Samaria after they heard how many people there were accepting Christ. These new disciples had "only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus," so upon their arrival, the two Apostles prayed that these Christians would receive the Holy Spirit "for it had not yet fallen on any of them." Then, "they laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit." Thus, in the Acts of the Apostles, we see that Baptism by water and Confirmation by the laying on of hands are distinct realities.



## CELEBRATING CONFIRMATION

In the Eastern Churches—such as the Byzantine, Maronite, or Chaldean Catholic Churches, which are in union with the Pope and are fully part of the Catholic Church but whose liturgies and rites underwent separate historical developments—infants and small children receive all three Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Confirmation or Chrismation, and the Eucharist) at the same time. In the Latin (Roman Catholic) Rite, under ordinary circumstances, Confirmation is typically deferred until the Baptized has reached the “age of reason,” at seven years of age or older. In fact, it is often the last Sacrament of Initiation to be received, although in some dioceses the original order of Baptism, Confirmation, and First Communion has been restored. Adult catechumens who have not previously been baptized generally receive all of the Sacraments of Initiation at once. The Mass of the Easter Vigil is traditionally an occasion for welcoming converts and catechumens through the Sacraments of Initiation.

**Who may receive Confirmation?** Every baptized person who has not received this Sacrament and has reached the age determined by the bishop of his or her diocese can and should be confirmed in order to complete his or her initiation into the Church.

In the Western Church, the recipient of Confirmation—called the *confirmand*—should normally have reached the age of reason (approximately seven), but the precise age of reception is left to the discretion of the local bishop. The expectation is that the confirmand is capable of spiritual maturity and has the will, with the help of grace, to act as Christ wishes, even in difficult situations.

However, every Christian in danger of death who has not received Confirmation (including infants) should receive this Sacrament. Those who have attained the age of reason should be in the state of grace, meaning they should not be guilty of any unforgiven mortal sins. They should also have the proper intention to receive Confirmation, so they are receiving it freely.

All Christians seeking to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation normally undergo a period of preparation and catechesis.

*Preparation for Confirmation should aim at leading the Christian toward a more intimate union with Christ and a more lively familiarity with the Holy Spirit—his actions, his gifts, and his bidings—in order to be more capable of assuming the apostolic responsibilities of Christian life. To this end catechesis for Confirmation should strive to awaken a sense of belonging to the Church of Jesus Christ, the universal Church as well as the parish community. The latter bears special responsibility for the preparation of confirmands.<sup>1</sup> (CCC 1309)*

Just as in the case of infant Baptism, with infant Confirmation this catechesis takes place as the child and young person matures.

**Matter, form, and minister.** The *matter* of Confirmation is the Sacred Chrism (called *myron* in the Eastern Churches) used to anoint the confirmand on the forehead, and the laying on of hands. The Sacred Chrism is the same used in Baptism and thus signals the connection between Baptism and Confirmation as a “double Sacrament” (in the words of St. Cyprian). The chrism is consecrated by the bishop for use throughout the diocese during the annual Chrism Mass on Holy Thursday. As in Baptism, the Sacred Chrism signifies the gift of the Holy Spirit. The prophet Isaiah said anointing with oil is a sign of abundance and joy, an “oil of gladness instead of mourning” (Is 61: 3).

### Focus Question 8:

In the Eastern Churches, when is Confirmation normally administered?

### Focus Question 9:

In the Western Church, when is Confirmation normally administered?

### Focus Question 10:

When are the three Sacraments of Initiation received together in the Western Church?

### Focus Question 11:

Who may receive Confirmation?

### Focus Question 12:

Is it necessary to go to Confession before receiving Confirmation?

### Focus Question 13:

When does Confirmation catechesis take place?

## VOCABULARY

### CONFIRMAND

A person preparing to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation.

### Focus Question 14:

What is the *matter* of Confirmation?



As in Baptism, the Sacred Chrism signifies the gift of the Holy Spirit.



**FROM YouCat**

Who can be confirmed, and what is required of a candidate for Confirmation?

Any Catholic Christian who has received the sacrament of Baptism and is in the “state of grace” can be admitted to Confirmation.

[1306–1311, 1319]

To be “in the state of grace” means not to have committed any serious sin (mortal sin). By a serious sin a person separates himself from God and can be reconciled with God only by making a good confession. A (young) Christian who is preparing for Confirmation finds himself in one of the most important phases of his life. He will do everything possible to grasp the faith with his heart and his understanding; he will pray alone and with others for the Holy Spirit; he will reconcile himself in every way with himself, with the people around him, and with God. Confession is part of this, since it brings one closer to God even if one has not committed a mortal sin. 316–317 (YouCat 206)

**Focus Question 15:**

What other Sacraments use the laying on of hands?

**Focus Question 16:**

What is the *form* of Confirmation?

**VOCABULARY****CHRISM**

Greek for “anointing.” Sacred Chrism is oil mixed with balsam and is consecrated by a bishop to signify the gift of the Holy Spirit. Chrism is used in the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders.

**CHRISMATION**

This name for Confirmation is used primarily in the Eastern Churches.

The action of laying on of hands is not unique to Confirmation. This sign is used also in the Sacraments of Holy Orders and the Anointing of the Sick. In the New Testament as well as in Sacred Tradition, the laying on of hands represented the calling down of the Holy Spirit upon a person, generally upon one being commissioned for a special task or in need of healing.

In the Western Church, the minister of Confirmation uses the form, “Be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit,” as he anoints the forehead of the confirmand with Sacred Chrism.

This notion of being sealed by the Holy Spirit is central to understanding the purpose of Confirmation:

**This seal of the Holy Spirit marks our total belonging to Christ, our enrollment in his service for ever, as well as the promise of divine protection in the great eschatological trial.<sup>2</sup> (CCC 1296)**

Recall that in the ancient world, seals were used to make a physical imprint on an object, signifying that it belonged to the owner of the seal. This Sacrament of Confirmation signifies that we belong to Christ.

The ordinary minister of Confirmation in the Western Church is a bishop, although under certain circumstances he can delegate this task to a priest. In the Eastern Churches, the Sacrament is routinely delegated to priests. These priests use the sacred *myron*, which has been consecrated by a bishop, thus maintaining the Apostolic connection.

**Confirmation sponsor.** Each confirmand has a sponsor who assists him or her in preparing for the Sacrament. The sponsor also should help the confirmed person act as a true witness of Christ, faithfully fulfilling the obligations to which the recipient has been called by this Sacrament.



Confirmation Sponsor.

The role of the sponsor is to make sure the confirmed person acts as a true witness of Christ.

## A GOOD SOLDIER FOR CHRIST

**T**he Rite of Confirmation in the extraordinary form of the Latin Rite includes a light slap on the cheek to remind the recipient that the service of Christ is difficult and can even be dangerous. This slap, normally administered by the bishop, is symbolic of the need for strength in times of persecution, even to the point of martyrdom, and is a reminder that the Christian needs to become a soldier for Christ.

This expression *soldier for Christ* comes from St. Paul, who exhorted his friend and son in the Lord, St. Timothy, to "Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and what you have heard from me before many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus" (2 Tm 2: 1-3).

To be a soldier of Christ, then, does not mean using violence or any means of coercion in spreading the truth, but rather means to let God's grace be the source of one's strength, to spread the Faith, and to be ready to suffer for Christ.

## EFFECTS OF CONFIRMATION

**C**onfirmation is the full outpouring of the Holy Spirit that was granted to the disciples at Pentecost. Its many effects include the following:

- ✱ Confirmation increases and deepens the sanctifying grace and actual graces received in Baptism. Sanctifying grace is the stable indwelling of God in our souls, whereas actual graces are particular helps in various circumstances.
- ✱ Confirmation imprints an indelible seal or character upon the soul, and, therefore, Confirmation, like Baptism, can neither be undone nor repeated.
- ✱ Confirmation roots us more deeply as children of God the Father. Thus, it strengthens our divine filiation, the real state of being an adopted son or daughter of God. This is referred to under the gifts of the Holy Spirit as the gift of *piety*.
- ✱ Confirmation's outpouring of the Holy Spirit also unites us more closely to Christ. Thus, we share more deeply in the life of the Blessed Trinity, since through the Holy Spirit our communion with the Father and the Son is strengthened.
- ✱ Confirmation increases the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit: wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord. With the addition of piety, these are the "spirits" that Isaiah said the Messiah would possess. The Holy Spirit generously shares them with the Father's new children, us.
- ✱ Confirmation increases the twelve Fruits of the Holy Spirit, which are "perfections that the Holy Spirit forms in us as the first fruits of eternal glory." They are "charity, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness,

### Focus Question 17:

Who is the *minister* of Confirmation?

### Focus Question 18:

What links Confirmation to the bishop in the Eastern Churches?

### Focus Question 19:

What is the role of the Confirmation sponsor?

### Focus Question 20:

What does it mean to be a soldier of Christ?

## VOCABULARY

### SPONSOR

A baptized, confirmed, and practicing Catholic who presents a child or adult for Baptism or Confirmation (and professes the Faith in the case of an infant). This person prays for the one being sponsored, helps with his or her religious instruction, and ensures that he or she faithfully fulfills the vocation of Christian discipleship.

### SOLDIER OF CHRIST

A name occasionally applied to those who receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. The term emphasizes the need and duty to remain strong in the Faith, to share the Faith with others, and to be willing to suffer for the Faith and defend it from attack.

### Focus Question 21:

What does Confirmation do in terms of the graces of Baptism?

### Focus Question 22:

How many times can one be confirmed?

### Focus Question 23:

How is Confirmation related to piety?

### Focus Question 24:

What are the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit?

**Focus Question 25:**

What are the fruits of the Holy Spirit?

**Focus Question 26:**

How does Confirmation equip one for Christian maturity?

**Focus Question 27:**

What are two groups with whom a teenager can share his or her faith?

**GUIDED EXERCISE**

Based on the seven bullet-points under the heading **EFFECTS OF CONFIRMATION**, write about the one that you think is the most important, or that personally means the most to you, and why.

**VOCABULARY****SEAL**

A permanent mark, which is imprinted upon the soul by God in the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders.



*Christ Carrying the Cross (detail) by Tiepolo.*  
The Sacrament of Confirmation aids Christians to carry their own crosses.

generosity, gentleness, faithfulness, modesty, self-control, chastity.”<sup>3</sup> (CCC 1832)

- ✱ Confirmation enables the confirmand to be a true witness to Christ. He can spread and defend the Faith by word and deed to bring people closer to the Faith.

Every Christian—even newly baptized infants—shares in the universal call to holiness, to be perfectly morally good through God’s assistance. And all Christians—young and old—share in the common priesthood of the faithful and can offer their ordinary lives as a pleasing sacrifice to God. Part of the vocation of lay people is the call to evangelize or to share the Faith with others. With whom is this done? One group is those outside the Faith. The other is our fellow Catholics, many of whom need to understand and experience the Faith in a deeper way.

The best preparation for this apostolate is a regular prayer life, the frequent reception of the Sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist, and a serious intention to become more knowledgeable about the teachings of the Church.

**CONCLUSION**

God created us to share in his loving happiness in an eternal communion with him and with all the saved. For our own and others’ salvation, he shares himself with us in the Sacraments, the first of which is Baptism. Baptism carries both blessings and responsibilities. Since not every person has been baptized—and some people will never have the opportunity to be—we should realize that we are personally called to be part of a great mystery, the mystery of God’s plan of salvation for the world. This realization could move us to consider our divine vocation, the particular work God calls us to do in his service during our time on earth.

In the Sacrament of Confirmation, the second of the Sacraments of Initiation, the Holy Spirit strengthens the bond between the baptized person and the Church. The confirmed person has the grace to be a witness for Christ to the world by word and example. As sons and daughters of God, we are called upon to act in every situation as Christ himself would act. Since the grace of Confirmation is always with us, we have the ability to act as spiritually mature persons. Thus, not only can we discover our vocation but also carry it out.



## ST. ANDRE BESSETTE (1845-1937)



Mount Royal dominates the city of Montreal and is in turn dominated by the great cupola of the Oratory of St. Joseph. This massive shrine was built through the inspiration of St. Andre Bessette, a Holy Cross lay brother who was perhaps the most famous man in Canada in the early 1930s.

On a typical morning, Brother Andre would be up at five AM and would spend two hours in prayer in the chapel. From nine until noon, he would meet with the motley crew of the injured and the sick—poor and rich alike—who would line up outside his small office, looking for cures from the “miracle man of Montreal.” He would continue this for two hours in the afternoon, before spending several hours after dinner visiting the sick in their homes and in hospitals. The old brother prayed again for an hour before retiring to gain strength from God in order to meet the demands of the thousands who constantly sought healing from him.

“Never anything joyous, never anything amusing,” he was known to comment about his work. Even so, the walls of the Oratory of St. Joseph are covered with the crutches, canes, and other paraphernalia rendered unnecessary by Brother Andre’s cures. His conversations were short, even brusque, often consisting of nothing more than his standard advice: “Get some oil consecrated to St. Joseph and get a medal of St. Joseph. Rub the oil. Make a novena to St. Joseph. Pray to him a lot. Pray to the Good God.”

When the thousands would return to thank him for his miraculous interventions, he would be equally brief: “It was St. Joseph and not I who cured you. Thank St. Joseph, not me.” Brother Andre’s life and example were a rich source of the revived devotion to St. Joseph that marked twentieth-century Catholicism. The Church has long applied Pharaoh’s words concerning the righteous Joseph, the dream interpreter in the Book of Genesis, to the later St. Joseph, husband of the Blessed Virgin Mary: “Go to Joseph!” (Gn 41:55). Brother Andre spoke those words to the thousands who came to Mount Royal: “Go to Joseph!”

“Enlightened” rationalist opinion of the twenty-first century scoffs at the idea of miracles, especially if the miracle is performed by a simple, uneducated, old man. Brother Andre was not even ordained a priest. He had “only” the graces of Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist at his disposal—just like us.

Brother Andre was a symbol to a sophisticated, prosperous, forward-looking North American city that God is still alive and well and at work in this world. Today, the shrine to St. Joseph draws hundreds of thousands to pray at the tomb of Brother Andre and to St. Joseph.

The life of Brother Andre echoed in some respects the life of St. Joseph, illustrating both silent ordinariness and supernatural action. Before he came to be known as a miracle-worker, Brother Andre’s life was utterly devoid of any newsworthy events. Just as St. Joseph’s silence bore fruit in his care for the Holy Family, so too did St. Andre’s in the ordinary duties of a Holy Cross lay brother.

He was canonized on October 17, 2010. His feast day is celebrated on January 6.

## Focus Question 28:

Why was St. Andre Bessette called the “miracle man of Montreal”?

## Focus Question 29:

To which saint was St. Andre especially devoted?



St. Andre Bessette.

“It was St. Joseph and not I who cured you. Thank St. Joseph, not me.”

*As sons and daughters of God,  
we are called upon to act in  
every situation as Christ himself  
would act.*



FROM *YouCat*

*What happens in Confirmation?*

In Confirmation the soul of a baptized Christian is imprinted with a permanent seal that can be received only once and marks this individual forever as a Christian. The gift of the Holy Spirit is the strength from above in which this individual puts the grace of his Baptism into practice through his life and acts as a “witness” for Christ. [1302–1305, 1317]

To be confirmed means to make a “covenant” with God. The confirmand says, “Yes, I believe in you, my God; give me your Holy Spirit, so that I might belong entirely to you and never be separated from you and may witness to you throughout my whole life, body and soul, in my words and deeds, on good days and bad.” And God says, “Yes, I believe in you, too, my child—and I will give you my Spirit, my very self. I will belong entirely to you. I will never separate myself from you, in this life or eternally in the next. I will be in your body and your soul, in your words and deeds. Even if you forget me, I will still be there—on good days and bad.” 120 (*YouCat* 205)

## CLOSURE

Write a paragraph summarizing the meaning of the Sacrament of Confirmation.

## ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT

For your eyes only, complete in writing the examination of conscience found under the sidebar, “An Examination of Conscience Based on the Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation,” in regard to living one’s baptismal and confirmational promises.

## AN EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE BASED ON THE SACRAMENTS OF BAPTISM AND CONFIRMATION

- ✱ Do I make a continuing effort to keep my baptismal promises to reject Satan, his empty promises, and his works, and to believe all that the Church teaches in the Apostles’ Creed?
- ✱ Do I try to live as a true child of God?
- ✱ Do I avoid persons and things that could harm my faith?
- ✱ Do I have a plan to strengthen my relationship with Christ?
- ✱ Do I pray to the Holy Spirit to enlighten my mind?
- ✱ Do I stand up courageously to defend the Faith when it is challenged?

## WHAT’S NEXT?

In Chapters 5 and 6, we will examine the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What graces does a person receive in the Sacrament of Confirmation?
2. When did Christ institute Confirmation?
3. In the Eastern Churches and in the Western Church, when is Confirmation normally administered?
4. Who may receive Confirmation?
5. What are the matter, form, and minister of Confirmation?
6. What are the major effects of Confirmation?
7. What are two groups with whom a teenager can share his or her faith?

### ENDNOTES – CHAPTER 4

1. Cf. OC Introduction 3.
2. Cf. Rev 7: 2-3, 9: 4; Ez 9: 4-6.
3. Gal 5: 22-23 (Vulgate).