

PRESENTER'S GUIDE

THE SACRAMENT OF *Confirmation*

A COMPLETE PREPARATION COURSE
and Activities with Parents & Sponsors



Publisher: Rev. James Socias



MIDWEST THEOLOGICAL FORUM

Downers Grove, Illinois

TABLE OF CONTENTS

vi	How to Use This Presenter's Guide	22	Chapter 5: The Sacraments of Initiation: Baptism
viii	Abbreviations used for the Books of the Bible	26	Chapter 6: The Sacraments of Initiation: The Eucharist
viii	General Abbreviations	30	Chapter 7: The Sacraments of Initiation: Confirmation
1	Introduction: Why Do We Need Confirmation	34	Chapter 8: The Gifts and Fruits of the Holy Spirit
5	Chapter 1: God Reveals Himself to Man	39	Chapter 9: Life in the Holy Spirit: Prayer
10	Chapter 2: The History of Salvation	42	Chapter 10: Life in the Holy Spirit: Holiness
14	Chapter 3: God Sends His Holy Spirit	46	Chapter 11: Life in the Holy Spirit: Witness
18	Chapter 4: The Church: Sacrament of Salvation	50	Chapter 12: Life in the Holy Spirit: Serving Others
		54	Epilogue: The Sacrament of Confirmation and Living the Christian Life
		56	Appendix: The History and Graces of the Sacrament of Confirmation
		57	Art Credits
		58	Welcome to Your First Session <i>(For Distribution to Confirmants)</i>



The Holy Trinity by Cairo.



Introduction: WHY DO WE NEED CONFIRMATION?

PREPARING FOR CLASS

The confirmands should read the chapter before class if possible.

Points to Remember

The Points to Remember on page 8 are a guide to the most important material for the confirmands to retain. Below, the points are summarized to highlight their main ideas.

1. Life's destination is heaven. This journey begins at Baptism, and God continues to help us on this journey through the Sacraments.
2. The Sacraments of Initiation help us to live as a disciple of Christ in the world.
3. The Sacrament of Confirmation brings the gifts of the Holy Spirit.
4. Four qualities should be evident in the confirmed Christian's life: prayer, holiness, witness, and service.

NOTES

Introductory Questions and Answers

Highlight the questions on page 1. You can use them to determine how well the class has comprehended the chapter, either in the beginning of the class or at the end—or both.

- ✦ **What is each person's final destination?** Each person's final destination is union with God in heaven (p. 2).
- ✦ **What is the Sacrament of Confirmation?** The Sacrament of Confirmation is one of the Seven Sacraments of the Church, which perfects the grace that is received at Baptism (p. 4).
- ✦ **What are the gifts and the fruits of the Holy Spirit?** The gifts of the Holy Spirit help us to live and grow as sons and daughters of God. They are wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord. The fruits of the Holy Spirit are the result of accepting the gifts of the Holy Spirit in our lives. They include charity, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control, modesty, chastity, and goodness (p. 6). See Chapter Eight for more details on the gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit.
- ✦ **What are the four elements of being a disciple of Christ?** The four elements of being a disciple of Christ are prayer, holiness, witness, and service (pp. 6-8).

DURING CLASS

Opening Prayer

Begin the class with the Sign of the Cross and an opening prayer such as the "Our Father" or the "Hail Mary."

Opening Activity

1. Have each confirmand introduce themselves by saying a little about themselves, and perhaps who their confirmation saint will be, if they have picked one.
2. Ask the confirmands to read the sidebar "What is Grace?" (p. 3). Be sure confirmands understand what grace is, how it helps them, and how they receive it.

WRAP-UP

Assessment

How well have the confirmands comprehended the chapter content? Here are some suggestions to assess the confirmands' knowledge.

1. Ask the questions found on page 1 to the class (answers can be found under "Introductory Questions and Answers" on p. 1 of the Presenter's Guide).
2. Have the confirmands write out, from memory, a list of the Seven Sacraments (see p. 5).
3. Have the confirmands name from memory the four elements of Christian discipleship (pp. 6-8) or explain each one.

Study Questions and Answers

Questions are found on page 11 of the textbook. For younger and middle students, pick three or four questions and review in class. For older students, assign the questions as homework to be answered in complete sentences, or ask the students to list the page number where each answer may be found.

1. **What is our ultimate destination in life?** Our destination is heaven, where we can be with God forever (p. 2).
2. **When does a person first receive the Holy Spirit?** The Holy Spirit is first received at Baptism (p. 2).
3. **What is grace?** Grace is the divine assistance, the help from God, that we receive in order to live as faithful followers of Christ (p. 3).
4. **What is a Sacrament? Name the Seven Sacraments.** A Sacrament is a visible sign, instituted by Christ and entrusted to the Church, that gives grace to the person who receives it. The Seven Sacraments are Baptism, Confirmation, the Eucharist, Penance and Reconciliation (also called Confession), the Anointing of the Sick, Matrimony, and Holy Orders (pp. 4-5).
5. **What is the Sacrament of Confirmation, and why do we need it?** Confirmation is the Sacrament by which God seals us in his Holy Spirit, perfects the graces received at Baptism, binds us more deeply as adopted children of God, and brings us more

closely into the Body of Christ, which is his Church (p. 4).

6. **Why is it important to prepare properly to receive a Sacrament?** To get the most benefit from the grace that is given in a Sacrament, we must be properly disposed. A proper disposition comes through preparation (p. 4).
7. **What is a "gift of the Holy Spirit"? Name the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit.** A gift of the Holy Spirit is one of seven gifts given by God that help us to live and grow as sons and daughters of God. They are wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord (p. 6).
8. **Comment on this statement, explaining why it is right or wrong: Confirmation is like your graduation from religious education, when you decide for yourself to be a Catholic.** Confirmation is not a "rite of passage" toward adulthood like graduating or getting a driver's license. Confirmation gives graces that will help you handle all the complex challenges that you are likely to face both as a young person and as an adult (p. 7).
9. **What are the four elements of living as a disciple of Christ?** Living as a disciple of Christ requires prayer, living a life of holiness, witnessing to others, and serving others (pp. 6-8).
10. **What is a vocation?** A vocation is the particular plan or calling that God has for each person in this life (pp. 7-8).

Homework

1. Assign the next chapter to read.
2. Assign Practical Exercise #1 (p. 11).
3. Assign an Enrichment Exercise (see below).

Enrichment Exercises

These can be assigned as homework or as an extra activity:

1. "Sealed in the Spirit"— discusses the "interior life" and how we develop it (p. 12).
2. "You and Your Parents" and "You and Your Sponsor"— Encourage the confirmands to involve their parents and sponsors as they prepare for Confirmation (p. 13-16).



Chapter 1: GOD REVEALS HIMSELF TO MAN

PREPARING FOR CLASS

The confirmands should read the chapter before class if possible.

Points to Remember

The Points to Remember on page 28 are a guide to the most important material for the confirmands to retain. Below the points are summarized to highlight their main ideas.

1. Everyone has a natural desire for God.
2. We can know about God through reason, and also by God revealing himself to us.
3. Sacred Tradition and Sacred Scripture form the Deposit of Faith, which is entrusted to the Magisterium.
4. We must respond to God's revelation by cooperating with the gift of faith.

Introductory Questions and Answers

Highlight the questions on page 17. You can use them to determine how well the class has comprehended the chapter, either in the beginning of the class or at the end—or both.

- ✦ **What is natural revelation?** Natural revelation refers to what we can know about God through human reason by looking at the world around us (p. 18).
- ✦ **What is supernatural Revelation?** Supernatural (or Divine) Revelation is God's communication of himself through the prophets and eventually through his Son, Jesus Christ. This type of revelation refers to certain truths that can only be known when God reveals them to mankind directly (p. 19).
- ✦ **What is the Deposit of Faith?** The Deposit of Faith is all of Divine Revelation granted to the Church by Jesus Christ, contained in Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition, and expressed by the Magisterium (p. 26).
- ✦ **What is the Magisterium?** The Magisterium is the teaching office of the Church, entrusted to the Pope and the bishops in union with him (p. 27).

DURING CLASS

Opening Prayer

Begin the class with the Sign of the Cross and an opening prayer such as the "Our Father" or the "Hail Mary."

Opening Activity

1. Review the Chapter "Introduction" by asking confirmands to define the terms "Grace," "Sacrament," and "Gifts of the Holy Spirit."
2. Have the confirmands read the sidebar "A Dialogue: God's Existence" (p. 19). Discuss with them how they know God exists.

Presenting the Chapter

Ideas for presenting the main concepts of this chapter:

1. Discuss the reality of many religions in the world, as well as people of no religion. How do people learn about God? Why do they come to different conclusions?
2. Review the sidebar "We Can Know by Reason Some Attributes of God" (p. 21). Explain the five attributes listed so that the confirmands understand each one.

3. Be sure the confirmands understand supernatural Revelation and how it comes to us (Scripture, Tradition, and the Magisterium). Make a distinction between Sacred Tradition/Scripture (the content) and the Magisterium (the interpreter).
4. Discuss the role of faith in receiving Divine Revelation, and that faith is a gift from God (pp. 27-28).

Main Classroom Activity

It is important for the confirmands to understand how the different elements of Divine Revelation interrelate. The following activity can help foster that knowledge.

Younger Students (Grades 3-5)

Have each confirmand draw a large cross on the upper half of a piece of paper. The cross represents Jesus Christ, which they may write below it. Below the cross, he or she should draw two arrows. Below one arrow, each confirmand should draw a Bible, and below the other, a person or persons representing the Apostles. You may wish to have students draw a speech bubble next to the person, since tradition is often thought of as oral teaching. Confirmands can label these pictures Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition. Have one or two volunteers share and explain their pictures to the class. Be sure the confirmands understand the two streams of Divine Revelation. A good title for the picture might be "God Shows Us Himself."

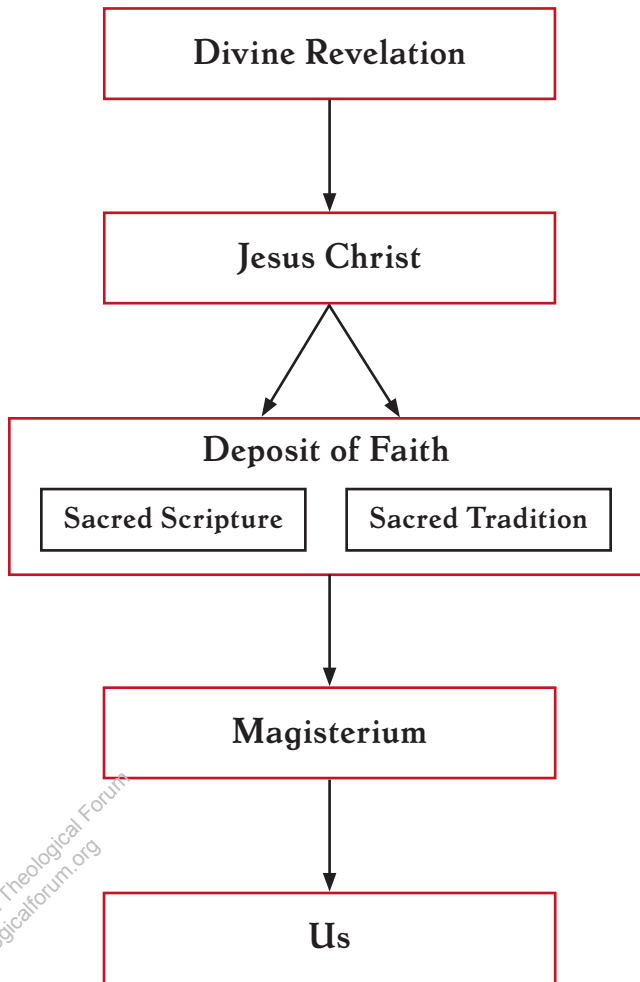
Middle Students (Grades 6-8)

Have each confirmand create a diagram like the one described under "Younger Students," adding to it definitions for the words "Scripture" (p. 26), "Tradition" (p. 25), and "Revelation" (p. 19). Their diagrams may be titled "Divine Revelation."

NOTES

Older Students (Grades 9+)

Ask each confirmand to create a diagram in pencil showing the relationship of the following terms: Divine Revelation, Jesus Christ, Sacred Scripture, Sacred Tradition, Deposit of Faith, and Magisterium. After they have finished, draw the relationship on a blackboard or whiteboard and have each one make changes to his or her diagram as needed.



Closing Activity

Ask a confirmand to read "Witness of Christ: St. Pedro Calungsod" (p. 29). Discuss in class how St. Pedro Calungsod gave his life for the truths found in Divine Revelation.

Read part of the Appendix: "The History and Graces of the Sacrament of Confirmation" (p. 56) to the confirmands. Choose a relevant sentence or paragraph that inspires you and them to continue teaching and learning about this Sacrament.