

A Middle School Confirmation Program

saint mary's press

Anointed in the Spirit

Catechist Guide

Rita Burns Senseman

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Introduction

Welcome to Anointed in the Spirit

Anointed in the Spirit is a Confirmation program for sixth, seventh, and eighth graders. This program is designed to guide their preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation through a process of liturgical catechesis that focuses on the Rite of Confirmation. By drawing themes from the Rite of Confirmation, sessions 1 through 8 prepare the candidates for full participation in the Sacrament. Two additional sessions are designed to support reflection after the celebration of Confirmation. This catechist guide provides fully designed plans for all ten sessions.

In addition to this guide, the Anointed in the Spirit program includes the following:

- a candidate handbook with eight chapters that correspond to the eight preparation sessions, as well as three appendixes that provide the following:
 - a collection of prayers
 - a summary of Catholic beliefs
 - a list of saints and their causes
- a program director manual, which contains helpful guidance on all aspects of leading a Confirmation program
- a guide for sponsors

This introduction to the catechist guide includes the following:

- an overview of the catechist guide
- tips for leading the sessions
- information about the role of the catechist
- information about the theology of Confirmation

Overview of the Catechist Guide

Anointed in the Spirit uses an approach called liturgical catechesis. This involves a three-part process: (1) preparation for Confirmation, (2) celebration of Confirmation, and (3) reflection after the celebration of Confirmation.

Preparation for Confirmation

This catechist guide includes eight sessions designed to prepare the candidates for the Sacrament of Confirmation. The Rite of Confirmation is the point of departure for the sessions. Each one focuses on an aspect of Confirmation. The candidate handbook has a chapter that corresponds to each one of these sessions. (Consult your program director for information about additional steps that may be part of your parish's Confirmation program, such as retreat, service work, or conversations with sponsors.)

Here is an overview of the preparation session topics:

Session 1: Being a Candidate

The first session relates to the presentation of the candidates (*Rite of Confirmation*, no. 21). The session explores the idea of being a candidate and being presented to the bishop.

Session 2: Baptism: Waters of New Life

This session invites the participants to reflect on their own celebration of Baptism and explore the significance of Baptism for their lives. Deepening one's understanding of the meaning of Baptism is a helpful way to prepare for Confirmation because of Confirmation's close relationship to Baptism.

Session 3: Renewing Baptismal Promises

This session prepares the candidates for the Renewal of Baptismal Promises that takes place during Confirmation (*Rite of Confirmation*, no. 23). The participants consider the nature of Baptismal Promises and explore the meaning and significance of renouncing sin and professing faith in God.

Session 4: The Laying On of Hands

This session explores the meaning and significance of the laying on of hands in the Rite of Confirmation (*Rite of Confirmation*, nos. 24–25). The candidates hear the story of Pentecost, review symbols of the Holy Spirit, and explore the working of the Holy Spirit in the world.

Session 5: The Gifts of the Holy Spirit

The focus of this session is the consecratory prayer in which the bishop asks the Father to send the Holy Spirit on the candidates and to give them

the Gifts of the Holy Spirit (*Rite of Confirmation*, no. 25). The participants work with a variety of scenarios as a way to explore how the gifts work in their lives.

Session 6: Being Anointed by the Holy Spirit

This session explores the anointing with Sacred Chrism, the central symbolic action in the Rite of Confirmation (*Rite of Confirmation*, no. 26). The participants explore the meaning and significance of Confirmation's outpouring of the Holy Spirit for their lives and for their role in the mission of the Church.

Session 7: The Eucharist: The Heart of the Church's Life

This session explores the significance of celebrating Confirmation within the Mass, the usual practice unless there are special circumstances (*Rite of Confirmation*, no. 31). The session provides a review of what happens during Mass and engages the candidates in an exploration of the Paschal Mystery.

Session 8: Celebrating the Sacrament of Confirmation

This session is the last one before the celebration of Confirmation. It functions as an immediate preparation for the celebration by providing a brief walk-through of the rite and offering a process for reflecting on the Word that will be proclaimed at Confirmation.

The Celebration of Confirmation

The preparation period leads to the high point: the celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Reflection After the Celebration of Confirmation

Sessions 9 and 10 are designed for use during the weeks following the celebration of Confirmation. This part of the process is called *mystagogy*, which means "reflection on the mystery." The purpose of the mystagogical sessions is to deepen the participants' understanding of the Sacrament and lead them outward into mission.

Session 9: Mystagogy I: Reflecting on the Rite of Confirmation

This session provides the participants with an opportunity to reflect on Confirmation and further explore its meaning and significance for their lives.

Session 10: Mystagogy II: Reflecting on God’s Word

Session 10 provides a mystagogical reflection on one of the readings from the celebration of Confirmation. A session extension introduces the participants to *lectio divina* and encourages them to make prayerful reading of the Scriptures a regular part of their lives as fully initiated Catholics.

Essential Sources

This guide includes two appendixes: (1) *Apostolic Constitution on the Sacrament of Confirmation* and (2) *Rite of Confirmation*. Because the point of departure for the program is the Rite of Confirmation, it is important for catechists to be familiar with these foundational documents on the Sacrament. We make this convenient for you by providing them.

Apostolic Constitution on the Sacrament of Confirmation

Pope Paul VI promulgated this document in 1971. It provides information about the origins and history of the Sacrament and describes the essence of the Sacrament.

Rite of Confirmation, Nos. 1–33

This is the Church’s official liturgical text for the Sacrament of Confirmation. In the appendix, we provide numbers 1 to 33, which includes the introduction to the rite and chapter 1, “Rite of Confirmation Within Mass.” This ritual text is the foundation for the sessions in this guide.

We recommend that you read the *Apostolic Constitution* and the *Rite of Confirmation* before you begin preparing for the sessions. Then when you prepare for each session, you will see that each has a background reading section. Specific paragraphs from the appendixes are listed. In these cases, rereading small portions will be helpful to you.

Tips for Leading the Sessions

This catechist guide has been designed to help make your preparation for leading the sessions as effective as possible, while providing flexible options requested by many catechists. This section reviews features of a typical session and provides you with important background information and tips for using the sessions effectively.

Overview, Objectives, and Time Frame

At the beginning of each session, you will find a brief overview that tells you what to expect in that session. This is followed by a summary of the session's objectives. Next, a section titled "At a Glance" provides a session outline with time frames for each part of the session. Each core session includes a set of main activities that fill 60 minutes. The core sessions include five steps, and most follow this pattern:

- A. welcome and prayer
- B. an activity to spark interest
- C. a teaching activity
- D. a life application
- E. a closing prayer

The sessions also provide optional session extensions, each 15 minutes long:

- an optional life application activity
- an optional journal activity

Materials and Preparation

Besides becoming familiar with the session steps and activities, you will need to do some minimal advance preparation for the sessions. For example, you may need to gather some supplies, make photocopies of handouts, or do some background reading. This preparation is outlined at the beginning of each session in the section titled "Materials and Preparation."

A few supplies are needed in most sessions. They are listed here, rather than repeated in every session:

- a Bible
- pens or pencils, one for each participant
- a large whiteboard and markers or a blackboard and chalk

- copies of the *Anointed in the Spirit Candidate Handbook*, one for each candidate
- supplies for creating a prayer space (see details in next section)

Enthronement

We recommend that you set up a simple entronement or display featuring key items and symbols related to Confirmation.

The focus of the entronement is the Bible. We suggest entroning the Word of God, meaning holding it high in a place of honor. This is the first principle when you are designing and setting up the entronement: the Word of God is preeminent. The other pieces that may surround the Bible are subordinate. The entronement helps to draw the participants' attention first to God's Word and second to other symbols related to the session topics.

Each week you'll need these items for the entronement:

- a small- to medium-size table
- a cloth to cover the table, varying the color according to liturgical season
- a Bible
- a large white candle (or appropriate liturgical color) and matches (if allowed)

You may want to use a box or something under the cloth to boost the Bible to a position higher than the other items on the table. Other items may be listed for the entronement for particular sessions, such as a large bowl of water or a container of oil. Try not to clutter the entronement with unnecessary items. Noble simplicity is a quality of good liturgy and is a helpful principle for setting up the entronement.

Prayer

Prayer is part of every session. It is an important component of the program not only because it echoes the ritual elements of the session but also because "prayer should be the ordinary environment for all catechesis" (*National Directory for Catechesis*, p. 61). Prayer is incorporated in several ways in each session:

- **Catechist Prayer.** This prayer is intended for the catechist to use during preparations for the session.
- **Opening Prayer.** Each session includes an opening prayer. You will notice that each includes the prayer "Let us remember that we are in

the holy presence of God.” (This is a familiar Lasallian prayer of the Christian Brothers, and Saint Mary’s Press is a Lasallian ministry.)

- **Closing Prayer.** Each session includes a 5- or 10-minute closing prayer service. Each session also provides the option of having everyone read a short prayer together from the candidate handbook—a good option if you are running behind and don’t have time for the full prayer service.

The Proclamation of God’s Word

For many sessions, the section titled “Preparation Tasks” asks you to recruit volunteers to read from the Scriptures during prayer or at some other time during the session.

A little preparation will help the readers feel comfortable in their role. Try to follow these preparation steps:

- As the participants arrive, recruit the designated number of readers.
- Show the readers where in the Bible to find their readings and point out where they are to begin and end.
- Instruct the readers to begin by saying, “A reading from (*name of the book from the Bible*).” End the reading by saying, “The Word of the Lord.”
- Instruct the readers to read slowly and loudly.
- Be prepared to help the readers practice pronunciation if necessary.
- Give the readers instructions about when to come forward and where to stand. Ask them to pause reverently after reading before returning to their seats.
- Give the readers instructions for placing or replacing the Bible on the enthronement. (*Note:* During prayer it is better for the readers to pick up the Bible from the enthronement and use it for the proclamation rather than carrying a Bible from their seats.)
- Ask the readers to spend a few minutes reading their Scripture passages on their own before the session begins.

Involving the candidates as leaders in the prayers is important and is worth the extra preparation work for you.

Note: If you have access to the *Lectionary for Mass* for weekdays, please note that many of the readings selected for the prayers in this program are drawn from the Confirmation readings in the *Lectionary*. You might consider reading from the *Lectionary* when applicable as a way to illuminate the connection between the session prayers and the Rite of Confirmation (see nos. 764–769 in the *Lectionary*).

Activities

Many types of activities are used in this program. The activities are designed to engage the multiple intelligences of young adolescent learners. Some young people learn best by listening, others by seeing, and others through hands-on activities. In addition many young adolescents need to regularly get up, move, and change what they are doing.

To keep the sessions running smoothly, you must be familiar with the activities and their aims. This will enable you to give clear instructions and effectively manage the transitions between steps. You will also need to prepare to summarize the key doctrinal points covered in the sessions. You will see that many sessions direct you to specific sections in the candidate handbook or include talking points to guide you. Talking points are clearly marked in the manual with this symbol: ►.

Optional Activities

Each session includes several optional activities. In addition to the 15-minute optional session extensions mentioned earlier, you will find the following:

- **Discussion Starters.** These questions can be woven into the session at various times.
- **Media Connections.** Many sessions suggest songs or films that complement the session.
- **Other Options.** Periodically you will see notes that offer options for implementing particular steps.

Small-Group Activities

When forming small groups or pairs for particular activities, provide specific instructions about how the groups or pairs are to be formed rather than leaving this to the participants. This will help to ensure that no one feels excluded.

Using the *Anointed in the Spirit Candidate Handbook*

The candidate handbook is a vital part of each session. It contains images, prayers, explanations, and journaling space that the participants will use in the sessions. Each candidate should have his or her own copy of the *Anointed in the Spirit Candidate Handbook*. Instructions for using the candidate handbook are clearly indicated in the catechist guide. In some cases, there are instructions for you to invite the participants to reference

something in the handbook. In other cases, the guide suggests that you refer to it as a source of information to help you lead the session.

Consider some of the following ways to expand the participants' use of the handbook:

- Send the candidate handbook home with the participants with instructions for completing a "My Mission" sidebar or a journaling page. This provides a good opportunity for deeper reflection than may be possible during the sessions.
- Have the participants take the candidate handbook home after each session and review the chapter you covered. Encourage the candidate to discuss the material with a parent or sponsor. Many of the "Catholic Connection," "Jesus Connection," and "Did You Know?" articles in the handbook present material that the candidates' regular religious education program, apart from Confirmation preparation, should have already covered. These are included, however, so you have a handy way of encouraging review of central aspects of Catholic teaching.
- Use images in the book as focal points to introduce or enhance discussion of a topic.
- Involve parents by sending the candidate handbook home with a simple assignment that the participants are to complete with their parents' help. This can be a good way for the parents to see the handbook and be involved in their children's preparation.
- Invite the candidates to share the handbook with their sponsors as a way to enhance the sponsors' connection to the preparation process.
- Help the participants become familiar with the different types of sidebars, as well as the prayers, the summaries of Catholic beliefs, and the list of saints found in the handbook's appendixes.

The Role of the Catechist

Your role is vital. You are leading young people to one of our Church's most sacred and holy mysteries, the Sacrament of Confirmation. The Sacrament of Confirmation is the celebration of the outpouring of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit. Like all the sacraments, Confirmation is a celebration of the Paschal Mystery—the work of salvation accomplished by Jesus Christ through his Passion, death, Resurrection, and Ascension.

Just how does one lead another person to a sacred mystery? Although we can certainly teach about some aspects of a sacred mystery, a part of the mystery is beyond words. This is where signs, symbols, and rituals come in. Sacred signs, symbols, and rituals speak to us in a language deeper and richer than words alone. They speak of God's action in our lives in

a way language cannot. That is why this program uses the signs, symbols, and rituals of the Confirmation liturgy to lead the participants to a deeper understanding of the sacred realities they represent. This preparation helps them enter into the celebration and fully participate in the Sacrament.

After the celebration of Confirmation, the newly confirmed reflect back on the mystery. This relates to the second part of your role. You are called on to be a mystagogue. This means you help the newly confirmed unpack or explore their sacramental encounter with God. Once they have been confirmed, they will see the central signs and symbolic actions from a new perspective. They have participated in the sacramental mystery; they have not just been taught about it.

The Theology of Confirmation

As one who is helping to lead the young candidates to the Sacrament of Confirmation, it is helpful for you to understand the meaning and significance of Confirmation. Reading the two appendixes and the background reading suggestions in each session will prepare you well. Here are a few themes you will see unfold during the sessions:

- *Confirmation is a special outpouring of the Holy Spirit.* In the Rite of Confirmation, the baptized receive a special outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The sacrament is conferred through the anointing of the forehead with Sacred Chrism, a laying on of the priest's or bishop's hand, and the words "be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit." (see *Rite of Confirmation*, no. 9).
- *Confirmation is a Sacrament of Christian Initiation.* Through the Sacraments of Christian Initiation—Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist—we are united with Christ and the Church. We are united with Christ's death, Resurrection, and glorification. Confirmation completes, or perfects, Baptism.
- *Confirmation makes us more like Christ and strengthens us for mission.* By the power of the Holy Spirit, Confirmation makes us more like Christ. Filled with the Holy Spirit, and made more like Christ, we are strengthened to assume more responsibility as disciples of Jesus Christ. Confirmation propels us outward in mission for the life of the world.

Thank You

Thank you for making the commitment to help prepare our young people for this important step in their lives of faith and in their lives in the Church.



Session 1

Being a Candidate

Session Overview

This session explores what it means to be a candidate for Confirmation. A poster-making activity introduces the idea of candidacy. Then, after a brief discussion on being called by God, the participants explore the various requirements of Confirmation by playing the “Candidate Checklist Game.” Two optional session extensions invite the candidates to consider what it means to be called by God.

Objectives

Enable the participants to do the following:

- understand the significance of being a candidate for the Sacrament of Confirmation
- explore what is expected of Confirmation candidates

At a Glance

A. Welcome and Opening Prayer	(5 minutes)
B. Being a Candidate	(20 minutes)
C. Called and Chosen	(10 minutes)
D. Candidate Checklist Game	(15 minutes)
E. Closing Prayer	(10 minutes)
Optional Session Extensions	
Called by Name	(15 minutes)
Journal Activity: Responding to the Call	(15 minutes)

Materials and Preparation

Materials Needed

Gather the following items, one for each participant:

- sheets of newsprint or poster board
- sets of markers

Gather the following additional items:

- a marker
- at least eight sheets of newsprint or poster board
- a roll of masking tape
- two copies of a list of the candidates' names
- a Bible marked at 1 Samuel 16:1 and Isaiah 42:1–13
- a large pillar candle
- recorded music and appropriate player (optional)

Preparation Tasks

- On a sheet of newsprint or poster board, make a sample poster announcing a Confirmation candidacy. For example, if one of your candidates is Cameron, make a poster that reads “Cameron for Confirmation” (or you can plan to refer to the posters on page 14 of the candidate handbook).
- Arrange to have the posters the candidates complete displayed in the parish.
- Write these three items on the board for the “Candidate Checklist Game”:
 - A. I will gladly and easily do this.
 - B. I would like more information on this requirement.
 - C. I will ask another person to work with me on this one.
- Prepare a sign for each of the requirements listed in the “Candidate’s Checklist” on page 17 of the handbook, but skip the first three items since the candidates have already met these requirements. Write each of the remaining eight items on individual sheets of newsprint or poster board. Post the signs around the room for all to see.
- Be sure you are well informed about each of the requirements for Confirmation. During step D, “Candidate Checklist Game,” the candidates may ask you questions about the requirements.
- Be prepared to tell the story of the call of David in 1 Samuel 16:1–13.
- Recruit a volunteer to read 1 Samuel 16:1 during the opening prayer and Isaiah 42:1–3 during the optional closing prayer service.
- Recruit two volunteers to read a list of the candidates’ names during the optional closing prayer service. Help them practice pronouncing the names before the session.
- Contact your priest or deacon if you would like him to do the blessing during the optional closing prayer service.

Catechist Prayer

Good and gracious God, you have called your people to be your own. Thank you for calling me to the ministry of catechist and for entrusting me with these young people. Help me as I guide the candidates in responding to your call. Help me to be always faithful to your Word and to your call to follow your Son, Jesus Christ. May the Holy Spirit show me the way as I prepare and lead this session. I ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Background Reading

- *Anointed in the Spirit Candidate Handbook*, chapter 1
- *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 1285, 1306–1311 (who receives Confirmation)
- 1 Samuel 16:1–13, Isaiah 42:1–3
- *Rite of Confirmation*, nos. 11–12, 21

Session Steps

A. Welcome and Opening Prayer (5 minutes)

1. **Welcome** everyone and make any announcements.
2. **Light** the candle, **make** the Sign of the Cross, and **lead** everyone in saying, “Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God.”
3. **Open** with these comments:
 - You are all candidates for Confirmation. Congratulations! We’ll spend this session talking about what this means. First, let’s listen to a short Scripture reading about a person who was chosen from among many candidates.
4. **Invite** the designated reader to proclaim 1 Samuel 16:1. Then pause for a moment of silence.
5. **Comment:**
 - God chose one of Jesse’s sons to be King of Israel. We’ll talk during the session about which son was chosen from among all the candidates. We’ll also talk about your candidacy for the Sacrament of Confirmation.
6. **Pray** the following opening prayer:
 - Let us pray. God of all people, you call these young people of *(parish name)* to be candidates for the Sacrament of

Confirmation. May the Holy Spirit be with us and guide us throughout this session and always. We ask this through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Close with the Sign of the Cross.

B. Being a Candidate (20 minutes)

1. **Hold up** the Confirmation candidacy poster (if you made one) or ask the participants to open their handbooks to page 14 and look at the image of campaign posters on the page. Using these or similar words, explain that this session will explore the idea of being a candidate:
 - As mentioned in the opening, you have all been chosen as candidates for Confirmation. During the celebration of the Sacrament, you will each be presented by name to the bishop as a candidate for Confirmation.
2. **Connect** the notion of being a Confirmation candidate with other types of candidates, using these or similar words:
 - Have you ever been a candidate for student council or class president? Or have you ever been a candidate for a music award or MVP on your team? Or do you know anyone who has been a candidate for an elected office?

A

1

Being a Candidate

A

Have you ever run for student council at your school? or maybe you know someone who was a candidate for student council? Have you or your parents ever publicly supported a candidate for mayor or maybe even for president? Being a candidate is a big deal!

Why is being a candidate such a big deal? A candidate is someone who is being considered for something important like a leadership position or an award. Perhaps you've had a coach who was a candidate for a coach-of-the-year award or a friend who was a candidate for a science award. If you are a candidate for

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Encourage the participants to share their experiences of being candidates or of knowing candidates.

3. **Lead** the participants to see the significance of being a candidate. Help them to see that it is an honor to be a candidate. Use these or similar words:
 - We named several different kinds of candidates. In each instance, it was an honor to be named as a candidate.
 - Being a candidate is a big deal! Whether you're a candidate for president of the United States or president of Washington Middle School, or whether you're a candidate for the Sacrament of Confirmation, being a candidate is very important! It means you are being considered for something important, like an honor or a new responsibility. Usually a person or group chooses candidates. But in the case of Confirmation, God has chosen you. He has called you to the Sacrament of Confirmation.
 - God's call comes through the Church. That is, the Church enables you to hear his call. The Church wants all to celebrate Confirmation when they get to the appropriate age.
 - Confirmation will complete your initiation into the Church. It adds to the gift of new life you received in Baptism by deepening your relationship with God—the Father, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit. In the Sacrament of Confirmation, there is a special outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon those being confirmed. Through the action of the Holy Spirit, the Father, united with Christ, accomplishes great things for us:
 - Our relationship with the Father grows deeper.
 - We are united more firmly to Jesus Christ.
 - The Gifts of the Holy Spirit increase in us.
 - Our connection with the Church increases, and we are better able to continue the Church's mission.
 - The Holy Spirit gives us a special strength to be witnesses to the Christian way of life through what we say and what we do.
4. **Explain** to the participants that before Confirmation they, as candidates, will be introduced to the parish community. Invite them to make posters introducing themselves. Let them know your plans for displaying the posters. Suggest the following ideas for the posters, **writing** notes on the board as you talk so the participants have something to refer back to while they work:

- your name (**write name on board**)
- illustrate five things about yourself (e.g., family, hobbies, school activities) and write a caption for each (**write five things on board**)
- illustrate one new thing you hope to do as a confirmed Catholic (e.g., being a lector or usher, getting involved in teaching younger kids, doing more social action) and write a caption (**write a hope on board**)

Distribute the newsprint or poster board and the markers. **Observe** the participants' work and make a mental note of some of the things they hope to do.

Note: An alternative is to have the candidates work in small groups of three to five to create a single poster that introduces all of the small-group members. The poster heading might be "Meet Some (*parish name*) Candidates."

5. **Invite** the participants to share their posters with one other person. If time allows, invite some volunteers to share with the large group. **Conclude** by summarizing your observations about what the candidates hope to do after being confirmed and by offering any relevant information about how your parish will help them to prepare for Confirmation (see "What the Parish Promises" on page 16 of the candidate handbook).

C. Called and Chosen (10 minutes)

1. **Repeat** the idea of the candidates' being called and chosen by God for Confirmation. Invite them to listen to a reading from the Old Testament, using these or similar words:
 - The reading involves several candidates for an important position. But only one is chosen. The Lord told Samuel that he would show him which of Jesse's eight sons to anoint as King of Israel. Jesse brings seven of his sons to Samuel, but none is the chosen one. Now listen to what happens.
2. **Tell** the story of David's being chosen King of Israel (see 1 Samuel 16:1–13). **Lead** a discussion by asking the following question:
 - When and how did God decide which of the sons was to be king? (*Before Samuel even went to Bethlehem, God had chosen David to be king. He looks at the heart. He doesn't judge as people judge.*)

Conclude with this comment:

- Even though you may not be aware of it, God has chosen you for the Sacrament of Confirmation. David responded to God’s call and became a great king. With his kingship came a lot of responsibilities. As a confirmed member of the Church, you’ll have greater responsibilities too. Your responsibility now, though, is to be fully prepared to receive the Sacrament. Let’s talk about some of the things you need to do as a candidate for Confirmation.

D. Candidate Checklist Game (15 minutes)

1. **Direct** the participants’ attention to the many signs posted around the room. **Explain** that each sign describes something the Church requires of Confirmation candidates.
2. **Explain** the game instructions:
 - Posted around the room are signs that describe the Church’s requirements for Confirmation candidates.
 - In this game, you are to consider these signs and these statements on the board. (*Point to the following statements on the board and read them aloud to the group*):
 - A. I will gladly and easily do this.
 - B. I would like more information on this requirement.
 - C. I will ask another person to work with me on this one.
 - I will read statement A. Then everyone will move to the sign or requirement that best fits them for that statement. So when I read statement A, you may move to the sign that reads, “I attend Mass.” But someone else may move to another sign. As we go along, I’ll ask for volunteers to say why they chose to stand under a particular requirement.
3. **Facilitate** the game by following these three steps for each statement on the board:
 - **Point to** a statement and read it. **Direct** the participants to select a sign and stand by it.
 - **Ask** a few candidates to explain why they selected what they did.
 - If no one chose certain requirements, involve the participants in a discussion of why that’s the case.

What Is Asked of You

Even though candidates for Confirmation do not campaign, the Church does ask that you be prepared and that you meet certain requirements. Here's a checklist of guidelines:



A Candidate's Checklist

- I am baptized.
 - I have not been confirmed before.
 - I am over the age of seven (or other age set by my bishop).
 - I want to live as a disciple of Christ and be a witness to the Christian way of life for others.
 - I am willing to seek guidance about the Christian life from my Confirmation sponsor.
 - I want to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation and complete my initiation into the Church, which began with my Baptism.
 - I am willing to pray more often in order to be better prepared to receive the Gifts of the Holy Spirit in Confirmation.
 - I am capable of renewing my baptismal promises. (We'll talk more about baptismal promises in chapter 3.)
 - I am willing to receive the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation before receiving Confirmation to make sure I am in the state of grace (see the "Catholic Connection" sidebar on page 21).
 - I attend Mass.
 - I am willing to spend time preparing for the Sacrament of Confirmation and learning more about its meaning and significance for my life.
- Your parish or diocese probably has some additional guidelines or requirements, so check with your catechist or parish leader.

Being a Candidate 17

B

Note: When discussing statement B, be prepared to respond to requests for more information on requirements.

Note: When discussing statement C, ask the candidates to identify someone with whom they could work. Encourage them to seek help and guidance from parents and sponsors.

4. **Direct** the participants to return to their seats. Ask the candidates to open their handbooks to page 17 and show them the checklist of the Church's requirements for Confirmation. **Review** the requirements, including those that were discussed in the course of the game. If you haven't done so already, provide written information about any additional requirements your diocese or parish may have. Be sure to clarify for the candidates which requirements are based only on diocesan or parish norms.

B

Note: If time allows, invite the participants to turn to the "My Mission" sidebar on page 16 of the handbook and jot notes about things they need to do to prepare for Confirmation.

Note: If the candidates ask questions about catechumens or adult Confirmation candidates in your parish who work with a different set of requirements, you may find it helpful to review the "Candidates for Sacraments" section on page 20 of the handbook.

5. **Conclude** by summarizing the following information:

- God promises to love us, and God always keeps his promises. So even if you don't do all the things you say you'll do, God will always do what he says.
- We do not have to earn God's gifts. That is not at all the point of spending some time in preparation as a candidate for Confirmation. The time of preparation is meant to help you be open to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in Confirmation.
- God calls each of us at all times and pours out his love upon us. The challenge for us is to recognize his love and his call and to respond with faithful living.

6. Invite the candidates to take their handbooks home and review chapter 1. Encourage them to discuss the chapter with a parent or sponsor. Be prepared to field any questions the candidates may have at the start of the next session.

E. Closing Prayer (10 minutes)



Ask the participants to turn to page 25 of the handbook and lead them in saying the prayer in the "Dear God" sidebar, or lead the following prayer service:

see Jesus, and when Jesus approached, he called out to Zacchaeus by name. It was up to Zacchaeus to respond, and he did. His encounter with Jesus changed his life.

When God calls each of us, it is personal. He wants us to respond, and he gives us the grace that enables us to do so.

Standing Before the Bishop


So there you'll be, called by name and standing before the bishop. The bishop is the minister of Confirmation. (We'll talk more about him in chapter 6.)

After you've been called, the bishop will give the homily. He'll explain the Scripture readings and talk about the meaning of Confirmation.

After the homily, the bishop will ask you some questions. But that's for the next chapter. For now let's concentrate on what it means to be a candidate.

Being a Candidate

A candidate is a person preparing for something important. You've been called by God to prepare for Confirmation. It's a big deal. Take it seriously. But also enjoy all the special support from your parish, your sponsor, and your family as you prepare to be confirmed. You won't be a candidate for too long. Confirmation will be here before you know it!



C

You call all people of the earth to yourself. You have called me to be a candidate for Confirmation. Help me to answer your call by being the best candidate I can possibly be. I pray that during this time I'll come closer to you and your Son, Jesus Christ. I pray that the Holy Spirit will help me and guide me in all I do. Amen.

Being a Candidate 25

1. **Draw** everyone's attention to the enthronement of the Bible. Pause for a moment of silence.
2. **Begin** by making the Sign of the Cross and praying:
 - In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
 - All: Amen.
 - The grace and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with us all, now and forever.
 - All: Amen.
3. **Invite** the designated reader to proclaim Isaiah 42:1–3. Then pause for a moment of silence.
4. **Comment:**
 - The prophet Isaiah tells us of God's chosen one. The chosen one is a servant of others. We hear Isaiah tell us that God will put his spirit upon the one he has chosen. My friends, God has chosen you for the Sacrament of Confirmation. You have been chosen as his servants.
 - In anticipation of your Confirmation, when you will be presented to the bishop and called forth, please stand in your place as your name is called.
5. **Invite** the designated readers to come forward and read the names of the candidates.
6. **Bless** the candidates (or if you invited a priest or deacon to do this, invite him forward). If you are presiding, use the following blessing:
 - You have been called and chosen as a candidate for Confirmation.
 - May this time of preparation deepen your faith and open your heart to the power of the Holy Spirit.
 - May the almighty and merciful God bless and protect us (*bless yourself with the Sign of the Cross as you say the following*) in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
 - All: Amen.
7. **Close** with song (see the "Media Connections" section).

Optional Session Extensions

Called by Name (15 minutes)

This session extension works best after step C, “Called and Chosen.”

Materials and Preparation

Gather the following items, one for each small group of four or five:

- sheets of 8½-by-11-inch paper
- pens or pencils
- Fold a sheet of paper so there are three columns or sections to the paper. At the top of each column, write one of the following three headings:
 - Called to Do Something
 - I’m in Trouble
 - Other Reason

1. **Introduce** this activity by referring to the story of King David’s being called. Then **explain** to the participants the importance of being called by name using these or similar words (see pages 23–25 of the handbook):

- When you are called by God, it is very personal and very important. He is calling you to himself. He is calling you out of the crowd, out of the pack. We see examples of this in the Bible. God called Samuel by name (see 1 Samuel 3:1–10). Jesus called Zacchaeus down from the tree (see Luke 19:1–10). Jesus also called Lazarus by name: “Lazarus, come out!” (John 11:43).
- Being called by name means something is up! A friend, a parent, a teacher, a coach wants something from us or wants us to do something. Let’s look at the times we are called by name and see what’s up.

2. **Place** the participants into small groups of four or five. Give each group a sheet of paper and a pen or pencil. Direct the groups to choose a recorder to write the response and a “folder” to fold the paper. Then provide the following instructions about the activity and folding the paper:

- The person who is the paper folder should fold the paper into three sections like this. (Show your example of the trifolded paper.) Unfold the paper and write the following headings at the top of each column:

- Called to Do Something
 - I'm in Trouble
 - Other Reason
- Think of the various times you are called by name. Place each example in one of these categories. For example: Your dad calls out during the game, "Madi, get the ball!" You would write this example under "Called to Do Something."
- You have 5 minutes to think of as many examples as you can of someone calling your name.
3. After 5 minutes, **ask** the participants to think about God's calling them to the life of faith. **Ask** them to identify similarities and differences among the examples on the paper and God's call.
4. **Call** the small groups back into the large group and **invite** volunteers to share some of the similarities and differences they identified.

Journal Activity: Responding to the Call (15 minutes)

This session extension works best after step C, "Called and Chosen," or after the optional session extension "Called by Name."

D

of Christ's Body, the Church. God continues to call us throughout our lives to deepen our relationship with him and strengthen our bond with the Church.

In the Sacrament of Confirmation, there is a special outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon those being confirmed. Through the action of the Holy Spirit, the Father, united with Christ, accomplishes great things for us:

- Our relationship with the Father grows deeper.
- We are united more firmly to Jesus Christ.
- The Gifts of the Holy Spirit increase in us.
- Our connection with the Church increases, and we are better able to continue the Church's mission.
- The Holy Spirit gives us a special strength to be witnesses to the Christian way of life through what we say and what we do.


And, rest assured, God always keeps his promises! So even if you don't do all the things you say you'll do, God will always do what he says. God's promises are trustworthy and eternal.

We do not have to earn God's gifts. That is not at all the point of spending some time in preparation as a candidate for Confirmation. The time of preparation is meant to help candidates be receptive to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. God calls each of us at all times and pours out his love upon us. The challenge for us is to recognize his love and his call and to respond with faithful living.

Called by God

The Scriptures are filled with accounts of people who heard God's call and responded with faith. Here are a few of those people and the verses where you can read about them.

Biblical People	Scripture Verses
Abraham	Genesis 12:1-9
Moses	Exodus 3:1-12
Samuel	1 Samuel 3:1-10
Isaiah	Isaiah 6:1-8
Jeremiah	Jeremiah 1:4-10
Mary	Luke 1:26-38
The First Disciples	Matthew 4:18-22
Matthew	Matthew 9:9-13
The Samaritan Woman	John 4:4-42
Saul	Acts of the Apostles 9:1-19



Jesus approached the tax collector Matthew, considered a sinner by many, at his collection booth. "Follow me," Jesus called. How will you answer Jesus' call?

© Brooklyn Museum/Corbis

Materials Needed

Gather the following items, one for each participant:

- ☐ Bibles

D

1. **Distribute** the Bibles and ask the candidates to open their handbooks to page 19. **Read** the journal activity instructions aloud and make sure everyone can find the “Called by God” chart. **Ask** everyone to read about at least two people listed in the chart.
2. **Invite** the participants to forms pairs and share one or two insights from their reading that may help young people to be faithful disciples. If time allows, **invite** volunteers to share in the large group.

Discussion Starters

- Review the posted candidate requirements for Confirmation (or look at the checklist on page 17 of the handbook). How do you feel about these requirements? How will they help you to be a disciple of Jesus Christ?
- What’s important about your name? What is the story behind why your parents gave you your name?

Media Connections

- The song “God Has Chosen Me,” by Bernadette Farrell (OCP Publications, 1990), works well as a conclusion to the closing prayer.
- The movie *Remember the Titans* (2000, 120 minutes, rated A-II and PG) is based on true events and tells the story of an African American coach who is called on by the community to lead a football team that has recently been forced to integrate. A clip from the beginning of the movie, when the coach responds, works well after step C, “Called and Chosen.”
- The animated movie *Prince of Egypt* (1998, 99 minutes, rated A-II and PG) tells the story of Moses’ call and his leading of the Hebrew people out of slavery and across the Red Sea. The early part of the movie that describes Moses’ call by God and his encounter with the burning bush works well after step C, “Called and Chosen.”

Note: For movies with a U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) rating of A-II, show only preselected scenes. Obtain parental permission for the participants who are under age thirteen to view an A-II rated movie, and use your best judgment regarding the appropriateness of the film and the advisability of viewing relevant excerpts.

Session 2

Baptism: Waters of New Life

2

Session Overview

This session explores the meaning and significance of being baptized and helps the participants see the relationship between Baptism and Confirmation. A brainstorming activity gets the candidates thinking about the life-giving and the destructive power of water. In the second activity, the ambiguous nature of water is related to Baptism. Then the participants deepen their understanding of Baptism by acting out everyday scenarios of “dying and rising to new life.” The session extensions provide the candidates with opportunities to reflect on their own Baptisms and the role of their godparents.

Objectives

Enable the participants to do the following:

- explore the life-giving and the destructive power of water and the significance of this for understanding the meaning of Baptism
- understand the effects of Baptism

At a Glance

A. Welcome and Opening Prayer	(5 minutes)
B. Water Brings Life and Death	(10 minutes)
C. Holy Waters of Baptism	(15 minutes)
D. Dying and Rising: A Simulation Game	(20 minutes)
E. Closing Prayer	(10 minutes)

Optional Session Extensions

Baptism Mind Map	(15 minutes)
Journal Activity: A Letter to My Godparents	(15 minutes)

2

Materials and Preparation

Materials Needed

Gather the following items:

- a large, clear bowl filled with water
- a Bible marked at Exodus 14:21–31
- a marker
- at least five blank index cards
- recorded music (see the “Media Connections” section) and appropriate player (optional)

Preparation Tasks

- Recruit a volunteer to read Exodus 14:21–31 during the opening prayer.
- Write each of the following items on separate index cards:
 - You and your best friend drift apart, and eventually the friendship ends. However, you find a new friend who introduces you to a whole new group of friends.
 - A portion of your town is flooded, including your neighborhood. You lose most of your things, which is very hard on you, but soon people you don’t even know step in to help your family. You feel a sense of belonging, a sense of community, that you’ve never experienced before.
 - Your best friend moves out of state. You find ways to stay connected, and your friend comes to stay with you during the summer.
 - Your dad is diagnosed with a serious disease. He can’t do all the things he used to do. Now you spend a lot more time with him, and your relationship with him is stronger than ever.
 - You’re devastated when you get cut from the basketball team. You join the band (or another club) and you find it is way more fun than basketball.

Note: If you want to have more than five small groups or play two rounds of the game, make additional cards with your own “dying and rising to new life” ideas.

Catechist Prayer

God of life, out of love you have created Heaven and earth and all the peoples of the earth. Through the power of your holy waters, you made me one of your own. As I was baptized in the name of the Father, and of

the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, may I live a life of love. May I reflect his image to those I catechize, and by your grace bring them closer to you. I ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Background Reading

- *Anointed in the Spirit Candidate Handbook*, chapter 2
- *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 1262–1274 (effects of Baptism), 694–696 (symbols of the Holy Spirit)
- Exodus 14:21–31
- *Apostolic Constitution on the Sacrament of Confirmation*, nos. 1–3

Session Steps

A. Welcome and Opening Prayer (5 minutes)

1. **Welcome** everyone and make any announcements.
2. **Light** the candle, **make** the Sign of the Cross, and **lead** everyone in saying, “Let us remember that we are in the holy presence of God.”
3. **Open** with these comments:
 - In this session, we’re going to look at the first initiation sacrament we all receive: Baptism. A person must be baptized to be confirmed. Understanding the meaning and significance of Baptism is necessary to grasp the meaning and significance of Confirmation. Confirmation will complete the process of your initiation that began with your Baptism. One of the ways we’ll explore Baptism is by talking about water. In our opening prayer, we will hear an important Old Testament story in which water plays a key part.
4. **Invite** the designated reader to proclaim Exodus 14:21–31. Then pause for a moment of silence.
5. **Comment:**
 - We hear in the Book of Exodus how the Red Sea was a source of both life and death. By parting the Red Sea, God brought freedom, and therefore new life, to the Israelites. The same waters brought death to the Egyptians and an end to the slavery the Israelites endured. Today we’re going to talk about water and how it can cause death and sustain life and how both aspects of the power of water relate to Baptism and Confirmation.

6. **Pray** the following opening prayer:

- God of life, by the power of the Holy Spirit, you brought the Israelites through the waters of the Red Sea from slavery to freedom, from death to new life. Bless our gathering today as we explore the wonder of the holy waters of Baptism, through which we are created anew. We ask this in your name, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Close with the Sign of the Cross.

B. Water Brings Life and Death (10 minutes)

1. **Walk** to the large bowl of water. Using your fingertips, playfully sprinkle water droplets onto some of the candidates as you ask them to think about their experiences with water.
2. **Invite** the participants to brainstorm ways people use and encounter water. Challenge them to name as many ways as possible. **Recruit** a volunteer to record the ideas on the board. If the candidates need help getting started, ask them to turn to page 27 in the handbook and read the first paragraph. If you notice that the participants are identifying only positive, life-giving experiences or uses of water, ask them to look

A


2 Baptism: Waters of New Life

A What comes to your mind when you think about water—swimming, waterslides, a warm bath or shower, walking along the seashore, rainy days, mud puddles, water bottles, water balloons, drinking fountains, fishing, boating? Maybe some less positive things come to mind too, like flooding, hurricanes, stories of people getting caught in strong currents?

Water Brings Life and Death

Water is a source of life. We drink it every day. It's in our sports drinks and orange juice. It's in most everything we drink and eat, and we need it to survive. We cook with it, bathe with it, and play in it. You've probably heard that approximately two-thirds of the human body is made up of water and that approximately 70 percent of the earth's surface is covered with water. Water is absolutely essential for life.

At the same time, water can bring destruction, and even death. Thousands of people die each year in drowning accidents. Hurricane Katrina destroyed lives



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Cool rainwater on your skin makes you feel alive and free. In what way is the water of Baptism associated with life and freedom?

Baptism: Waters of New Life 27

and homes in New Orleans and along the Gulf Coast. Floods, tsunamis, and cyclones kill people and wipe out property all over the world. Severe storms and floods may have done damage not too far from where you live. You may even be a bit frightened when a severe thunderstorm hits your area.

Water can be scary, but it can also be beautiful and enjoyable. A white sandy beach with the sun setting over the water is a magnificent sight. But that same water could take your life.

Water brings us joy, refreshment, and life, but it also can bring death and destruction. The waters of Baptism do the same. They bring both life and death. In Baptism the water is a sacramental symbol that signifies what God does in the Sacrament. By the power of the Holy Spirit, God gives us new life in Christ and makes us a new creation. We are born anew and made members of Christ's Body, the Church.

Baptismal waters are also associated with destruction. Through Baptism the Holy Spirit destroys sin and death. By the power of the Holy Spirit, the waters of Baptism wash away all sins, both Original Sin and personal sin, as well as the punishment for sin.

B



Water is very powerful and can be destructive. How could new life come forth from the devastation caused by this flood? In Baptism, how does new life come from death?

at the image on page 28 of the handbook and then point out a few additional examples of water being destructive (flooding, drowning, rip-tides, tidal waves).

3. **Review** the brainstormed list. **Point out** examples of water bringing or sustaining life and examples of water bringing death or destruction.

Comment:

- Water is a necessity of life. It keeps us alive. It is absolutely essential for life (*refer to the examples the candidates named*). We need it to drink and to grow our food, keeping us healthy. At the same time, we see that water can destroy life (*refer to the examples the candidates named*). Water brings both life and death.
4. **Point** to the bowl of water and **ask** the participants how they would describe what water symbolizes. If necessary, explain that water is a symbol of both life and death.

C. Holy Waters of Baptism (15 minutes)

1. **Cup** your hand and **scoop** some water into it, letting the water fall back into the bowl as you begin an explanation of the waters of Baptism: