

Family Faith Formation

COME, HOLY SPIRIT!

The Sacrament of Confirmation

Resource for Adults:

- Confirmation: Strengthened by the Spirit, Called to Action (handout)
<http://www.usccb.org/about/justice-peace-and-human-development/upload/Confirmation-handout.pdf>
- Matthew Kelly (video)—Session 10.1—What is Confirmation?
Session 10.4—On the Day
<http://dynamiccatholic.com/confirmation/view-program/session-10/>

Objectives for Adults:

- Understand what the Sacrament of Confirmation is in the Initiation process
- Understand the Rite of Confirmation, its words and symbols

Objectives for Children:

- Learn about the Sacrament of Confirmation
- Understand Confirmation as one of the three Sacraments of Initiation
- Know and understand the meanings of the symbols and words used in the Sacrament of Confirmation

Objectives for Family:

- Make an action plan that will involve all family members
- Encourage weekly Mass attendance

Welcome/Introduce Theme: (5-10 min.) Families begin together

Today we will learn how Confirmation makes us stronger Christians through the gift of the Holy Spirit. We will also learn about the symbols and words used to celebrate the sacraments and recognize the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

Opening Prayers (10 minutes)

Sign of the Cross, Our Father, and Hail Mary

Scripture Reading: The Promise of the Spirit/Ascension of Jesus (Acts 1:4-8)

Sharing: Adults share with their children about their own experience of celebrating Confirmation (if they can remember that far back!)

Glory Be . . .

*Dismiss children to their own session.

Parents/Adult Presentation (30-40 min.)

Give handouts:

Confirmation: Strengthened by the Spirit, Called to Action

Highlight with participants and use some of the discussion questions.

Introduce videos:

Explain that although the video is geared toward teens/young adults it has good information for you as well, replace “you” with “your child” in your mind while you are viewing it.

Matthew Kelly <http://dynamiccatholic.com/confirmation/view-program/session-10/>

Sessions 10.4

Go over key points and answer any questions.

Children’s Presentation: (30-40 min.)

Use the Chapter on Confirmation in your Parish Program.

Sharing and Action Plan—Children and Parents together (15-20 min.)

Discuss with your child one or more of the symbols of Confirmation (handout #1).

During the weeks before Confirmation, practice the Confirmation rite with your child and go to Mass regularly to practice Mass responses.

Talk about the gifts of the Spirit with your child each night at dinner. (handout #2)

Prepare the rite below on card stock or index cards. One per family

Practicing the Rite of Confirmation

<u>SPONSOR(s) say:</u>	Bishop, I present (<u>First name of child</u>) to be confirmed.
<u>Bishop says:</u>	<i>makes a tiny cross with Holy Chrism on their forehead as he says:</i> (<u>Name of child</u>) be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit.
<u>CHILD says:</u>	AMEN.
<u>Bishop says:</u>	Peace be with you.
<u>CHILD says:</u>	AND WITH YOUR SPIRIT. (NO handshake is done as in the past.)

Activity

Have cutouts of 6-8 in. flames (one per family) and explain that this is one of the symbols of the Holy Spirit. Have families write their names on the backs of these and on the front, write down their family action plan. (see Sharing & Action plan)

Closing Prayer and Ritual: (10-15 min.)

At this time, parents stand with their children. Each parent places a hand on their child's head and says the following prayer. (Each family should be given a copy of the prayer.)

Send your Holy Spirit upon (Name) to be his/her Helper and Guide.
Give him/her the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of right judgment and courage,
the spirit of knowledge and reverence.
Fill him/her with the Spirit of wonder and awe in your presence.
Amen.

Dismissal

Handout #1 for Discussion

Focus on the Symbols

Let's reflect, then, on the symbols of Confirmation:

Laying on of Hands. Remember how often Jesus touched the people he healed? See, for instance, the cure of Jairus's sick daughter (Mark 5:21-24, 35-43). Elsewhere in Scripture, the laying on of hands brought the Spirit's life-giving power for service and ministry (see Acts 6:6 and 13:3). Through the ritual gesture, our children are blessed and empowered to bring their unique gifts to the people of God.

Anointing With Chrism. The word *chrism* is related to the word *Christ*, which means "anointed." The ancient Hebrews anointed kings and priests, marking that person as sacred. Later, Christians called Jesus the Christ, the Messiah, the anointed one. When the bishop blesses the oil on Holy Thursday, he invokes the Spirit so that those to be anointed will share in Christ's "royal, priestly and prophetic honor."

When our children are anointed, then, they share in Jesus' mission. They are marked with a new identity that cannot be changed. In the rite we ask that this seal will make them more like Christ.

Signing With the Cross. Our children are familiar with insignia which mark one a member of a certain fraternity, sorority or military branch. Gang colors identify their members, as uniforms do theirs. What does it mean to be marked with the sign of the cross? It grounds our life firmly in Jesus' life and empowers us to remain faithful in adversity.

Marking our children with the cross at Confirmation, as they were marked at Baptism, reminds them of their Christian identity, their call to mission and the price they must pay to witness to Jesus. Young people who seek heroes can identify here with the greatest hero who ever lived. Jesus in turn calls them to love the difficult, to live out the adage that youth was made for heroism.

Gift of Peace. The exchange of peace is an ancient ritual reminding us of our unity as children of God. The Holy Spirit makes us sharers in God's gift of peace and calls us to share peace with others. Help our children discover ways they share peace with others each day.

Taken from:

<http://www.americancatholic.org/Messenger/May2002/Feature2.asp#F4>

Handout #2 for Discussion at Home

Through our relationship with the Holy Spirit, we benefit from seven gifts (from Isaiah 11:2-3)

- **Wisdom** – the ability to recognize the importance of keeping God central in our lives
- **Understanding** – the ability to understand the meaning of God’s message
- **Knowledge** – the ability to think about and explore God’s revelation, and also to recognize there are mysteries of faith beyond us
- **Fortitude** – the courage to do what one knows is right
- **Counsel** – the ability to see the best way to follow God’s plan when we have choices that relate to Him
- **Piety** – the practice of praying to God with true devotion
- **Wonder & Awe** – an attitude of amazement before God, who is all-present, and whose friendship we do not want to lose