

# ***The Sacrament of Confirmation***



*Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me.*

*-Ps 51:12*

# Confirmation

(from Latin confirmation = strengthening, consolidation) Confirmation like Baptism and the Eucharist, is one of the three sacraments of initiation of the Catholic Church. As the Holy Spirit descended upon the disciples who were gathered on Pentecost, so the Holy Spirit comes to every baptized person for whom the Church requests the gift of the Holy Spirit. It secures and strengthens him to be a living witness to Christ.

# Sacred Chrism

(from Greek chrisma = oil of anointing; and cristos = anointed one). Chrism is an ointment made out of a mixture of olive oil and balsam. On the morning of Holy Thursday, the Bishop consecrates it, so that it can be used in Baptism Confirmation, priestly and episcopal ordination, and also the consecration of altars and bells. Oil is a symbol of joy, strength and health. People anointed with chrism are supposed to spread "the aroma of Christ" (2 For 2:15)

# Holy Spirit

The Third Person of the Blessed Trinity, understood as the perfect love between God, the Father, and the Son, Jesus Christ, who inspires, guides, and sanctifies the life of believers.

The term "Spirit" translates the Hebrew word ruah, which, in its primary sense, means breath, air, wind. Jesus indeed uses the sensory image of the wind to suggest to Nicodemus the transcendent newness of him who is personally God's breath, the divine Spirit. On the other hand, "spirit" and "Holy" are divine attributes common to the three divine persons. By joining the two terms, Scripture, liturgy, and theological language designate the inexpressible person of the Holy Spirit, without any possible equivocation with other uses of the terms "spirit" and "holy"

# Rites of Confirmation

## Introductory Rites

Everyone gathers for the celebration. The candidates and sponsors may be invited to participate in the opening procession.

## Liturgy of the Word

All will hear the Word of God proclaimed. The readings will be those designated for the day on which Confirmation is celebrated, or they will be specially selected from a list of readings suggested in the Lectionary. “It is from hearing of the word of God that the many-sided work of the Holy Spirit flows out upon the Church and upon each one of the baptized and confirmed”.

## Presentation of the candidates

A leader from the parish will present the candidates to the bishop. Unless the size of the group prevents it, the person making the presentation will call the candidates names.

Will those who are to be confirmed from Our Lady of Guadalupe Church, please stand.

Bishop, these people, our brothers and sisters, have been involved in a process of preparation leading to the Sacrament of Confirmation. They have been found ready, and we now ask you to complete their Christian initiation, confirming in the name of Christ and the Church.

## Homily

The Liturgy of the Word continues with the homily. The bishop will explain the readings and help the community come to a deeper understanding of the Sacrament of Confirmation. At the end of the homily, he will ask the candidates to profess their faith by renewing their baptismal promises.

## Renewal of Baptismal Promises

The renewal of these promises help express the close connection between Baptism and Confirmation. The response, a series of “I do’s,” may appear simple, but the meaning is all important. The candidates denounce Satan and profess belief in the Trinity-Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. After the profession the bishop says: “This is our faith. This is the Faith of the Church. We are proud to profess it in Christ Jesus our Lord”(Rite of Confirmation, 27). All the people gathered respond, “Amen.”

**V:** Do you reject Satan?

**R:** I do.

**V.** And all his works?

**R:** I do.

**V:** And all his empty promises?

**R:** I do.

**V:** Do you believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth?

**R:** I do.

**V.** Do you believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary, was crucified, died, and was buried, rose from the dead, and is now seated at the right hand of the Father?

**R:** I do.

**V.** Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of the sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting?

**R.** I do.

**V.** God the all powerful Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, has given us a new birth by water and the Holy Spirit, and forgiven all our sins. May he also keep us faithful to our Lord Jesus Christ forever and ever.

**R.** Amen

## Laying On of hands

The Bishop and the priests extend their hands over the whole group of candidates, a gesture that signifies the gift of the Holy Spirit. The bishop invokes the Holy Spirit, using the consecratory prayer. He prays to the father, asking him to send his Holy Spirit upon the candidates.

All powerful God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, by water and the Holy Spirit you freed your sons and daughters from sin and gave them new life. Send your Holy Spirit upon them to be their helper and guide. Give them the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of right judgement and courage, the spirit of knowledge and reverence. Fill them with the spirit of wonder and awe in your presence.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

## Anointing with Chrism

This is the heart of the Sacrament of Confirmation. The sponsors present their candidates to the bishop and place their right hands on their candidates' shoulders as a sign of support and commitment to helping them live faithfully. Then the bishop dips his right thumb in the Chrism and traces the Sign of the Cross on the candidates' foreheads, saying their names and the words, "Be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit." The candidates respond, "Amen." After the anointing the bishop says, "Peace be with you." The candidates respond, "And with your spirit." This exchange is a sign of the bond or communion shared by all the faithful with one another and with the bishop.

**Bishop:** Be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit

**Candidate:** Amen

**Bishop:** Peace be with you

**Candidate:** And with your spirit

**Obispo:** Recibe por esta señal, el Espíritu Santo

**Candidato:** Amen

**Obispo:** La paz este contigo

**Candidato:** Y con su Espíritu

## Prayer of the Faithful

All join together in prayer. The community responds, "Lord, hear our prayer" or something similar.

## Liturgy of the Eucharist

The celebration of Confirmation is normally celebrated within a Mass. This helps highlight the unity of the three Sacraments of Christian Initiation and the communion shared among all the faithful with God.

# The effects of Confirmation



*“Peace be with you. As the Father sent me so I am sending you. Receive the Holy Spirit ”*

*John 20:21-23*

The Sacrament of Confirmation has two primary effects. The first is that the confirmed person’s bond with the Church is strengthened. The second is that the person is enriched with an outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Both of these effects bring to perfection the grace that is first received in Baptism and are the basis for the following specific ways that the Sacrament affects the life of a Christian.

Confirmed people more closely identify themselves with Jesus Christ. They reflect more deeply on how living by Jesus’ values affects their relationship with friends, family, and strangers. They desire to be Christ’s hands and feet, reaching out to serve others need. They hope that when other people hear their words and see their actions, those people see a reflection of Christ acting in the world today. Confirmed people are drawn into deeper participation in the life of the Church. Confirmed people are proud to be Catholic and want to share with others the joy and support they experience as a member of the Church.

Confirmed people experience a growth in the spiritual Gifts of the Holy Spirit:

**Wisdom** - With the gift of wisdom, we see God at work in our lives and in the world. For the wise person, the wonders of nature, historical events, and the ups and downs of our lives take on deeper meaning and purpose.

**Understanding** - With the gift of understanding, we comprehend how we need to live as followers of Jesus Christ. A person with understanding is not confused by all the conflicting messages in our culture about the right way to live.

**Right Judgement** - With the gift of the right judgement, sometimes called counsel, we know the difference between right and wrong, and we choose to do what is right. A person with right judgement avoids sin and lives out the values taught by Jesus.

**Courage** - With the gift of courage, sometimes called fortitude, we overcome our fear and are willing to take risks as a follower of Jesus. A person with courage is willing to stand up for what is right in the sight of God, even if it means accepting rejection, verbal abuse, or even physical harm and death.

**Knowledge** - With the gift of knowledge, we understand the meaning of God's Revelation, especially as expressed in the life and words of Jesus Christ. A person with knowledge is always learning more about Scripture and Tradition.

**Reverence** - With the gift of reverence-sometimes called piety - we have a deep sense of respect for God and the Church. A person with reverence recognizes our total reliance on God and comes before God with humility, trust, and love.

**Wonder and awe** - With the gift of wonder and awe (fear of the Lord), we are aware of the glory and majesty of God. A person with wonder and awe knows that God is the perfection of all we desire: knowledge, perfect goodness, perfect power, and perfect love.

## **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 full fledged, responsible member of the Catholic Church.

[1285-1314]

When a coach sends a 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; new will win the game for him. We just have to want to do it and listen to him.

## **What does Sacred Scripture say about the sacrament of Confirmation?**

In the Old Testament, the People of God expected the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the Messiah. Jesus lived his life a special Spirit of love and of perfect unity with his father in heaven. This Spirit of Jesus was the "Holy Spirit" for whom the people of Israel longed; this was the same Spirit whom Jesus promised to his disciples, the same Spirit who descended upon the disciples fifty days after Easter, on the feast of Pentecost. And it is again this same Holy Spirit of Jesus who descends upon everyone who receives the Sacrament of Confirmation.

[1288-1315]

In the Acts of the Apostles, which were written a few decades after the death of Jesus, we see Peter and John traveling about to confirm new Christians by imposing hands on those who previously "had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus", so that their hearts might be filled with the Holy Spirit.



## **What happens in Confirmation?**

In Confirmation the soul of the 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 confirmands 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 for 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 lifer 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.

## **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 to not 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.

## **Who may confirm?**

The Sacrament of Confirmation is normally administered by the Bishop. For weighty reasons when necessary, the bishop can also delegate a priest to do it. In danger of death any priest can administer Confirmation.

[132-1314]

## ***Symbols of Rite of Confirmation***

### **Water**

Recalls Baptism

United in Christ through journey  
to the cross/resurrection

### **Laying on of hands**

Receiving the Holy spirit

#### Gifts

Wisdom

Understanding

Right Judgment

Courage

Knowledge

Reverence

Wonder and Awe

### **Anointing with Chrism**

Conforming to Christ

Take on Christ's role as Priest, Prophet and King

Christ Bearers

### **Gift of Peace**

Continuing the mission of Christ to the world

Discerning giftedness and the use of these gifts in  
transforming the world to the Peace of Christ

***Let's ask ourselves:***

***are we open to the Holy Spirit,  
do we pray to the Holy Spirit  
to enlighten us,  
to make us more sensitive  
to the things of God?***

***This is a prayer  
we need to pray every day:***

***Holy Spirit,  
may my heart be open  
to the Word of God,  
may my heart be open to good,  
may my heart be open  
to the beauty of God,  
every day.***

Pope Francis

