

The Sacrament of Confirmation

A Four-Part Catechetical Video Series

with Cardinal Wuerl



The One whom the Father has sent into our hearts, the Spirit of his Son, is truly God.

Catechism of the Catholic Church, 689.

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Introduction and Overview for the Catechist

This video-based program is designed to be used as a part of the spiritual and catechetical preparation students make as they prepare for the celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation.

This program is formatted in such a manner that the four lessons may be taught over a period of time, preferably four one-hour sessions. Over the course of the program the Cardinal moves the students from an understanding of the Church and the Sacraments of Initiation which bring them to become full members of the Church, to encouraging the students to become active witnesses to the love of God in their lives that is their Christian right and duty.

In offering this video lesson series, the Cardinal exercises his ministry to teach, conferred upon him in his consecration as Bishop. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* states: “By virtue, therefore, of the Holy Spirit who has been given to them, bishops have been constituted true and authentic teachers of the faith and have been made pontiffs and pastors”(CCC, 1558).

The catechetical notes on the following two pages are offered to provide a context for the sacrament of Confirmation. The short paragraphs reflect thoughts on the theology of the sacrament, as well as common misunderstandings. They are not essential to the lessons themselves, but help lay a foundation upon which the catechist may more fruitfully supplement the Sacrament of Confirmation Video Series.

Lesson Components

Each lesson includes a:

- video segment – in which Cardinal Wuerl offers a 10 minute teaching on the lesson topic
- catechist guide – which contains objectives, prayer and supplemental catechetical material to build upon the video lesson
- student lesson packet - which includes a video worksheet and an accompanying prayer and reflection activity

Suggested Lesson Presentation:

- opening prayer and Scripture Reflection
- introduction of video lesson topic
- video presentation
- review key points of video lesson
- closing prayer and reflection

Additional Resources:

- Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) available online at: <http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/what-we-believe/catechism/catechism-of-the-catholic-church/epub/index.cfm>
- United States Catholic Catechism for Adults (USCCA)
- Rite of Confirmation
- Liturgical Norms and Policies of the Archdiocese of Washington

Catechetical Notes on Confirmation

Dignity of Confirmation:

1. Those who have been baptized continue on the path of Christian initiation through the sacrament of confirmation. In this sacrament they receive the Holy Spirit whom the Lord sent upon the apostles at Pentecost.
2. This giving of the Holy Spirit conforms believers more fully to Christ and strengthens them so that they may bear witness to Christ for the building up of his Body in faith and love. They are so marked with the character or seal of the Lord that the sacrament of confirmation cannot be repeated (From the Rite of Confirmation, *Catholic Rites Today*).

Sacraments of Initiation:

Baptism, the Eucharist, and confirmation together constitute the “sacraments of Christian initiation,” whose unity must be safeguarded. It must be explained to the faithful that the reception of confirmation is necessary for the completion of baptismal grace.

Confirmation, then, should be understood in the context of Christian initiation, and not as a method of marking the “coming of age” of a candidate, since the sacrament of confirmation is in fact administered to people from infancy through adulthood (Liturgical Norms and Policies, 4.1.4-4.1.5).

Indelible Character of Confirmation:

Confirmation confers on the baptized an indelible character, the seal of the Lord, and enriches them with the gifts of the Holy Spirit which conforms them more closely to Christ, binds them more perfectly to the Church, and gives them grace and strength, as true witnesses of Christ, to spread the Lord’s presence among others and to defend the faith by word and deed (Liturgical Norms and Policies, 4.1.3).

Role of the Bishop:

Normally a bishop administers the sacrament so that there will be a clearer reference to the first pouring forth of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost: after the apostles were filled with the Holy Spirit, they themselves gave the Spirit to the faithful through the laying on of hands. Thus the reception of the Spirit through the ministry of the bishop shows the close bond that joins the confirmed to the Church and the mandate received from Christ to bear witness to him (Rite for Confirmation, 7).

“Adult in the Church”

“Although Confirmation is sometimes called the ‘sacrament of Christian maturity,’ we must not confuse adult faith with the adult age of natural growth, nor forget that the baptismal grace is a grace of free, unmerited election and does not need ‘ratification’ to become effective. St. Thomas reminds us of this:

Age of body does not determine the age of soul. Even in childhood man can attain spiritual maturity: as the book of *Wisdom* says: ‘For old age is not honored for length of time, or measured by number of years.’ Many children, through the strength of the Holy Spirit they have received, have bravely fought for Christ even to the shedding of their blood” (CCC, 1308).

Preparation:

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 biddings – 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. (Liturgical Norms and Policies, 4.10.4)

The Effects of Confirmation:

Confirmation brings an increase and deepening of baptismal grace:

- it roots us more deeply in the divine filiation [becoming adopted sons and daughters of God] which makes us cry, “Abba! Father!”;
- it unites us more firmly to Christ;
- it increases the gifts of the Holy Spirit in us;
- it renders our bond with the Church more perfect;
- it gives us a special strength of the Holy Spirit to spread and defend the faith by word and action as true witnesses of Christ, to confess the name of Christ boldly, and never to be ashamed of the Cross.

(CCC, 1303)

Catechist Guides

Lesson 1: What is the Church?

Lesson 1: Objectives:

In this lesson the student will learn that:

1. Church refers to the whole community of believers who are members of God's family.
2. When Jesus ascended to heaven he wanted to remain with us so he established the Church as a way that he could continue to be present with us.
3. Because the Church is a mystery, we need images to help us understand the mystery.
4. The four primary images we use to describe the Church are: Body of Christ, People of God, beginning of God's Kingdom and the Gate of Heaven.
5. We can say Jesus is with us spiritually in the Church through: God's Word, the Sacraments and in the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Catechist Further Reading:

Catechism of the Catholic Church: Paragraphs 751-776.

USCCA: Chapter 10 - The Church: Reflecting the Life of Christ

Opening Prayer:

Leader: As we begin the time together growing in our love and knowledge of the Lord, we pray that the Holy Spirit come upon us. May our hearts and minds be open to the grace and love that God bestows through his Son and in the Holy Spirit as we pray together...

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created. And You shall renew the face of the earth.

O, God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit, did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may be truly wise and ever enjoy His consolations, through Christ Our Lord, Amen.

Video: Introduce video lesson topic – What is the Church

Our understanding of the Church and of our role as members of the Church is essential because in the sacrament of confirmation we become full members in, and active witnesses of, the Church in the world.

You may wish to distribute the Lesson 1 video worksheet to the students to complete as they view the video

Post-video questions for discussion:

- What is the Church?
- What image of the Church do you most like, and why?
- Why did Jesus establish the Church?
- Why would we describe the Church as mystery?
- In what ways is Jesus in heaven, yet present in the Church today?

Student Prayer and Reflection Activity (based on 1 Corinthians 12:12-31)

Closing Prayer:

God our Father, let the Spirit you sent on your Church to begin the teaching of the gospel continue to work in the world through the hearts of all who believe. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen. (From the liturgical prayers for the Feast of the Solemnity of Pentecost)

Lesson 2: Baptism and Confirmation

Lesson Objectives:

In this lesson the student will learn that:

1. All seven sacraments contain an outward element (a visible, tangible, audible sign) established by Christ to provide us contact with Him, to allow his grace to touch us.
2. Baptism is the first sacrament, it parallels our birth, it brings us to new life, makes us members of the Church and alive in the gift of the Holy Spirit.
3. We need Confirmation and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit to renew the gift of the Holy Spirit first received in Baptism.
4. Confirmation makes you a full member of the Church and an active witness for Christ in the world.

Catechist Further Reading:

Catechism of the Catholic Church: Paragraphs 1212 - 1321

USCCA: Chapter 15: Baptism: Becoming a Christian; Chapter 16: Confirmation: Consecrated for Mission

Catholic Rites Today: Rite of Baptism and Rite of Confirmation

Liturgical Norm and Policies: Chapter 3: Baptism of Infants; Chapter 4: Confirmation

Opening Prayer:

(You may want to have symbols of Baptism arranged on a prayer table: water, white garment, candle, etc.)

Leader: Sacred Scripture reveals to us God's saving plan of love. God speaks to us in Scripture; our prayer is a response to God's call. As you listen to the Word of God, listen with your mind and your heart, let the words fill you with the promise they hold:

R:/ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavens.

Reader: A reading from the Letter of St. Paul to the Ephesians. (1:1-6)

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, to the holy ones who are [in Ephesus] faithful in Christ Jesus: grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavens, as he chose us in him, before the foundation of the world, to be holy and without blemish before him. In love he destined us for adoption to himself through Jesus Christ, in accord with the favor of his will, for the praise of the glory of his grace that he granted us in the beloved.

R:/ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavens.

Video: Introduce video lesson topic – Baptism and Confirmation

The Sacraments of Initiation are the foundation of the Christian life. Baptism begins our journey in the life of the Church, Confirmation strengthens the grace of Baptism and the Eucharist sustains us with the Body and Blood of Christ. It is important for us to understand that there is a unity among sacraments, particularly the sacraments of initiation. This video looks at the deep connection between the sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation.

Post-video questions for discussion:

- Why is Baptism the fundamental and primary sacrament?
- What is original sin?
- What are the visible signs in the sacrament of Baptism?
- What are the visible signs in the sacrament of Confirmation?
- What is the connection between the visible signs of the Rite and their spiritual realities?
- Why do we renew our baptismal promises during the Confirmation liturgy?

Closing Prayer:

Leader: At your Baptism, someone else professed your Baptismal promises for you. At Confirmation you will renew these promises in your own name in a formal profession with the Bishop. However, we profess our faith each Sunday when we pray the Creed. When we pray the Creed we say “I do believe” to our faith. As we close this lesson, let us pray together the Creed:

I believe in one God, the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the Only Begotten Son of God, born of the Father before all ages.

God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God, begotten, not made,
consubstantial with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us men and for our salvation
he came down from heaven, and by the Holy Spirit
was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate,
he suffered death and was buried,
and rose again on the third day
in accordance with the Scriptures.
He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead
and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.

I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.
I confess one baptism for the forgiveness of sins
and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Lesson 3: The Eucharist

Lesson Objectives:

In this lesson the student will learn that:

1. Eucharist is our spiritual food for the spiritual life that we received in baptism, and that is strengthened in Confirmation.
2. The Church understands the saving actions of Jesus are made present, and our redemption is carried out, in every Eucharistic celebration.
3. Jesus is present in all the sacraments, but He is uniquely present in the Eucharist.
4. The presence of the Eucharist in the tabernacle allows us to pray in the real presence of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament and reserves the Eucharist for the sick and dying in their time of need.
5. The Eucharist is the center of our spiritual lives; everything flows from our receiving the Eucharist regularly and worthily.

Catechist Further Reading:

Catechism of the Catholic Church: Paragraphs 1322 -1344.

USCCA: Chapter 17: The Eucharist: Source and Summit of the Christian Life.

Catholic Rites Today: The Importance and Dignity of the Eucharistic Celebration.

Liturgical Norms and Policies: Chapter 5: Introduction.

Opening prayer:

Catechetical Note: This prayer is taken from Eucharistic Prayer, IV of the new Roman Missal. The Eucharistic prayer is the most ancient portion of the Mass. The Eucharistic prayer is the central part of the sacramental preparation.

Leader: As we prepare to learn more about the importance of the Eucharist in our lives, we pray an ancient Eucharistic prayer.

Prayer:

And you so loved the world, Father most holy,
that in the fullness of time you sent your Only Begotten Son to be our Savior.
Made incarnate by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary,
he shared our human nature in all things but sin.
To the poor he proclaimed the good news of salvation,
to prisoners, freedom, and to the sorrowful of heart, joy.
To accomplish your plan, he gave himself up to death,
and, rising from the dead, he destroyed death and restored life.
And that we might live no longer for ourselves but for him who died and rose again for us,
he sent the Holy Spirit from you, Father, as the first fruits for those who believe,
so that, bringing to perfection his work in the world,
he might sanctify creation to the full.

Leader: Knowing that Jesus did not leave us alone in the world, may our hearts be open to the gift of Jesus present in the Eucharist. May we always say, “thank you, God” for this most amazing gift of the Eucharist. We ask this through Christ our Lord, Amen.

Video: Introduce video lesson topic – The Eucharist

When we receive the Eucharist we participate in an intimate sharing in Christ Jesus. It is in the Eucharist that we most fully experience the real and enduring presence of God with us. The Church calls the Eucharist the “source and summit” of the Christian life. That means everything flows from and to the Eucharist. Communion renews and strengthens us in the Church.

Post-video questions for discussion:

- What do we mean when we say the Eucharist is the Real Presence?
- What can we do to receive the Eucharist more worthily?
- How has the video influenced your appreciation of the Eucharist?
- When did Jesus establish the Eucharist? What is the significance of this?
- When Jesus was teaching the disciples about the Eucharist as his Body and Blood, some of them said that it was a “hard teaching” so they turned away from Jesus. Do you find this hard teaching? How do you respond? Do you walk away? What other responses could there be?
- Do you remember your First Holy Communion? Share memories of the First Communion with others.

Lesson 4: Living the Christian Faith

Lesson Objectives

In this lesson the student will learn that:

1. We need the sacraments of initiation, particularly confirmation and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, to live the Christian life amid the challenges of the world today.
2. In the Gospels we hear Jesus speaking to us: it is his teaching, his message, his inspiration. We hear and respond to this message as we try to apply the teaching of Jesus to our lives today.
3. We must form our conscience to do good and avoid doing evil. The Church helps us to discern the truth of what is good and evil through the teachings found in the Catechism of the Catholic Church and similar resources.
4. To live our faith we need both knowledge and friendship with God. Prayer is the means to develop this relationship with God.

Catechist Further Reading:

Catechism of the Catholic Church: Paragraphs 1776 - 1948.

USCCA: Chapter 23: Life in Christ, Christian Morality

Opening Prayer:

(Prayer for this lesson is modeled on the antiphonal psalm prayer. This form of prayer has been used since ancient times. Today the tradition is still in use in praying the Liturgy of the Hours, particularly in monastic communities.)

Before beginning this prayer divide the students into two sides. Explain that the leader will first proclaim the response; the students will then read aloud the respective text for their side, alternating until the end of the psalm when all will proclaim the response together.

Psalm 111 is a prayer of praise to God for his goodness:

Leader: I will give thanks to the Lord with all my heart in the company and assembly of the just.

Side A: Great are the works of the LORD,
studied by all who delight in them.

Side B: Majestic and glorious is his work,
his righteousness endures forever.

Side A: He won renown for his wondrous deeds;
gracious and merciful is the LORD.

Side B: He gives food to those who fear him,
he remembers his covenant forever.

Side A: He showed his powerful deeds to his people,
giving them the inheritance of the nations.

Side B: The works of his hands are true and just,
reliable all his decrees,

Side A: Established forever and ever,
to be observed with truth and equity.

Side B: He sent release to his people,
decreed his covenant forever;
holy and fearsome is his name.

Side A: The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom;
prudent are all who practice it.
His praise endures forever.

R:/ I will give thanks to the Lord with all my heart in the company and assembly of the just.

Video: Introduce video lesson topic – Living Out the Christian Life

In this video series we have explored the meaning of Church and how, through the sacraments of initiation we are brought into the life of God, receive the gift of the Holy Spirit and share in the passion of Christ through the Eucharist. But what does all of this have to do with your life outside of the Church? Plenty. This final video explores our duty to live our faith in the world, and how God continues to help us be witnesses of his love in our words and actions.

Post-video questions for discussion:

- Why is it important to develop our conscience?
- What will the gifts of the Spirit enable us to do with our lives?
- How can the Church help us to develop our consciences?
- Have you ever looked at the Catechism of the Catholic Church?
- Which would you check first for a question about faith: Google or the Catechism? Which is a better source?
- Which do you need to develop more: your knowledge of faith, or your life of prayer?

Closing Prayer:

Prayer to the Holy Spirit (*Saint Augustine of Hippo*)

Breathe in me, O Holy Spirit, that my thoughts may all be holy.

Act in me, O Holy Spirit, that my work, too, may be holy.

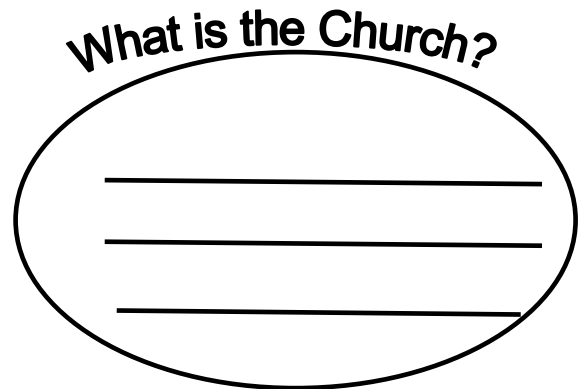
Draw my heart, O Holy Spirit, that I love but what is holy.

Strengthen me, O Holy Spirit, to defend all that is holy.

Guard me, then, O Holy Spirit, that I always may be holy. Amen.

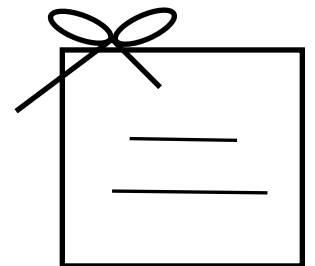
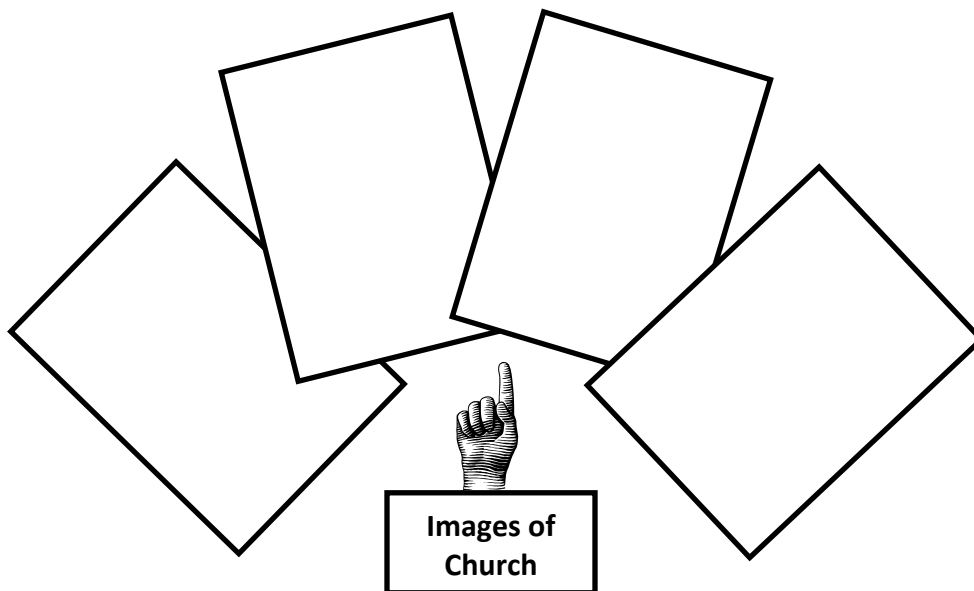
Lesson 1: What is the Church?

Lesson 1: Video Worksheet



In what 3 ways is Jesus present spiritually in the Church?

1.	_____
2.	_____
3.	_____



What gift did Jesus establish so he could stay present to us?

Lesson 1: Prayer and Reflection

Opening Prayer:

Leader: As we begin the time together growing in our love and knowledge of the Lord, we pray that the Holy Spirit come upon us. May our hearts and minds be open to the grace and love that God bestows through his Son and in the Holy Spirit as we pray together...

Come Holy Spirit

Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created. And You shall renew the face of the earth.

O, God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit, did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may be truly wise and ever enjoy His consolations, through Christ Our Lord, Amen.

Scripture Reflection: One Body, Many Parts:

Jesus established the church as a way to stay with us; a means to continue to be present in Word, Body and Blood, in love and in the gift of the Holy Spirit. With Jesus as the head, we are members of the Body of Christ, the Church. The Church continues the work of Jesus today through celebrating the sacraments, caring for others and proclaiming the Gospel. Look up and read the following Scripture passage 1 Corinthians 12: 12-31:

Reflection Questions:

How do you understand your role in the Body of Christ? Do you see yourself as an active member contributing to building up the body? Do you see the contributions of others, their faith and how it helps you to be strengthened in faith? How would you like to grow in your faith and as a member of Christ's body the Church?

Response: Pick one of these questions and write a response on the lines below.

Closing Prayer:

God our Father, let the Spirit you sent on your Church to begin the teaching of the gospel continue to work in the world through the hearts of all who believe. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen. (From the liturgical prayers for the Feast of the Solemnity of Pentecost)

Lesson 2: Baptism and Confirmation

Lesson 2: Video Worksheet



BAPTISM

Outward Signs of Baptism:

What you see:

Words you hear:



What you receive in Baptism:



1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

CONFIRMATION

Four Outward Signs of Confirmation
(What you SEE and HEAR)

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

What you receive in Confirmation:





What promises do you renew at your Confirmation?

Lesson 2: Prayer and Reflection

During the Confirmation liturgy, the bishop calls upon the Holy Spirit in this prayer which helps the faithful to understand the dignity and importance of the sacrament of confirmation.

The Laying on of Hands:

“My dear friends:

in baptism God our Father gave the new birth of eternal life
to his chosen sons and daughters.

Let us pray to our Father that he will pour out the Holy Spirit
to strengthen his sons and daughters with his gifts
and anoint them to be more like Christ the Son of God.

(pause for silent prayer)

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 judgment 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.”

Amen.

Recall the words the Cardinal used to close this session:

“Reflect in your own heart: What does it mean to you to receive these gifts of the Holy Spirit that allows you to be a disciple of Jesus, a member of His Church? What does it mean to you to receive these gifts of the Holy Spirit that empower you to be a witness of Jesus Christ in the world?

Do you believe that you receive the same energy that was poured out at Pentecost; energy to proclaim in your actions, the way you speak and the choices you make to be witness to the goodness of God?”

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Closing Prayer: The Nicene Creed

Lesson 3: The Eucharist

Lesson 3: Video Worksheet

During which Jewish feast did Jesus institute the Eucharist?



Why is the Eucharist our most important sacrament?



What is the name of this gesture of reverence?



What are the 2 reasons the Eucharist is reserved (kept) in the tabernacle?

1. _____

2. _____



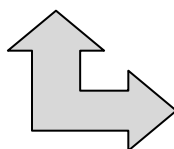
What does "Real Presence" mean?

TRUE OR FALSE ☒ ☐

Catholics believe the saving actions of Jesus are made present and our redemption is carried out in every Eucharistic celebration. ☒ ☐

Catholics believe the Eucharist actually does what it symbolizes – Jesus is really and truly present. ☒ ☐

Catholics believe we share in Christ's death and resurrection and are redeemed in this sharing. ☒ ☐



So when we gather around the altar each Sunday it is like we are gathering where?

Lesson 3: Prayer and Reflection

The Catechism of the Catholic Church identifies contemplation as a *gaze* of faith, fixed on Jesus. "I look at him and he looks at me," this is what a certain peasant of Ars in the time of his holy curé used to say while praying before the tabernacle (CCC, 2715).

In prayer of contemplation we look to Jesus. We allow our focus to be on the Lord, not ourselves. Jesus touches us as we rest in his presence; offer him your love, your fears, your joys and your challenges. His love will lighten your burdens, give you direction in times of confusion, and strength in times of trial if you allow yourself to trust in his love and mercy.

As you close this session on the Eucharist, spend some time as a class praying before the Blessed Sacrament reserved in the tabernacle:

(As you enter the church remember to genuflect reverently in the presence of the Lord in the tabernacle. When we genuflect, we make the statement that we believe God is indeed greater than we are; we bend a knee in his presence to show him the honor due Him.)

You may use the following words to St. John Vianney to begin your prayer:

"When we go before the Blessed Sacrament, let us open our heart; our good God will open His. We shall go to Him; He will come to us; the one to ask, the other to receive. It will be like a breath from one to the other."

Allow yourself to sit quietly and rest in God's presence.

Lesson 4: Living Out our Catholic Faith

Lesson 4: Video Worksheet

What are the three ways Jesus speaks to us in the Gospels?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

What three sources does Cardinal Wuerl suggest that we use to form our consciences?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____



Where do we turn when we need help understanding what Jesus is saying to us in the Gospel today?

To live our faith, what 2 things do we need to do?

1. _____
2. _____

How does Confirmation help you to live out the challenges of everyday life? (Hint: it is a gift)

How do we develop friendship with God?

Lesson 4: Prayer and Reflection

St. Ignatius Loyola, the founder of the Jesuits, developed a prayer called the *Examen*. The word sounds a little like “examination of conscience,” the prayer we use before celebrating the sacrament of reconciliation, but it has a different purpose. The *Examen* is a daily reflective prayer which helps us to find God in our daily life. There are five steps to the *Examen*; below are each of the steps with a direction and a space for your response. To help in your focus on this prayer, it is important that you write a response to each point of the exercise.

The *Examen* challenges us to look at ourselves in prayer and reflection. This is sometimes difficult, but this practice helps us to grow in our faith and to deepen our relationship with God. St. Ignatius calls this part of the Spiritual Exercises. Like any exercise, prayer requires our attention and practice as we begin to stretch and strengthen our spiritual lives.

If you have trouble beginning this prayer, offer a prayer to the Holy Spirit to open your mind and your heart to prayer. As our Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI said: “It is the Holy Spirit who helps our inability, enlightens our minds and warms our hearts, guiding our turning to God.”

The *Examen* (from the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius Loyola)

1. **The First** point is to give thanks to God our Lord for the benefits I have received.

2. **The Second** is to ask grace to know my sins and rid myself of them.

3. **The Third** is to ask an account of my soul from the hour of rising to the present examen, hour by hour or period by period; first as to thoughts, then words, then deeds.

4. **The Fourth** is to ask pardon of God our Lord for my faults.

5. **The Fifth** is to resolve, with his grace, to amend them. Close with an Our Father.

Closing Prayer:

Prayer to the Holy Spirit (*Saint Augustine of Hippo*)

Breathe in me, O Holy Spirit, that my thoughts may all be holy.

Act in me, O Holy Spirit, that my work, too, may be holy.

Draw my heart, O Holy Spirit, that I love but what is holy.

Strengthen me, O Holy Spirit, to defend all that is holy.

Guard me, then, O Holy Spirit, that I always may be holy. Amen.

Supplemental Prayers and Scripture Citations:

Prayer for the Help of the Holy Spirit (St. Anthony of Padua)

O God, send forth your Holy Spirit into my heart that I may perceive, into my mind that I may remember, and into my soul that I may meditate. Inspire me to speak with piety, holiness, tenderness and mercy. Teach, guide and direct my thoughts and senses from beginning to end. May your grace ever help and correct me, and may I be strengthened now with wisdom from on high, for the sake of your infinite mercy. Amen.

Pentecost Sunday Sequence – a plea for the Holy Spirit to come and sanctify (translated from the Latin *Veni Sancti Spiritus*)

COME, Holy Spirit, send forth from heaven the rays of thy light.

Come, Father of the poor;

Come, giver of gifts, Come, light of [our] hearts.

Oh best Comforter, Sweet guest of the soul, Sweet refreshment.

In labor, rest in the heat, moderation; in tears, solace.

O most blessed Light fill the inmost heart of thy faithful.

Without your spirit, nothing is in man, nothing that is harmless.

Wash that which is sordid water that which is dry,

heal that which is wounded.

Make flexible that which is rigid, warm that which is cold,
rule that which is deviant.

Give to thy faithful, who trust in thee the sevenfold gifts.

Amen, Alleluia. Grant to us the merit of virtue,

Grant salvation at our going forth,

Grant eternal joy.

Amen. Alleluia.

Additional Scripture Selections for Eucharist

Mt 26:26-29

Mk 14:22-25

Lk 22:14-20

Lk 24:13-35

Jn 6:25-58

1 Cor 10:16-17

1 Cor 11:23-39

Additional Scripture Selections for Mission and Prayer

Mt 5:13-16

Mt 7:21

Mt 10: 27-33

Lk 11:1-4

Additional Scripture Selections from Lectionary for Confirmation:

Old Testament

Is 11: 1-4

Is 42: 1-3

Is 61: 1-3, 6, 8-9

Ez 36: 24-28

Jl 2:23, 26-3:3

New Testament

Acts 1:3-8

Acts 2:1-6, 14, 22-23, 32-33

Acts 8:1, 4, 14-17

Acts 10:1, 33-34, 37-44

Acts 19:1-6

Rom 5:1-2, 5-8

Rom 8:14-17

Rom 8:26-27

1 Cor 12:4-13

Gal 5:16-17, 22-23, 24-25

Eph 1:3, 4, 13-19

Eph 4:1-6

Psalms

Ps 22

Ps 23

Ps 96

Ps 104

Ps 117

Ps 145

Gospels

Mt 5:1-12

Mt 16:24-27

Mt 25: 14-30

Mk 1: 9-11

Lk 4: 16-22

Lk 8:4-10, 11-15

Lk 10:21-24

Jn 7:37-39

Jn 14: 15-17

Jn 14: 23-26

Jn 15:18-21, 26-27

Jn 16:5-7, 12-13

Confirmation Mystagogy: (Post-Sacramental formation)

The following mystagogical reflection by St. Ambrose could be used for a post-sacramental reflection:

Mystagogy of St. Ambrose: "Recall then that you have received the spiritual seal, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of right judgment and courage, the spirit of knowledge and reverence, the spirit of holy fear in God's presence. Guard what you have received. God the Father has marked you with his sign; Christ the Lord has confirmed you and has placed his pledge, the Spirit, in your hearts."

The following is a more formal, extensive reflection which can be used in the first session after the celebration of the Rite of Confirmation

Mystagogical Reflection on Anointing with Chrism

Opening Song: We are One

*We are one, we are one,
we are one in the Spirit, we are one,
Hallelujah, hallelujah,
we are one in the Spirit, we are one.*

Opening Prayer:

Heavenly Father, as we gather together,
help us to know that through the Spirit you have given us,
we remain in you and you remain in us.
Open our hearts and minds to the beauty of your gifts,
strengthen us to use them in your service always.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
R:/ Amen.

Recall the Word of God (preferably a reading used during the Rite of Confirmation)
(1 Cor 12:3b-7-13)

Brothers and sisters: no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit.
There are different kinds of spiritual gifts but the same Spirit;
there are different forms of service but the same Lord;
there are different workings but the same God who produces all of them in everyone.
To each individual the manifestation of the Spirit is given for some benefit.
To one is given through the Spirit the expression of wisdom;
to another the expression of knowledge according to the same Spirit;
to another faith by the same Spirit; to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit;
to another mighty deeds; to another prophecy;
to another discernment of spirits;
to another varieties of tongues; to another interpretation of tongues.

But one and the same Spirit produces all of these,
distributing them individually to each person as he wishes.
As a body is one though it has many parts,
and all the parts of the body, though many, are one body, so also Christ.
For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks,
slaves or free persons, and we were all given to drink of one Spirit.

Reflection on the Anointing:

We are gathered here to reflect upon the moment during the Confirmation Liturgy when the Bishop called you forward, laid hands upon you and anointed your head with the holy Chrism. This is an essential moment of the rite, the moment when you were infused with the grace through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and the sacramental character is sealed in you.

Take a moment to silently reflect and recall the memory of those moments:

(as the students reflect, slowly read the following prompts)

- What were your thoughts as you proceeded to the steps of the altar?
- How did you feel to have the Bishop call you by your Confirmation name?
- What did you feel as the bishop placed his hand on your forehead, making the sign of the cross with his thumb?
- Were you aware of your sponsor standing with you, placing their hand upon your shoulder? What did their presence mean to you as you were confirmed?

With these images in mind, describe your experience by answering these questions:

- What meaning did the anointing have for you personally?
- How will your reception of the sacrament of Confirmation affect the Church?
- Think of the image of hands used in this Rite, how does this speak to you? How does it call you to respond?
- After the anointing, how did you feel when the Bishop offered you the sign of peace? How did you respond?
- What did his extending his hand in welcome mean to you?
- How will you share the Holy Spirit who lives in you?
- What joys or challenges does living your life for the mission of Christ bring to you?

Psalm Prayer (Ps 104:1, 24, 29-30, 31, 34)

Response (all): Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth.

Side 1: Bless the Lord, O my soul!

O Lord, my God, you are great indeed.

Side 2: How manifold are your works, O Lord!

the earth is full of your creatures;

Response (all): Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth.

Side 1: May the glory of the Lord endure forever

may the Lord be glad in his works!

Side 2: Pleasing to him be my theme

I will be glad in the Lord.

Response (all): Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth.

Side 1: If you take away their breath, they perish
and return to their dust.

Side 2: When you send forth your spirit, they are created.
and you renew the face of the earth.

Response (all): Lord, send out your Spirit, and renew the face of the earth.

Closing Prayer:

Holy Spirit, Lord and giver of Life,
As we go forth from this place be our helper and guide.
Keep us always mindful of the gifts of your Spirit bestowed upon us;
the spirit of wisdom, and understanding,
the spirit of right judgment and courage,
the spirit of knowledge and reverence.
And may we always be filled with wonder and awe in your presence.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
R:/ Amen.