



Confirmation Study Guide

*BASIC INFORMATION REGARDING THE
SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION*

Revision 7

1. WHAT IS A SACRAMENT?

A sacrament is an outward sign instituted by Christ to give [sanctifying] grace. (CCC 1131)

2. WHAT IS AN “OUTWARD SIGN”?

An outward sign is something we can see or hear. It tells us about something that we cannot see or hear.

3. WHAT IS CONFIRMATION?

Confirmation is the sacrament of Christian maturity which strengthens and increases the activity of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Along with Baptism and Eucharist, Confirmation completes our initiation into the Roman Catholic Church thereby making us witnesses and disciples of Jesus Christ. (CCC 1285)

4. WHO MAY RECEIVE THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION?

Any baptized Roman Catholic may receive this sacrament. (CCC 1306)

5. WHAT IS “GRACE”?

Grace is a created sharing in the life of God. It is given to us through the merits of Jesus Christ and communicated by the Holy Spirit. The principal means of grace are the sacraments, prayer, and good works. (CCC 1996-1997)

6. WHAT IS ACTUAL GRACE?

Actual grace is a supernatural help of God which prompts us to do good and avoid evil. (CCC 2000)

7. WHAT IS SANCTIFYING GRACE?

Sanctifying grace confers on our souls a sharing in the life of God Himself. The effects make us holy and pleasing to God, His adopted children, temples of the Holy Spirit, and the right to heaven. Sanctifying grace is lost when we commit serious (mortal) sin. (CCC 2023-2024)

8. WHAT ARE THE SEVEN SACRAMENTS? (CCC 1210)

Sacraments of Initiation

1. Baptism 2. Confirmation

3. Eucharist

Sacraments of Healing

4. Reconciliation (Penance)

5. Anointing of the Sick

Sacraments of Love and Service

6. Matrimony (marriage)

7. Holy Orders

(the priesthood)

WHAT ATTITUDES SHOULD WE HAVE IN RECEIVING THE SACRAMENTS?

We should receive the sacraments with faith and love, but also with trust in God's mercy and sorrow for our sins. (CCC 1309-1310)

9. WHAT ARE THE OUTWARD SIGNS OF CONFIRMATION?

The outward signs of the sacrament of Confirmation are 1) the imposition of **hands** and 2) the anointing with **chrism**. The Bishop first imposes hands over all the candidates. (The extension of hands over the Confirmandi expresses the biblical gesture by which the gift of the Holy Spirit is invoked. [CCC 1299] The oil represents the Holy Spirit's descent. [CCC 1300])

10. WHAT IS THE OIL USED AS PART OF THE SACRAMENT?

Holy Chrism. It is a mixture of olive oil and a perfume called balsam. It is blessed by the Bishop each year on Holy Thursday. (1297)

11. WHO IS THE ORDINARY MINISTER OF CONFIRMATION?

The Bishop is the ordinary minister of Confirmation. (CCC 1313) The current bishop of the Diocese of St. Petersburg is Bishop Robert N. Lynch

12. IN THE RITE OF CONFIRMATION WE ASK GOD TO SEND HIS SEVENFOLD SPIRIT. WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

The sevenfold spirit means the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit: wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety (reverence), and fear of the Lord. These gifts of the Holy Spirit are the qualities of a mature person. We are not magically transformed by Confirmation, but rather the Holy Spirit helps us to grow spiritually by fostering these qualities of maturity. (CCC 1299)

14. HOW ARE THE SEVEN GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT DEFINED?

Wisdom - the gift enabling us to learn the purpose and plan of God (CCC 1831): the gift which helps us to put God first in our lives, to recognize the truth, to love spiritual things, to learn from mistakes, and to look at everything either as a help or an obstacle to reaching heaven.

Understanding - the gift enabling us to grasp the truths of religion as far as necessary.

Counsel - the gift enabling us to see and choose correctly what will help most to the glory of God and our own salvation and that of others.

Fortitude (courage) - the gift we receive to overcome the obstacles and difficulties that arise in the practice of our religious duties.

Knowledge - the gift which points out to us the path to follow and the dangers to avoid in order to reach heaven.

Piety (reverence) - the gift which inspires us with a tender and filial confidence in God, makes us joyfully embrace all that pertains to His service.

Fear of the Lord (respectful awe) - the gift fills us with a sovereign respect for God, and makes us dread, above all things, to offend Him.

15. HOW DO THESE GIFTS HELP YOU?

The gifts (wisdom, understanding, counsel, and knowledge) help our minds grasp and see the meaning of the truths of our faith and **to know** how to live out our faith. The gifts (fortitude, piety, and fear of the Lord) give us the grace and power that our will needs **to do** what God wants us to do.

Mainly, they help us:

to make **wise** decisions about important matters

to **understand** the real meaning of life

to **guide** (counsel) us in making right decisions

to be **strong** (fortitude) to uphold and do what is right and to condemn and avoid what is wrong

to **know** (knowledge) the teaching of God and our true destiny

to give **true worship and praise** (piety) to God

to **fear offending** (fear of the Lord) God who is our loving Father

16. WHAT DOES THIS SEVENFOLD GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT DO FOR US?

When we receive this Gift, we are:

1. Given special strength.
2. Bound more intimately to the Church by the reception of the Character of the Sacrament.
3. More strictly obliged **to spread and defend the Faith** both by word and by deed as true witnesses of Christ. (CCC 1285)

17. WHAT IS A SACRAMENTAL MARK OR CHARACTER?

A sacramental mark or character is a stamp of Christ on the soul giving it a sharing in the priesthood of Christ that is associated with Baptism, Confirmation, or Holy Orders.

18. WHAT IS THE SACRAMENTAL MARK OR CHARACTER OF BAPTISM?

The Baptismal character admits us into the church and enables us to receive the sacraments and participate in the Eucharistic liturgy. (CCC 1273)

19. WHAT IS THE SACRAMENTAL MARK OR CHARACTER OF CONFIRMATION?

The character given in Confirmation consecrates a Christian 1) for the **defense** of the Faith and 2) the **bringing of others** to Christ. (CCC 1304, 1305)

20. WHAT IS THE SACRAMENTAL MARK OR CHARACTER OF HOLY ORDERS?

The character given in Holy Orders is a full share in the priesthood of Jesus Christ, i.e., the power to celebrate Mass, forgive sins, etc. (CCC 1581)

21. WHAT IS EXPECTED OF YOU AFTER YOU HAVE BEEN CONFIRMED?

After Confirmation you are expected to use all the means provided by the Church to develop as a mature, responsible Christian witness. This means to **proclaim** the faith without hesitation; to **defend** it against those who hate it; to **spread** it wherever possible, as the apostles did; and by your life style **show** your faith in Jesus Christ and His Church. (CCC 1303)

22. WHAT ARE SOME OF THE WAYS IN WHICH YOU CAN PROMOTE THE FAITH?

You can promote the faith by praying for others, giving good example by learning more about the faith, practicing the spiritual and corporal works of mercy, praying for vocations, taking a volunteer role in a particular service to others, and above all by uniting yourself to Jesus often in the sacraments of Eucharist and Penance.

23. WHAT ARE THE FRUITS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT?

The Fruits of the Holy Spirit are the virtues produced in our lives when we exercise the Gifts of the Holy Spirit. There are twelve:

Charity	love of God and our neighbor
Joy	serves God with cheerful hearts
Peace	with God, man and ourselves. With God, because we are His children. With man, because we deal justly with all and are kind to all. With ourselves, because we have a good conscience, that does not accuse us of sin.
Patience	suffer all adversities for the love of God
Kindness	disposition to do well and show kindness
Goodness	makes us hurt no man, and be good to all
Generosity	is an un-tired confidence of mind, in expecting the good things of the life to come.
Gentleness	allays in us all the emotions of passion and anger
Faithfulness	makes us punctual observers of our covenants and promises
Modesty	observes a becoming deportment in all our outward actions
Self-Control	makes us not only temperate in meat and drink, but in all other sensible delights
Chastity	purity in thoughts, words, looks, and actions

(CCC 1832; Galatians 5:22-23)

24. HOW DOES A SACRAMENTAL DIFFER FROM A SACRAMENT?

Sacramentals are candles, statues, a rosary, holy water, ashes, palms, medals, etc. Sacramentals are reminders asking Christ's blessing upon someone or something; it is a special way of putting oneself in Christ's presence and asking for his help. **The sign of the Cross** is a sacramental. It means that we belong to Christ, that we proclaim this fact openly to all people, and that we are committed to serving God and one another, even if there is a cost in doing so. It reminds us of the presence of the Holy Trinity. (CCC 1667-1672)

25. WHAT IS FAITH?

Faith is the virtue of believing in God and desiring to serve Him. It is a gift of God, and it is also our intention to do God's will. Faith is our constant, life-long journey with God on Earth and toward God in eternity. (CCC 1814 – 1816)

26. AS THE "FAITHFUL," WHAT ARE OUR PRIMARY DUTIES? (CCC 871 – 945)

Our duties are:

1. To believe we are enabled to recognize God's Word.
2. To seek to have an informed faith.
3. To work to understand and live out the Word of God.

27. WHAT IS PRAYER?

Prayer is talking with God, in the name of Jesus Christ, as a friend and listening for Him to speak to us through priests, parents, teachers, the Bible, some friends and in your thoughts. It also means acting on what we know to be good and right.

- PURPOSE OF PRAYER:*
1. **A**doration (praise) (CCC 2639 – 2643, 2647)
 2. **C**onfession (forgiveness) (CCC 2631, 2838 – 2841)
 3. **T**hanksgiving (for all we have received) (CCC 2637 – 2638)
 4. **S**upplication (petition) (CCC 2634 – 2643, 2649)

- KINDS OF PRAYER:*
1. Personal - by yourself
 2. Community - with others (Mass, class prayers)
 3. Formal (memorized) - *Our Father; Hail Mary...*
 4. Spontaneous (felt and thought at the moment)

- SPECIFIC WAYS TO PRAY:*
1. Contemplative (CCC 2709 – 2719, 2721, 2724)
 2. Meditation (CCC 2705 – 2708, 2721, 2723)
 3. Vocal (CCC 2700 – 2704, 2721 – 2722)

SOME IMPORTANT TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

ASSUMPTION: Mary was taken to Heaven after her death, body and soul.

BAPTISM: Cleanses us of original sin, makes us children of God and heirs of heaven. The sacrament initiates us into the Church.

BIBLE: The inspired Word of God; the story of the people of God. God tells us about Himself and Jesus, His Son, in 73 books. The human authors expressed the message of God's plan of salvation for all people under guidance of the Holy Spirit. Two parts of the Bible:

Old Testament: before Christ was born.

New Testament: after Christ was born, His life and ministry, His death, and the Church left in the leadership of His apostles under the care and guidance of the Holy Spirit.

BISHOP ROBERT N. LYNCH: Head of the Diocese of St. Petersburg. At confirmation the Bishop says, "(Your name), be sealed with the Holy Spirit." The newly confirmed reply, "Amen." Then the Bishop says, "Peace be with you." The newly confirmed respond, "**And also with you.**"

CHURCH: The People of God. The Body of Christ.

CONSCIENCE: Conscience is one's practical judgment about the rightness or wrongness of one's acts. We must receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation when we commit serious (mortal) sin.

GREEK WORDS FOR LOVE

Eros This type of love covers everything from queasy stomachs and warm fuzzy feelings to strong sensual passion.

Stergo This word means to feel affection, especially the affection between parents and children.

Philos This is the love of friendship, best friends, and the fellowship of being with those people you enjoy.

Agape (noun) **Agapeo** (verb) Agape is a decision to unconditionally proactively seek someone's well-being, asking nothing in return, expecting nothing; a commitment which chooses the risk of possibly being deeply hurt by that someone.

HOLY DAYS OF OBLIGATION IN THE UNITED STATES: All Sundays of the year and:

1. Christmas Day, the Feast of the Birthday of Christ.... Dec. 25
2. Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God..... Jan. 1
3. Ascension..... 7th Sunday of Easter
4. Assumption of Mary..... Aug. 15
5. Feast of All Saints..... Nov. 1
6. Immaculate Conception of Mary..... Dec. 8

Whenever January 1, the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God, or August 15, the solemnity of the Assumption, or November 1, the solemnity of All Saints, falls on a *Saturday* or on a *Monday*, the precept to attend Mass is abrogated (set aside).

HOLY TRINITY: One God, revealed as the Father (Creator), Jesus Christ the Son (Redeemer and Judge), and the Holy Spirit (Sanctifier, Advocate).

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION: Mary preserved from all sin from the moment she was conceived.

INCARNATION: God becomes man.

LITURGY: **a** : a rite or series of rites, observances, or procedures prescribed for public worship in the Christian church in accordance with authorized or standard form **b** : ceremonial or ritualistic worship **c** : the Eucharistic Celebration or the Mass. Two parts of the Mass: 1. **Liturgy of the Word:** we listen to the Word of God from scripture and the homily. 2. **Liturgy of the Eucharist:** we celebrate the mystery of the Lord's death and resurrection through *Transubstantiation* of the bread and wine to the Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus on the altar. This is the Consecration during the Mass. In the Communion rite at Mass, we receive His Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity. The Liturgy of the Eucharist commemorates the Last Supper which Jesus ate with His apostles before he died on the Cross. *The Mass re-enacts the Last Supper and the Crucifixion.*

MARY: The Mother of Jesus, The Blessed Virgin.

ORIGINAL SIN: Original sin is not sin you personally commit but the result of the sin of our first parents. In their free will, our first parents chose to disobey God. The entire human race inherits the result of this turning away from God. Baptism washes away original sin.

P.A.C.T.: Positive Action Change Everything.

PENTECOST: Fifty days after His Resurrection, Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to guide the Apostles and the Church. The Church's birthday. The same Holy Spirit comes to us in Confirmation.

PETER: The first Vicar of Christ as the visible head of the Church.

POPE BENEDICT XVI: The head of our Church today.

RECONCILIATION: Called back to the Father's Love.

When Jesus walked the earth, He not only exhorted men to repentance so they should abandon their sins and turn wholeheartedly to the Lord but He also welcomed sinners and reconciled them with the Father. "And there people brought to Him a paralytic lying on a stretcher. When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, 'Courage, child, your sins are forgiven.'" [NAB: Mt 9:2]. Of the woman who anointed His feet He said, "So I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven; hence, she has shown great love." [NAB: Lk 7:47a].

After His resurrection He sent the Holy Spirit upon the apostles, empowering them to forgive or retain sins and sending them forth to all peoples to preach repentance and the forgiveness of sins in His name. "Receive the holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained." [NAB: Jn 20:22b-23].

Essential Parts of Penance

SORROW FOR SIN and a **FIRM DETERMINATION TO DO BETTER.** This begins with an open and honest examination of conscience.

RESURRECTION: Greatest proof of the Divinity of Jesus; Jesus rose from the dead after He was crucified and died.

SIGN OF THE CROSS: We express our belief and faith in the Trinity – God the Father, Jesus Christ His Son, and the Holy Spirit.

SIN: Sin is a rejection of God’s love, a refusal of an opportunity to accept His love and pass it on to others. In serious sin (mortal sin) we fully realize what is seriously wrong and we want to choose our way over God’s way. Sin makes it more difficult to obey God’s commandments.

SPONSORS: Roman Catholics, already confirmed, who have accepted the responsibility by prayer, word and example, of helping the one being confirmed to carry out his or her Christian duties faithfully.

TABLE of FEASTS (For Future Planning)

Feast	Date
1 st Sunday of Advent	November 27, 2005
Ash Wednesday	March 1, 2006
Begin the Divine Mercy 9 Day Novena	April 14, 2006
Easter	April 16, 2006
Divine Mercy Sunday	April 23, 2006
Pentecost	June 4, 2006
1st Sunday of Advent	December 3, 2006
Ash Wednesday	February 21, 2007
Easter	April 8, 2007
Pentecost	May 27, 2007

TEN COMMANDMENTS:

Moral code of Laws which God gave to Moses. They help us to live in harmony with God and others.

1. I am the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shall not have strange gods before Me. Thou shall not make to thyself a graven thing, nor the likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, nor of those things that are in the waters under the earth. Thou shall not adore them, nor serve them.
2. You shall not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.
3. Remember thou keep holy the Sabbath day.
4. Honor thy father and thy mother.
5. You shall not murder.
6. You shall not commit adultery.
7. You shall not steal.
8. You shall not bear false witness against thy neighbor.
9. You shall not covet thy neighbor's wife.
10. You shall not covet thy neighbor's goods.