



LEADER GUIDE

CONFIRMATION

SESSION 1

THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT



CONFIRMATION: THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

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Augustine Institute
6160 South Syracuse Way, Suite 310
Greenwood Village, CO 80111
Information: 303-937-4420
ydisciple.org
Formed.org

SESSION OVERVIEW

Every year, millions of Catholics receive the Sacrament of Confirmation in their parishes. Confirmation is a once-in-a-lifetime sacrament intended to bestow the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit and empower Catholics to go and spread the Gospel to all the world. When the Apostles were filled with the Holy Spirit, they became some of the most influential people in the world.

The Holy Spirit is powerful—great miracles and mighty works have been done through the power of the Holy Spirit. So why is it that we do not see the same power of the Holy Spirit in the lives of so many Catholics today? Why do we not see the Church and the Gospel spread by the millions of Catholics who received the Sacrament of Confirmation?

In this session, we will discuss the power of the Holy Spirit. God intends the grace that He gives us in the Sacrament of Confirmation to set the world on fire with His love.

SESSION SNAPSHOT

Review the entire lesson plan in advance so you are prepared to lead and discuss comfortably. Gather necessary supplies and review video segments prior to your gathering. Use the time allotments in the session outline below as a guideline, as the length of time spent on each section will vary from group to group.

TIME	SECTION	SECTION OVERVIEW
20 minutes	CONNECT	Lead an activity to introduce how God has blessed us all with gifts to be used in His service; then open in prayer.
60 minutes	DISCUSS	Watch and discuss these video segments: Scene 1: The Holy Spirit is amazing Scene 2: What's the big deal with Confirmation? Scene 3: Confirmation is a full initiation into the life of the Spirit Scene 4: We need to cooperate with the grace received in Confirmation
10 minutes	COMMIT	Review the key points and last week's commitment. Then commit to praying a simple prayer to the Holy Spirit twice daily. Close in prayer.

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- » Media device to show video segments
- » Bibles
- » Participant Sheets
- » 2 sheets of paper per person
- » Pencils

PREPARE IN ADVANCE

- » Have snacks ready.
- » Create a welcoming environment.



LEADER TIPS

- » We often include possible responses and material from the *Catechism* after the discussion questions to help you facilitate the conversation. It is best to let group members respond first and share the concepts in parentheses only as needed.
- » A Lighthouse talk that we recommend with this session is “All Things Are Possible for God” by Fr. Joshua Waltz.

lighthousecatholicmedia.org/store/title/all-things-are-possible-for-god#



CONNECT



ACTIVITY

GIFTED GROUP

Pass out two sheets of paper and a pencil to each person.

SAY: On one sheet of paper, I want you to write one of your talents—choose something the rest of the group would not immediately know about you. I’ll then collect the papers, shuffle them, and read them one by one. As I read them, I want you to write down on the other sheet of paper the talent and the person you believe it belongs to. At the end, we’ll see who guessed the most correctly.

Be sure to join in the activity, sharing a little-known talent that you possess. Have fun with the discoveries and affirm each member for his or her talents. Then ask the question:

» Why do you think we struggle with comparing our talents to the talents of others?

INTRODUCTION

SAY: You are a gifted group of individuals! God has gifted each of us for the purpose of sharing those gifts and helping others. This is why it is a waste of energy to wish that we had the gifts we see in others. As we dig into this study on Confirmation, we'll discuss how the Holy Spirit gives us *charisms*, or gifts, to build up the Church.

The Sacrament of Confirmation is about a full encounter with the power of the Holy Spirit—but frequently, we don't see that life-changing power visible in the lives of everyday Catholics. In this first session, we're going to be introduced to the incredible power of the Holy Spirit in our lives!

OPENING PRAYER

SAY: Let's begin in prayer.

Invite a volunteer to read aloud John 14:12-13.



"Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I go to the Father. Whatever you ask in my name, I will do it, that the Father may be glorified in the Son." —John 14:12-13

PRAY: Father in heaven, we pray that You send forth Your Holy Spirit into our lives just as You did in the creation of the world. Jesus, Son of God, cleanse us of our sin so that we would cooperate with the Holy Spirit and be Your witnesses to the ends of the earth. Fire of the Holy Spirit, set our hearts on fire as we learn more about You and the power You make available to us. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.



DISCUSS

SAY: Let's watch the first scene of this session.



Watch the first video segment. The video will last about 3 minutes. At the end of the segment, discuss.

SAY: Steve shared several miracle stories about those who were healed by the power of the Holy Spirit. The miracles were not done only by Jesus—they were done by regular people like you and me in the name of Jesus.

» I'd like each of you to share with the group a story you know of a miracle that occurred.

(Miracle stories can be from Scripture or from private revelation—like Fatima, the great works of Padre Pio, Lourdes, etc. A miracle story could also be an answered prayer, a person's conversion to Christ or Jesus' real presence in the Eucharist. The foundation of Christianity is built upon the greatest miracle in the history of the world: Jesus' resurrection and ascension into heaven!)

» How is it possible for a normal, everyday person to miraculously heal another person?

(The Catechism teaches: "The Holy Spirit gives to some a special charism of healing so as to make manifest the power of the grace of the risen Lord. But even the most intense prayers do not always obtain the healing of all illnesses. Thus St. Paul must learn from the Lord that 'my grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness,' and that the sufferings to be endured can mean that 'in my flesh I complete what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his Body, that is, the Church.'" [CCC 1508].)

SAY: Dr. Alexis Carrel was a famous French surgeon and biologist who was awarded the Nobel Prize in Medicine in 1912 and made the cover of *Time* magazine in 1938. Though he had no religious faith, he was intrigued with the story of Lourdes, France, where it was reported that the Blessed Virgin Mary had appeared to a 14-year-old peasant girl named Bernadette Soubirous in 1858. At the request of Mary, Bernadette dug into the ground and a spring bubbled up. What captured Dr. Carrel's interest were the reports of thousands of people who had been healed in the waters of the spring.

Dr. Carrel went to investigate firsthand the cures that were being reported in Lourdes. While traveling to Lourdes by train, Dr. Carrel was called several times to treat an extremely sick passenger named Marie Bailly. When the train arrived, Dr. Carrel accompanied Marie to the shrine, where she was bathed in the spring waters. Later, Dr. Carrel and two other doctors examined Marie carefully and their conclusion was unanimous: she was miraculously cured. Dr. Carrel came to faith and became a prominent Catholic leader. He wrote a book describing his experience and his belief in the miraculous healings of Lourdes. Unfortunately, this had a negative effect on his career and his reputation among some doctors.

- » Despite Dr. Carrel's esteemed reputation, people refused to believe him. Why do you think people are skeptical of miracles?

(Faith takes trust, and because of our fallen nature we have difficulty trusting. Certainly there are hoaxes, and it is prudent to have some skepticism. However, our faith is based upon the greatest miracle of all: the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. There are many well-documented, unexplainable miracles that have occurred in the history of the Church. In fact, verifying miracles is actually part of the process of canonizing a saint, but if you believe in a miracle, then you believe in God. If you believe in God, then you will be challenged to change your life. Many people are not ready to change their lives and therefore don't want to believe in miracles.)

SAY: Let's continue with Scene 2.



Watch the second video segment. The video will last about 3 minutes. At the end of the segment, discuss.

SAY: Steve describes his experience with the Holy Spirit at Confirmation.

- » If we are talking about the same Holy Spirit who performed all of these miracles we read about in the New Testament, why don't we see a greater impact in the Church every year after millions of Catholics are confirmed?

(The gifts of the Holy Spirit are bestowed at Confirmation, but it is our responsibility to use those gifts to build up the Church. In Steve's case, he didn't understand what he was receiving. Imagine you were given a new smartphone for Christmas. If you didn't know what it was and how it worked, you would never utilize its functionality to communicate, accomplish tasks, and stay informed. The same can be said of the gifts of the Holy Spirit given at Confirmation.)

SAY: There are many different symbols for the Holy Spirit. This is because the Holy Spirit is spirit and not material. The best way that we can describe the Holy Spirit is through symbols or images, because some symbols share the same characteristics as God's Spirit.

- » Why is the Holy Spirit likened to fire?

(Fire is powerful and the Holy Spirit is powerful. Life would cease to exist without that ball of fire we call the sun. Also, fire spreads and consumes what it touches, making that which it touches more like itself. Consider a wood fire; the longer the wood burns, the more it resembles fire with its glow and heat.)

- » Why is the Holy Spirit likened to wind or breath?

(Wind is powerful. It is estimated that one giant wind turbine can provide electricity for over 300 homes. While it can blow gently and cool you on a hot day, it can also generate micro bursts and tornadoes and demolish structures in its path. Like the Holy Spirit, you cannot see the wind, but you can feel the effects of it.)

SAY: Let's continue with Scene 3.



Watch the third video segment. The video will last about 6 minutes. At the end of the segment, discuss.

SAY: That was an amazing story that Steve shared with us! It's a story about a normal everyday person and a normal everyday family that experienced the power of the Holy Spirit.

We're going to read a Scripture passage from Acts that demonstrates how the power of the Holy Spirit impacts the Church.

Have the group read Acts 2:41-47.



"So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls. And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. And fear came upon every soul; and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things in common; and they sold their possessions and goods and distributed them to all, as any had need. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they partook of food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved." —Acts 2:41-47

SAY: How can we explain this rapid growth in the Church? After all, the Church was shunned by most Jews, and the Romans were very suspicious of it. In fact, there were many attempts to squash the growing Christian movement. The reason for the Church's rapid growth was that people saw something powerful, attractive, and extraordinary in it.

» From the description of the early Church we read in Acts, where do you see the power of the Holy Spirit at work?

(People witnessed the power of the Holy Spirit in the wonders and signs of healings and other miracles. They witnessed the Holy Spirit in the generosity and joy of the members of the Church. They witnessed the Holy Spirit in their dedication to prayer, fellowship, the Mass, the teaching of the Apostles, and in a community whose love and care for one another didn't seem humanly possible.)

SAY: Some people believe that the charisms of the Holy Spirit were given in abundance only in the early Church in order to empower her for initial growth and mission, similar to the huge rockets of a space shuttle that fall away after they have launched the shuttle into orbit.

- » How would you respond to someone who says: “If you need miracles to believe in Jesus, then you don’t really have faith!”?

(There is some truth to this statement if someone refuses to seek God until he or she experiences something supernatural. In this sense, it is more of an excuse. Jesus performed miracles in His public ministry in order to strengthen the faith of His followers. He promised the Apostles that they would “receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you.” [Acts 1:8] Faith is trusting that powerful works of the Holy Spirit can be supernatural and miraculous and are part of the Christian life.)

SAY: Let’s continue with Scene 4.



Watch the fourth video segment. The video will last about 3 minutes. At the end of the segment, discuss.

SAY: Every sacrament bestows life-changing grace into our life, but sacraments aren’t magic—they do require us to cooperate with God’s grace.

- » What are you willing to commit to in order to be better prepared to make use of the grace from your Confirmation?

(Participants could address the need to be more committed to the H.A.B.I.T.S. of a disciple, or they could address negative behaviors or activities they need to stop doing.)

- » What fears prevent you from giving your life, without reservation, to the Holy Spirit and allowing His power to work through your life?



COMMIT



ACTIVITY

TAKE-AWAY

SAY: I am going to go around the circle, starting with the person on my right, and I'd like each of us to share something we remember that this person said tonight.

Take a minute and go around the group, asking everyone to share briefly. Then continue.

Now I want to go around the circle again, this time starting with the person on my left, and I'd like each of us to share one "take-away" from tonight. In other words, share something that resonates in your heart as a truth to live by.

Give everyone time to share, and then continue.

SAY: When something resonates with our hearts, we should be mindful to take that to prayer. So I encourage you to take whatever touched your heart in this session into your prayer this week.

In addition to prayer, how are your spiritual H.A.B.I.T.S. coming along?

Encourage your group members to share how they have grown spiritually since your last meeting by practicing spiritual H.A.B.I.T.S. Ask them if there is any way that you can help them in their commitment to developing spiritual H.A.B.I.T.S. You can find the H.A.B.I.T.S. in the Leader Guide for Follow Me, Session 5: The Cost. After everyone has shared, follow up on last week's commitments before discussing the new commitment.

SAY: This week's commitment is to pray a simple prayer every day. I want you to pray as you wake up in the morning and as you go to bed at night: "Come, Holy Spirit, fill my heart and kindle in me the fire of Your love." As you do this, you will become more aware of the Holy Spirit's presence in your life.



CLOSING PRAYER

SAY: Let's close in prayer.

PRAY: Come, Holy Spirit, awaken in us a desire for You in our lives. As You touch us, light our lives ablaze with the fire of Your love and transform us to be more like You. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.



LEADER GUIDE

CONFIRMATION

SESSION 2

THE HOLY SPIRIT IN SCRIPTURE



CONFIRMATION: THE HOLY SPIRIT IN SCRIPTURE

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Augustine Institute
6160 South Syracuse Way, Suite 310
Greenwood Village, CO 80111
Information: 303-937-4420
ydisciple.org
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SESSION OVERVIEW

Most people know the story of Pentecost and the descent of the Holy Spirit onto the Apostles. But many don't know the work of the Holy Spirit before Pentecost. In fact, when we explore the movements of the Holy Spirit throughout the history of salvation in the Bible, we discover God's unique plan for the Sacrament of Confirmation.

In this session, we will discuss the power of the Holy Spirit throughout the Bible, looking in particular at the descent of the Holy Spirit at Jesus' baptism. We will explore misconceptions about the Sacrament of Confirmation and help teens understand the plan of the Holy Spirit in their lives.

SESSION SNAPSHOT

Review the entire lesson plan in advance so you are prepared to lead and discuss comfortably. Gather necessary supplies and review video segments prior to your gathering. Use the time allotments in the session outline below as a guideline, as the length of time spent on each section will vary from group to group.

TIME	SECTION	SECTION OVERVIEW
20 minutes	CONNECT	Lead an activity to introduce the topic of the mystery of the Holy Spirit; then open in prayer.
60 minutes	DISCUSS	Watch and discuss these video segments: Scene 1: Confirmation Misconceptions Scene 2: The Holy Spirit through Salvation History Scene 3: The Baptism of Jesus Scene 4: The Fullness of the Holy Spirit in Confirmation
10 minutes	COMMIT	Review the key points and last week's commitment. Then commit to praying to the Holy Spirit for 5 minutes each day. Close in prayer.

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- » Media device to show video segments
- » Bibles
- » Pencils or pens
- » 2 notecards per person
- » Participant Sheets

PREPARE IN ADVANCE

- » Have snacks ready.
- » Create a welcoming environment.
- » Label half the notecards with either a letter or number. For example, if you expect 10 participants, put a small number (1–10) in the top corner of each card.
- » Bookmark your Bible for each of the Scripture passages referenced in this session.



LEADER TIPS

- » We often include possible responses and material from the *Catechism* after the discussion questions to help you facilitate the conversation. It is best to let group members respond first and share the concepts in parentheses only as needed.
- » This session is heavy on Scripture study and Scripture references. It is very important that Catholics know the Bible and the story of salvation. St. Jerome said, “Ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of Christ.”
- » We also recommend the Lighthouse Catholic Media talk “Bible Basics for Catholics” by Dr. John Bergsma.

lighthousecatholicmedia.org/store/title/bible-basics-for-catholics#



CONNECT



ACTIVITY

THE MYSTERY PERSON

Distribute two notecards (one labeled and one not; see “Prepare in Advance” above) and a pen or pencil to each person.

SAY: I want you each to answer five questions on your notecard that’s labeled with a letter or number. Then I’ll collect the notecards, shuffle them, and read each notecard aloud. I’ll ask you to write on your second notecard who you think the “Mystery Person” is, based upon their answers. We’ll see who can guess the most right. Here are the questions:

1. Where did your great grandparents live?
2. What is the largest body of water you have seen with your eyes?
3. What is the farthest place you have been from your home?
4. What has been the most exciting Christmas or birthday present you have received?
5. What is the scariest or riskiest thing you have ever done?

Collect the cards, and read them one at a time. On their blank notecards, have participants jot down each card number (or letter) as you read it, and then the name of the person they think the card belongs to. Repeat until all cards are read. Then read each card again and have the group share their answers.



INTRODUCTION

SAY: That was fun to try and figure out the mystery person on the cards. It can seem like the Holy Spirit is a mystery person as He has been represented by many different symbols: wind, fire, dove, water, and a cloud. In this session we will become more familiar with this “Mystery Person” through our study of Sacred Scripture.



OPENING PRAYER

SAY: Let’s open our prayer with a passage from Acts 1:7-9.

Have a teen read Acts 1:7-9.



“He said to them, ‘It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has fixed by his own authority. But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth.’ And when he had said this, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight.”

—Acts 1:7–9

PRAY: Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of Your faithful. And kindle in them the fire of Your love. Send forth Your Spirit, Lord, and they shall be created. And You shall renew the face of the earth. Let us pray, O God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit did instruct the hearts of Your faithful; grant that in the same Spirit we may be truly wise and ever rejoice in His consolation. Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.



DISCUSS

SAY: Let's watch the first scene of this session.



Watch the first video segment. The video will last about 4 minutes. At the end of the segment, discuss.

SAY: Scott talks about several misconceptions that he had about the purpose of the Sacrament of Confirmation.

» If you told a friend that you were preparing to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation and your friend asked, "What is Confirmation?" how would you respond?

(Allow each person to respond. Make sure you correct any of their misconceptions. To "confirm" means to strengthen. Confirmation strengthens someone to be a missionary disciple in the world. Confirmation is not choosing to be Catholic—if they are baptized, they are already Catholic. Confirmation is not a rite of passage to becoming an adult in the Church—many dioceses around the world confirm children, and the Eastern Rite Catholic Churches confirm infants after their Baptism. Finally, Confirmation is not a graduation from faith formation. A disciple is called to be a lifelong learner of the truth revealed by Jesus Christ.)

» In each of the sacraments of initiation, you receive something from God. What do you receive in the Sacrament of Baptism?

(The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches: "Holy Baptism is the basis of the whole Christian life, the gateway to life in the Spirit, and the door which gives access to the other sacraments. Through Baptism we are freed from sin and reborn as sons of God; we become members of Christ, are incorporated into the Church and made sharers in her mission: 'Baptism is the sacrament of regeneration through water in the word.'" [CCC 1213].)

» What do you receive in the Sacrament of Holy Communion?

(The Catechism teaches: "In the most blessed sacrament of the Eucharist 'the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity, of our Lord Jesus Christ and, therefore, the whole Christ is truly, really, and substantially contained.'" [CCC 1374].)

("The principal fruit of receiving the Eucharist in Holy Communion is an intimate union with Christ Jesus. Indeed, the Lord said: 'He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him.'" [CCC 1391].)

SAY: While all three Persons of the Blessed Trinity are present in all of the sacraments,

Baptism emphasizes our relationship with the Father as we become His sons and daughters. The Eucharist emphasizes our relationship with the Son as we become more united with Him in receiving His body, blood, soul, and divinity. Confirmation emphasizes our relationship with the Holy Spirit as we receive a special outpouring of His presence and increase of His gifts.

SAY: Let's continue with Scene 2.



Watch the second video segment. The video will last about 5 minutes. At the end of the segment, discuss.

SAY: Scott references several occasions in the Old Testament where the Holy Spirit “came mightily upon” an individual. Let’s read the story of Samson slaying 1,000 Philistines in Judges 15:12-16.

Ask for a volunteer to read aloud Judges 15:12-16.



“And they said to him, ‘We have come down to bind you, that we may give you into the hands of the Philistines.’ And Samson said to them, ‘Swear to me that you will not fall upon me yourselves.’ They said to him, ‘No; we will only bind you and give you into their hands; we will not kill you.’ So they bound him with two new ropes, and brought him up from the rock. When he came to Lehi, the Philistines came shouting to meet him; and the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon him, and the ropes which were on his arms became as flax that has caught fire, and his bonds melted off his hands. And he found a fresh jawbone of an ass, and put out his hand and seized it, and with it he slew a thousand men. And Samson said, ‘With the jawbone of an ass, heaps upon heaps, with the jawbone of an ass have I slain a thousand men.’”

—Judges 15:12–16

» What similarities do you see in this story of Samson and the story of Pentecost?

(The Holy Spirit descended at Pentecost in tongues of fire. Similarly, the Holy Spirit descended upon Samson and the ropes that bound his hands melted as if they had caught fire. The Holy Spirit empowered the Apostles and they courageously went about Jerusalem sharing the good news of Jesus Christ. Similarly, the Holy Spirit empowered Samson to courageously face and defeat 1,000 Philistines.)

SAY: We are going to read some verses about Saul and David in 1 Samuel.

Ask for volunteers to read aloud each of the following verses.



“Now Saul was coming from the field behind the oxen; and Saul said, ‘What ails the people, that they are weeping?’ So they told him the tidings of the men of Jabesh. And the spirit of God came mightily upon Saul when he heard these words, and his anger was greatly kindled.” —1 Samuel 11:5–6 [emphasis added]

“Then Samuel said to the people, ‘Come, let us go to Gilgal and there renew the kingdom.’ So all the people went to Gilgal, and there they made Saul king before the LORD in Gilgal. There they sacrificed peace offerings before the LORD, and there Saul and all the men of Israel rejoiced greatly.” —1 Samuel 11:14–15

“And Samuel said to Jesse, ‘Are all your sons here?’ And he said, ‘There remains yet the youngest, but behold, he is keeping the sheep.’ And Samuel said to Jesse, ‘Send and fetch him; for we will not sit down till he comes here.’ And he sent, and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, and had beautiful eyes, and was handsome. And the LORD said, ‘Arise, anoint him; for this is he.’ Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon David from that day forward.” —1 Samuel 16:11–13a [emphasis added]

»» What similarities do you see in the story of Saul and David and the Sacrament of Confirmation?

(In the story of Saul and David, they are anointed with oil and strengthened in the power of the Holy Spirit for the particular mission of being a king to God’s people. Similarly, in Confirmation you are anointed and strengthened in the power of the Holy Spirit for the mission of priest, prophet, and king. The Catechism says: “Jesus Christ is the one whom the Father anointed with the Holy Spirit and established as priest, prophet, and king. The whole People of God participates in these three offices of Christ and bears the responsibilities for mission and service that flow from them.” [CCC 783].)

SAY: Now let's read a couple verses about Joshua in Numbers and Deuteronomy.



"And the LORD said to Moses, 'Take Joshua the son of Nun, a man in whom is the spirit, and lay your hand upon him.'" —Numbers 27:18

"And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands upon him; so the people of Israel obeyed him, and did as the LORD had commanded Moses." —Deuteronomy 34:9

» What similarities do you see in the story of Joshua and the Sacrament of Confirmation?

(There is the laying on of hands in both the story of Joshua and in the Sacrament of Confirmation. The Catechism teaches that the gift of the Spirit is given through the laying on of hands: "From that time on the apostles, in fulfillment of Christ's will, imparted to the newly baptized by the laying on of hands the gift of the Spirit that completes the grace of Baptism." [CCC 1288].)

SAY: Let's continue with Scene 3.



Watch the third video segment. The video will last about 4 minutes. At the end of the segment, discuss.

» "Christ" is not Jesus' last name. In fact, it is a title for Jesus. What do you think "Christ" means, and why is the title important?

("Christ" comes from the Greek word Christos, meaning "anointed one." It is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew word "Messiah." The title is important because it means that Jesus is the long-awaited Messiah of the Jews, whom God sent to be King and Deliverer. In ancient Israel, kings, priests, and prophets were anointed with oil to symbolize their consecration to God and their being "set apart" for His service. As the "Christ," Jesus is anointed to deliver us from sin and reign in our lives forever as the King of kings and Lord of lords.)

SAY: Scott references Psalm 2:7 in this segment. Psalm 2 is about the anointing and coronation of King David. Let's read Psalm 2 and see how this can also describe Christ's reign as King.

Ask for a volunteer to read Psalm 2.



“Why do the nations conspire, and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD and his anointed, saying, ‘Let us burst their bonds asunder, and cast their cords from us.’ He who sits in the heavens laughs; the LORD has them in derision. Then he will speak to them in his wrath, and terrify them in his fury, saying, ‘I have set my king on Zion, my holy hill.’ I will tell of the decree of the LORD: He said to me, ‘You are my son, today I have begotten you. Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession. You shall break them with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.’ Now therefore, O kings, be wise; be warned, O rulers of the earth. Serve the LORD with fear, with trembling kiss his feet, lest he be angry, and you perish in the way; for his wrath is quickly kindled. Blessed are all who take refuge in him.”
—Psalm 2

» What are some of the verses that can describe Christ’s reign on earth?

(A reign with an iron rod is a reference to authority. The same reference can be found referring to Christ in Revelation 2:27. The Psalm also states he will rule the ends of the earth.)

SAY: Let’s continue with Scene 4.



Watch the fourth video segment. The video will last about 4 minutes. At the end of the segment, discuss.

SAY: Scott mentions that the Holy Spirit is a person, and persons require relationships. In other words, the Holy Spirit desires to have a relationship with you. He is called the Paraclete, which means “helper.” One way to develop your relationship with the Holy Spirit is to get in the habit of asking His assistance in the responsibilities and challenges of daily life. It is as simple as saying, “Come Holy Spirit, give me _____.”

» Let’s think about an average day in your life. Starting with the morning and going through the evening, what are some responsibilities and challenges that you might face throughout the day? What things might you ask the Holy Spirit to help you face?

(Here are some possible responses: Come Holy Spirit, give me...

- energy to face the day
- a joyful heart
- courage to resist temptation
- patience with my peers
- wisdom in my decisions
- understanding in my communication
- knowledge for my tests
- kindness in my friendships
- respect for my teachers
- respect for my parents
- discipline in my studies
- fortitude when I’m weary
- peace and confidence with who I am
- charity for this person I have trouble liking)



COMMIT



ACTIVITY

TAKE-AWAY

SAY: I am going to go around the circle, starting with the person on my right, and I'd like each of us to share something we remember that this person said tonight.

Take a minute and go around the group, asking everyone to share briefly. Then continue.

Now, I want to go around the circle again, starting with the person on my left, and I'd like each of us to share one take-away from tonight. In other words, share something that resonates in your heart as a truth to live by.

Give everyone time to share, and then continue.

SAY: How are your spiritual H.A.B.I.T.S. coming along?

Encourage your group members to share how they have grown spiritually since your last meeting by practicing spiritual H.A.B.I.T.S. Ask them if there is any way that you can help them in their commitment to developing spiritual H.A.B.I.T.S. You can find the H.A.B.I.T.S. in the Leader Guide for Follow Me, Session 5: The Cost. After everyone has shared, follow up on last week's commitments before discussing the new commitment.

SAY: This week's commitment is to spend five minutes each day praying to the Holy Spirit. Spend a few minutes reading Scripture. Quietly reflect upon what you read, and ask the Holy Spirit to move in your mind and heart. Be aware of your thoughts, feelings, and desires, and discern if the Holy Spirit is leading you in a particular direction. Consider journaling about your thoughts, feelings, and desires and how the Holy Spirit might be leading you.



CLOSING PRAYER

SAY: Let's close with a prayer from St. Catherine of Siena.

PRAY: Holy Spirit, come into our hearts; draw them to You by Your power, O my God, and grant us charity with filial fear. Preserve us, O ineffable Love, from every evil thought; warm us, inflame us with Your dear love, and every pain will seem light to us. Our Father, our sweet Lord, help us in all our actions. Jesus, love, Jesus, love.



LEADER GUIDE

CONFIRMATION

SESSION 3

Moved to Mission



CONFIRMATION: MOVED TO MISSION

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Augustine Institute
6160 South Syracuse Way, Suite 310
Greenwood Village, CO 80111
Information: 303-937-4420
ydisciple.org
Formed.org

SESSION OVERVIEW

The Sacrament of Confirmation is one of the three sacraments of initiation (CCC 1212). Too often, Confirmation can seem like a graduation or an ending of something, but that is not the case at all. This sacrament is a beginning, an initiation.

In this session, we will discuss the very purpose of the Sacrament of Confirmation: the Holy Spirit moving the Church to mission. We will explore Jesus' mission following His baptism when the Holy Spirit descended on Him, as well as the story of Pentecost and the mission of the Church.

SESSION SNAPSHOT

Review the entire lesson plan in advance so you are prepared to lead and discuss comfortably. Gather necessary supplies and review video segments prior to your gathering. Use the time allotments in the session outline below as a guideline, as the length of time spent on each section will vary from group to group.

TIME	SECTION	SECTION OVERVIEW
15 minutes	CONNECT	Lead your group in sharing humorous family stories to introduce the topic of belonging; then open in prayer.
60 minutes	DISCUSS	Watch and discuss these video segments: Scene 1: What does it mean to be initiated? Scene 2: The battle in the desert Scene 3: The Holy Spirit moves us to mission Scene 4: The battle in your own heart
15 minutes	COMMIT	Review the key points and last week's commitment. Then refocus on the need to establish great H.A.B.I.T.S. Close in prayer.

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- » Media device to show video segments
- » Bibles
- » Participant Sheets
- » Pens or Pencils

PREPARE IN ADVANCE

- » Have snacks ready.
- » Create a welcoming environment.



LEADER TIPS

- » We often include possible responses and material from the *Catechism* after the discussion questions to help you facilitate the conversation. It is best to let group members respond first and share the concepts in parentheses only as needed.
- » This session discusses the purpose of the Sacrament of Confirmation. We recommend learning more about this sacrament from the Lighthouse Catholic Media talk “We Must Go Out: The Sacrament of Confirmation” by Fr. Mike Schmitz.

lighthousecatholicmedia.org/store/title/we-must-go-out-the-sacrament-of-confirmation#



CONNECT



ACTIVITY

FUNNY FAMILY STORIES

SAY: Belonging to a family is a great adventure, isn't it? Every family has its funny stories about things they did together, with siblings or cousins for example. Some are passed on through generations, and some might be your own. An example might be a crazy camping adventure or the one about your uncles who almost set the kitchen on fire.

- » Let's go around in a circle and have everyone share: What is the funniest story that you can remember or that you've been told about your family?

Give every teen an opportunity to tell a quick story. This activity is designed to lead into the presenter's stories in the first video segment, so preview the segment before your session and be prepared to lead with a story of your own. It doesn't need to be about initiation, just a shared experience.



INTRODUCTION

SAY: Today's topic is on the purpose of the Sacrament of Confirmation. Confirmation is one of the three sacraments of initiation. But what is it that we are initiated into? This is what we will be discussing in this session.



OPENING PRAYER

SAY: Let's begin in prayer.

Have a teen read aloud Acts 2:3-4.



"And there appeared to them tongues as of fire, distributed and resting on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."
—Acts 2:3-4

PRAY: Heavenly Father, we thank You for all the many blessings in our lives, especially the people who help us draw closer to You. Jesus, You promised the Holy Spirit to Your disciples and that they would receive power from on high. We ask for that promise to be fulfilled in our lives as well. Holy Spirit, help us to know You and fill us with Your love.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.



DISCUSS

SAY: Let's watch the first scene of this session.



*Watch the first video segment. The video will last about 5 minutes.
At the end of the segment, discuss.*

SAY: Paul said that the Sacrament of Confirmation is not a graduation but an initiation. Initiation has two meanings: to admit someone into a group and to begin something. We see this act of admitting and beginning in the sacraments of initiation: Baptism, Eucharist, and Confirmation.

- » How are Baptism, First Eucharist, and Confirmation each a new beginning, and what do they admit us into?

(Baptism is the beginning of the Christian life. The soul passes through Christ's death and resurrection and experiences death of the old self and rebirth as a child of God. Therefore, Baptism initiates, or admits, us into the family of God, the Church. Our First Eucharist is the beginning of a lifetime of receiving Jesus physically into our bodies, which nourishes and strengthens our life in Christ. It initiates, or admits, us into the family meal. Confirmation is the beginning of a new life in the Holy Spirit as His gifts are increased within us. It initiates, or admits, us into the mission of the Church, which is to spread and defend the Catholic faith. So the sacraments of initiation—Baptism, Eucharist, and Confirmation—initiate us into the family, the family's meal, and the family's mission.)

- » On the beatification of Joan of Arc a century ago, it is reported that Pope St. Pius X said: "All the vigor of Satan's reign is due to the easy-going weakness of Catholics." What do you think this pope may have meant by that strong statement?

(The Catholic Church is the hope of the world because Jesus established the Catholic Church. Jesus, the Way and the Truth and the Life for every human being, gave the Church the mission to draw as many people as possible into the Way, the Truth, and the Life—that is, into His mystical body, the Church. If Catholics are lukewarm in their faith and do not take this mission seriously, evil will be allowed to flourish.)

- » What are some reasons you think confirmed Catholics become lukewarm or even leave the Church?

(People who have come to know Jesus personally and have experienced His love will desire to grow closer to Him. As a result, their love for the Church grows because the Church provides all that is needed to grow closer to God. They also want others to experience this same love and are motivated to share the love of Jesus with them. These people are ready for Confirmation, as they desire to have an increase of the gifts of the Holy Spirit in order to bring the love of Jesus to the world. For many, this personal relationship with Jesus was not present when they received their Confirmation. Therefore, their Confirmation probably felt like something they were made to do and not something they desired to do.)

SAY: Let's continue with Scene 2.



Watch the second video segment. The video will last about 4 minutes. At the end of the segment, discuss.

SAY: As we talked about in the previous session, when the Holy Spirit descends upon someone in the Scriptures, He prepares them for a mission.

- » After Jesus was baptized, He was led into the desert by the Spirit to be tested. In the desert, Jesus overcame the temptations of the devil. How is this a foreshadowing of His mission from the Father?

(The devil's mission is to draw as many souls as possible into hell with him. The mission of Jesus Christ was to definitively defeat Satan by conquering sin and death. It makes sense that after the Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus at the Jordan River, He quickly led Jesus into the desert to begin His mission of saving souls from him who "comes only to steal and kill and destroy" [John 10:10].)

- » What is the mission of confirmed Catholics?

(This is the mission Jesus gave the Church: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age" [Matthew 28:19-20]. In other words, it is the mission of every confirmed Catholic to help as many people as possible give their lives to Jesus and enter into full communion with the Catholic Church.)

- » Archbishop John Hughes was the first archbishop of New York (1850–1864). He wrote: "Everyone should know that we have for our mission to convert the world, including the inhabitants of the United States: the people of the cities, the people of the country, the officers of the Navy and the Marines, the commanders of the Army, the Legislature, the Senate, the Cabinet, the President and all!"

- » What is your honest reaction to this quote?

(Many Catholics, especially those who are "lukewarm," would probably be uncomfortable with a statement like this. It may feel too strong, even intolerant, especially in the United States where the "separation of Church and State" in the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution has been misinterpreted to mean "you should keep your faith to yourself." In reality, Archbishop Hughes' statement inspires true tolerance because it is honest and transparent. Honesty and charity will witness to the world that Catholics are not a threat but want the best for others.)

SAY: Let's continue with Scene 3.



Watch the third video segment. The video will last about 4 minutes. At the end of the segment, discuss.

SAY: Paul explains how the Holy Spirit descended on the disciples at Pentecost and how they were empowered to start the Church. Peter, who out of fear denied Christ and was in hiding, was transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit. As a result, Peter spoke courageously to the crowd and 3,000 converted and were baptized (Acts 2:41); Peter healed a man who was crippled from birth (Acts 3:1-10); Peter and John spoke boldly about Christ to the leaders, elders, and high priests, and they healed people and cast out demons (Acts 5:16); and Peter raised a girl named Tabitha from the dead (Acts 9:36-43).

- » St. John Bosco worked tirelessly to bring tough, delinquent youth off the streets of Turin, Italy, and provide them spiritual formation, education, and even apprenticeships for particular trades. He wrote: “When one is convinced that his cause is just, he will fear nothing.” Why is a just cause and courage necessary to make an impact in the world?

(A just cause takes the focus off ourselves and onto mission. We can easily succumb to fear when we stay focused on ourselves. There is no greater cause than spreading the Gospel, because Jesus is the only person who can free someone from their sin and give them life to the full. In Confirmation, the Holy Spirit increases the gift of fortitude which helps us to be courageous in overcoming our fears and doing what is right and generous for others.)

- » Pope Francis reminds us that by virtue of our baptism, all of us—priests, religious, and lay people—are called to be missionary disciples. If you were to create a job description for a missionary disciple, what would be the expectations of the job?

(Let’s start with disciple. A disciple is a fully devoted follower of Jesus. A disciple is committed to disciplines: prayer, accountability, study, service, sacraments, and living the moral life. [Recall our H.A.B.I.T.S. acronym.] A missionary is sent into the lives of others to share the good news and serve. In short, a missionary disciple is someone who knows Jesus and wants to make Him known!)

SAY: Let’s continue with Scene 4.



Watch the fourth video segment. The video will last about 3 minutes. At the end of the segment, discuss.

SAY: Paul shares with us many stories of teens who were missionary disciples. Two students decided to pray five minutes before school and invite others to join them. It grew to 200 students. One girl started making modest clothes in order to grow a movement of modesty in her school. A guy led a Bible study for his football teammates on the bus that grew to every team in the school having a Bible study on the bus. Another student, whose family was broken through divorce, prayed daily for her family to be healed, and they all ended up coming into the Catholic Church.

- » Paul said that if you want to change lives, you need to commit to two things: Prayer and Share. Pray for people every day who are in need, and look for the opportunity to share with them the Gospel.

Who is someone you know who does not know the love that God has for them? Are you willing to start praying for that person every day? Are you willing to make an effort to share the Gospel message with that person?

» Can anyone share with the group the Gospel message?

G - God has created us in His image and to be in relationship with Him now and forever.

O - Our sins have separated us from God, and we find ourselves in a great spiritual battle with Satan.

S - Sins cannot be removed through our own efforts.

P - Paying the price for our sins, Jesus was crucified, died, rose from the dead, and ascended into heaven to prepare a place for us.

E - Everyone who places their faith in Jesus shall have abundant life here and eternal life in heaven.

L - Life that is eternal is the fulfillment of all our desires in heaven forever with God, His angels, and His saints.)



COMMIT



ACTIVITY

TAKE-AWAY

SAY: I am going to go around the circle, starting with the person on my right, and I'd like each of us to share something we remember that this person said tonight.

Take a minute and go around the group, asking everyone to share briefly. Then continue.

Now I want to go around the circle again, this time starting with the person on my left, and I'd like each of us to share one take-away from tonight. In other words, share something that resonates in your heart as a truth to live by.

Give everyone time to share, and then continue.

SAY: When something resonates with our hearts, we should be mindful to take that to prayer. So I encourage you to take whatever touched your heart in this session into your prayer this week.

This week's commitment is to recommit to the H.A.B.I.T.S. that we have talked about in previous sessions.

As a reminder, H.A.B.I.T.S. stands for:

Holy Hour
Accountability
Bible Study
Invest in your parish
Tell others about the Faith
Sacraments

You can find more information about the spiritual H.A.B.I.T.S. in the Leader Guide for Follow Me, Session 5: The Cost.

When you invest in these H.A.B.I.T.S. in your life, you create the capacity within your soul to become receptive to the movements of the Holy Spirit. These H.A.B.I.T.S. will change your life because the Holy Spirit will be free to transform you.

Take a few minutes before closing to follow up on last week's commitments. Invite everyone to share any successes and challenges; share yours as well. Then close in prayer.



CLOSING PRAYER

SAY: Let's close in prayer.

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

Let us pray, O God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit did instruct the hearts of Your faithful; grant that in the same Spirit we may be truly wise and ever rejoice in His consolation. Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

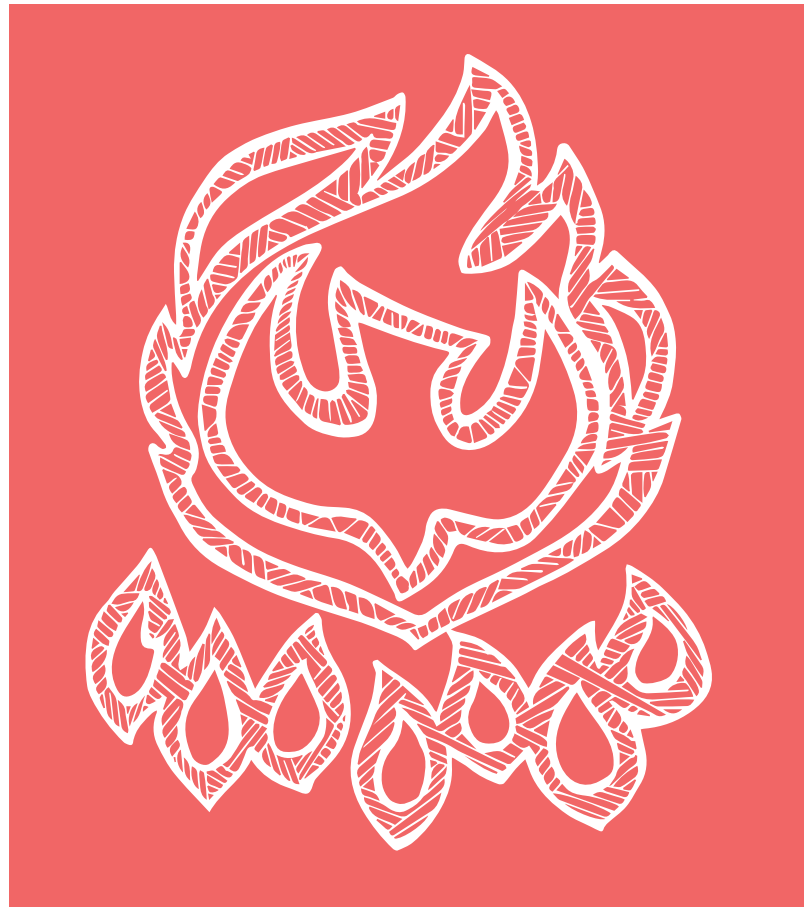


LEADER GUIDE

CONFIRMATION

SESSION 4

THE GIFTS AND FRUITS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT



CONFIRMATION: THE GIFTS AND FRUITS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

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6160 South Syracuse Way, Suite 310
Greenwood Village, CO 80111
Information: 303-937-4420
ydisciple.org
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SESSION OVERVIEW

Confirmation gives to us the same fullness of the Holy Spirit that the Apostles received on Pentecost. Confirmation perfects the grace of Baptism, deepens our bond with the Blessed Trinity, strengthens our bond with the Church, and gives us the strength to spread and defend the Catholic faith.

In this session, we will discuss the gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit. The gifts of the Holy Spirit are increased within us in our Confirmation, and the fruits are the manifestations of the Holy Spirit working in our lives. The gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit strengthen our witness in the world.

SESSION SNAPSHOT

Review the entire lesson plan in advance so you are prepared to lead and discuss comfortably. Gather necessary supplies and review video segments prior to your gathering. Use the time allotments in the session outline below as a guideline, as the length of time spent on each section will vary from group to group.

TIME	SECTION	SECTION OVERVIEW
20 minutes	CONNECT	Lead an activity in which teens share thoughts about faith-related topics; then open in prayer.
60 minutes	DISCUSS	Watch and discuss these video segments: Scene 1: The Gifts of the Holy Spirit Scene 2: The Fruits of the Holy Spirit Scene 3: Cooperation with the Holy Spirit
10 minutes	COMMIT	Review the key points, and commit to praying the Litany to the Holy Spirit every day this week.

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- » Media device to show video segments
- » Bibles
- » Participant Sheets
- » Pens or Pencils

PREPARE IN ADVANCE

- » Have snacks ready.
- » Create a welcoming environment.
- » Have your Bible bookmarked for the different Scripture passages referenced in the Leader's Guide.



LEADER TIPS

- » We often include possible responses and material from the *Catechism* after the discussion questions to help you facilitate the conversation. It is best to let group members respond first and share the concepts in parentheses only as needed.
- » This session teaches that the gifts of the Holy Spirit strengthened in Confirmation are for Catholics to share and defend their faith.

We recommend the Lighthouse Catholic Media talk "Contemporary Sainthood" by Mark Hart.

lighthousecatholicmedia.org/store/title/contemporary-sainthood#



CONNECT



ACTIVITY

SPIRITUALLY THINKING

SAY: I have seven questions that I want to give everyone the opportunity to answer. Let's go in the order of the number of letters in your full name: first, middle, and last. The person with the most letters goes first.

1. What do you think is the meaning of life?
2. How has your perception of God changed over the years?
3. What is a moral conviction you have that is not widely accepted today?
4. Can you give an example of a time you did the right thing in a difficult situation?

5. What would be the value of knowing more about the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*?
6. What impact do you think praying the rosary every day can have in someone's life?
7. What difference does going often to the Sacrament of Confession make in someone's life?



INTRODUCTION

SAY: In this session we will discuss the gifts of the Holy Spirit that we receive in our Baptism and that are strengthened in the Sacrament of Confirmation. We need these gifts to spread and defend our faith.



OPENING PRAYER

SAY: Let's open our prayer with a passage from Isaiah 11:1-3a.

Have a teen read Isaiah 11:1-3a.



"There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. And his delight shall be in the fear of the LORD." —Isaiah 11:1-3a

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

Let us pray, O God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit did instruct the hearts of Your faithful; grant that in the same Spirit we may be truly wise and ever rejoice in His consolation. Through the same Christ, our Lord. Amen.



DISCUSS

SAY: Let's watch the first scene of this session.



Watch the first video segment. The video will last about 7 minutes. At the end of the segment, discuss.

SAY: It can be challenging to see how the gifts of the Holy Spirit work practically in our lives. The seven questions I asked you in our "Spiritually Thinking" activity are directly related to the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit. Let's revisit those questions and see how the gifts of the Spirit informed your answers.

1. What do you think is the meaning of life?

(The gift of wisdom empowers us to view the meaning of life according to God's plan. That plan is that we would seek first the kingdom of God and grow in holiness. Also, wisdom is to see ourselves through God's loving gaze. As Gina mentioned in the video, the girl with the eating disorder needed wisdom to overcome her self-hatred and be healed.)

2. How has your perception of God changed over the years?

(The gift of understanding is a deeper knowledge of God that leads to a more intimate relationship with Him. For example, it is one thing to know and believe that there are three persons in one God. It is another to understand the eternal exchange of selfless love within the Trinity that you are called to participate in now and for all eternity.)

3. What is a moral conviction you have that is not widely accepted today?

(The gift of counsel empowers us to be docile and formed by the teaching of Christ and not by the world. In other words, we receive counsel from the Church and give that counsel to others. In Gina's example, a girl was able to give counsel to her friends when they were on the verge of doing something dangerous. In our culture today, teenagers who witness to sexual purity are a great example of the gift of counsel.)

4. Can you give an example of a time you did the right thing in a difficult situation?

(The gift of fortitude is the strength to do the right thing, especially when it is challenging. In the example Gina shared, the young man who resisted the temptation to look at pornography with his friends demonstrated strength when they were weak. His strength inspired other guys to resist as well.)

5. What would be the value of knowing more about the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*?

(The gift of knowledge empowers us to have a more complete grasp of the truth, or deposit of faith, that God has revealed to us. For example, knowledge allows you to integrate your faith into all areas

of life—philosophy, psychology, biology, politics, business, etc. Jesus promised: “If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.” Gina’s story of the girl whose Bible was marked up shows the freedom and joy that is experienced in growing in the knowledge of God.)

6. What impact do you think praying the rosary every day can have in someone’s life?

(The gift of piety strengthens our desire to show our love for God and others. In other words, piety helps you to be more in tune with the presence of God and to show Him reverence. The pious person grows in the desire to give God worship and praise and to intercede for others who need His grace. In Gina’s story, her youth group was demonstrating piety in their awareness of God’s true presence in the tabernacle. The sister cried because she loves Jesus and for her to see young people showing their love for Jesus gave her hope.)

7. What difference does going often to the Sacrament of Confession make in someone’s life?

(The gift of fear of the Lord strengthens our desire to never be separated from God through our sin. Confession allows us to make our relationship with God the number one priority in our lives because it removes the obstacles to that relationship.)

SAY: Let’s continue with Scene 2.



Watch the second video segment. The video will last about 7 minutes. At the end of the segment, discuss.

SAY: Gina shares a story of conversion to Jesus. It has been said that conversion to Jesus is an 18-inch journey: that is, the 18 inches that physically exist between your mind and your heart. The “tough” girl Gina talked about beautifully demonstrated this journey when she held the crucifix to her heart. Conversion to Jesus brings about the fruits of the Spirit in your life. The *Catechism* calls the fruits perfections in us:

“The fruits of the Spirit are perfections that the Holy Spirit forms in us as the first fruits of eternal glory. The tradition of the Church lists twelve of them: ‘charity, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, generosity, gentleness, faithfulness, modesty, self-control, chastity’” (CCC 1832).

» Charity is love for God, neighbor, and self. What do you think is the difference between loving yourself and selfishness?

(The ability to love one’s self comes from security, whereas selfishness comes from insecurity. Security is found when our fundamental needs are met—physical, emotional, spiritual, social, and intellectual. Unmet needs can lead to fear, insecurity, and the need to control. A selfish person often has difficulty giving for fear of losing something they control. Jesus says: “Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” [Matthew 11:28]. Jesus invites us to find healing and security in Him. When we are secure in His love, we are able to love ourselves and others more and more.)

- » Think for a moment of something that would be disappointing for you. Perhaps you lose a championship game, get turned down to the school dance, have a friend stab you in the back, or just miss getting a scholarship to college. How can the Holy Spirit bring you joy in the midst of disappointment?

(If there is one thing you can count on while here on this earth, it is that you will experience disappointment. Joy is experienced in the knowledge that God is present to you and wants to console you in those times. Joy is also experienced when you are reminded of the salvation Jesus won for you. As St. Paul says: "I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us" [Romans 8:18].)

- » Let's say a friend tells you that he/she overheard some of your classmates making fun of you during lunch. How can the Holy Spirit bring you peace in this situation?

(Peace is feeling assured in your relationship with God and in making the right choices. You have peace when you feel no need to impress others or have them like you. In other words, you know who you are and you like who you are regardless of what other people think. True friendships are mature and they bring the best out of one another. Friendships that put Jesus at the center quickly become true friendships.)

SAY: I am going to read the remaining fruits of the Spirit and a short description of them. After I read each one, share with the group someone you think exhibits that fruit in his or her life.

Patience – allows you to endure difficulties and discomforts in life and be attentive to others

Kindness – allows you to recognize the dignity of people and treat them well

Goodness – inclines you to do good to everyone and choose to live by truth

Generosity – giving charitably to others

Gentleness – a sensitivity that comforts others

Faithfulness – a dedication to the Lord and commitment to others

Modesty – dressing and behaving in a way respectful to one's self and others

Self-control – controlling one's own impulses, emotions, or desires

Chastity – seeing others as children of God and not sexual objects

SAY: Let's continue with Scene 3.



Watch the third video segment. The video will last about 3 minutes. At the end of the segment, discuss.

SAY: Gina says there are three reasons people do not have the fruits of the Spirit in their lives: 1) They don't believe they are real; 2) they prefer living for sin rather than living for Jesus; and 3) they have not had a personal encounter of the love of Jesus. These three reasons show that there is a battle in each of our hearts to either live for self or to live for God.

» St. Augustine wrote: "God created us without us: but he did not will to save us without us." What does this quote mean to you?

(God will not save us without our cooperation. He respects our freedom. He desires that we reach out to Him and ask for His mercy and grace. St. John writes: "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness" [1 John 1:8-9]. In other words, we have to choose. Likewise, the gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit will not show in our lives if we are not willing to give ourselves over and cooperate with the Holy Spirit.)



COMMIT



ACTIVITY

TAKE-AWAY

SAY: I am going to go around the circle, starting with the person on my right, and I'd like each of us to share something we remember that this person said tonight.

Take a minute and go around the group, asking everyone to share briefly. Then continue.

Now I want to go around the circle again, this time starting with the person on my left, and I'd like each of us to share one take-away from tonight. In other words, share something that resonates in your heart as a truth to live by.

Give everyone time to share. Then follow-up on last week's commitment.

SAY: How are your spiritual H.A.B.I.T.S. coming along?

Encourage your group members to share how they have grown spiritually since your last meeting by practicing spiritual H.A.B.I.T.S. Ask them if there is any way that you can help them in their commitment to developing spiritual H.A.B.I.T.S. You can also find the H.A.B.I.T.S. in the Leader Guide for Follow Me, Session 5: The Cost.

This week's commitment is to pray the Litany to the Holy Spirit every day.



CLOSING PRAYER

SAY: Let's close in prayer with the Litany to the Holy Spirit, which you can find on your Participant Sheet. You'll respond with the words in bold.

LITANY TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

Lord, have mercy on us. (Lord, have mercy on us).

God the Father of Heaven, (Have mercy on us).

God the Son, Redeemer of the world, (Have mercy on us).

God the Holy Spirit, (Have mercy on us).

Holy Trinity, One God, (Have mercy on us).

Divine Essence, one true God, (Have mercy on us).

Spirit of truth and wisdom, (Have mercy on us).

Spirit of holiness and justice, (Have mercy on us).

Spirit of understanding and counsel, (Have mercy on us).

Spirit of love and joy, (Have mercy on us).

Spirit of peace and patience, (Have mercy on us).

Spirit of longanimity and meekness, (Have mercy on us).

Spirit of benignity and goodness, (Have mercy on us).

Love substantial of the Father and the Son, (Have mercy on us).

Love and life of saintly souls, (Have mercy on us).

Fire ever burning, (Have mercy on us).

Living water to quench the thirst of hearts, (Have mercy on us).

From all evil, (Deliver us, O Holy Spirit).

From all impurity of soul and body, (Deliver us, O Holy Spirit).

From all gluttony and sensuality, (Deliver us, O Holy Spirit).

From all attachments to the things of the earth, (Deliver us, O Holy Spirit).

From all hypocrisy and pretense, (Deliver us, O Holy Spirit).

From all imperfections and deliberate faults, (Deliver us, O Holy Spirit).

From our own will, (Deliver us, O Holy Spirit).

From slander, (Deliver us, O Holy Spirit).

From deceiving our neighbors, (Deliver us, O Holy Spirit).

From our passions and disorderly appetites, (Deliver us, O Holy Spirit).

From our inattentiveness to Your holy inspirations, (Deliver us, O Holy Spirit).

From despising little things, (Deliver us, O Holy Spirit).

From debauchery and malice, (Deliver us, O Holy Spirit).

From love of comfort and luxury, (Deliver us, O Holy Spirit).

From wishing to seek or desire anything other than You, (Deliver us, O Holy Spirit).

From everything that displeases You, (Deliver us, O Holy Spirit).

Most loving Father, (**Forgive us**).
Divine Word, (**Have pity on us**).
Holy and divine Spirit, (**Leave us not until we are in possession of the Divine Essence, Heaven of heavens**).

Lamb of God, Who takes away the sins of the world, (**Send us the divine Consoler**).
Lamb of God, Who takes away the sins of the world, (**Fill us with the gifts of Your Spirit**).
Lamb of God, Who takes away the sins of the world, (**Make the fruits of the Holy Spirit increase within us**).

V. Come, O Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of Your faithful,
R. And enkindle in them the fire of Your love.
V. Send forth Your Spirit and they shall be created,
R. And You shall renew the face of the earth.

PRAY: God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit instructed the hearts of the faithful, grant us by the same Spirit to be truly wise and ever to rejoice in His consolation. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

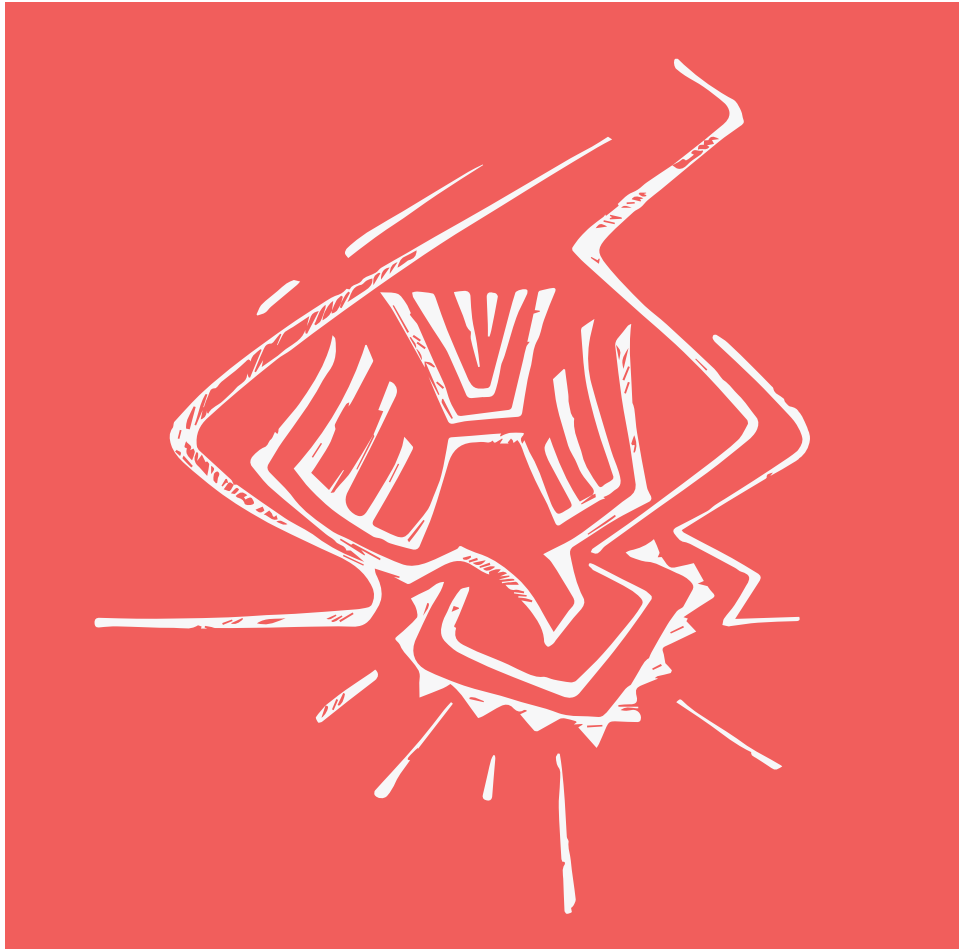


LEADER GUIDE

CONFIRMATION

SESSION 5

THE RITE



CONFIRMATION: THE RITE

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Augustine Institute
6160 South Syracuse Way, Suite 310
Greenwood Village, CO 80111
Information: 303-937-4420
ydisciple.org
Formed.org

SESSION OVERVIEW

Catholics understand Liturgy to be the greatest form of prayer and worship that we can offer to God. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* states, “A sacramental celebration is woven from signs and symbols. In keeping with the divine pedagogy of salvation, their meaning is rooted in the work of creation and in human culture, specified by the events of the Old Covenant and fully revealed in the person and work of Christ” (CCC 1145). This means that every sign and symbol within the Liturgy is communicating a deep spiritual reality.

Catholics who don't understand the meaning of the signs within a Liturgy will have difficulty entering into worship. As a result, a sacrament like Confirmation can seem like a “nice ceremony” rather than a powerful encounter with the Holy Spirit. In this session we will discuss the signs and symbols that are present in the Rite of Confirmation.

SESSION SNAPSHOT

Review the entire lesson plan in advance so you are prepared to lead and discuss comfortably. Gather necessary supplies and review video segments prior to your gathering. Use the time allotments in the session outline below as a guideline, as the length of time spent on each section will vary from group to group.

TIME	SECTION	SECTION OVERVIEW
20 minutes	CONNECT	Lead teens in an activity in using symbolism to describe their personalities; then open in prayer.
60 minutes	DISCUSS	Watch and discuss these video segments: Scene 1: Is the Rite Simply a Nice Ceremony? Scene 2: What is Liturgy? Scene 3: A Walkthrough of the Rite Scene 4: How to Be Receptive to the Holy Spirit
10 minutes	COMMIT	Review the key points; then commit to improve in one of the four practices that stoked the fire of the Holy Spirit in the early Church: study, fellowship, sacraments, or prayer. Close in prayer.

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- » Media device to show video segments
- » Bibles
- » Participant Sheets
- » Large writing pad and easel
- » Marker
- » Timer

PREPARE IN ADVANCE

- » Have snacks ready.
- » Create a welcoming environment.



LEADER TIPS

- » We often include possible responses and material from the *Catechism* after the discussion questions to help you facilitate the conversation. It is best to let group members respond first and share the concepts in parentheses only as needed.
- » This session discusses the signs within the Rite of Confirmation. We recommend learning more about this sacrament from the Lighthouse Catholic Media talk “Confirmation: The Sacrament of Evangelization and Martyrdom” by Dr. Brant Pitre.

lighthousecatholicmedia.org/store/title/confirmation-the-sacrament-of-evangelization-and-martyrdom



CONNECT



ACTIVITY

The Deeper Meaning of Me

SAY: We are going to be discussing the Rite of Confirmation and the deeper meaning of the signs and symbols in the sacramental celebration. Let’s start with an activity using symbolism to share about ourselves and understand each other more deeply. I’ll read pairs of things—think of them as signs that indicate a deeper personality or character trait. I want you to pick the one that describes or symbolizes you best, and explain why to the group.

Read a different pair of choices to each person, and keep this activity moving at a quick pace. Continue around the circle, giving everyone several turns as time allows.

1. Trapeze artist or circus clown
2. Sprinter or distance runner
3. Magnifying glass or telescope
4. 1st and 10 or 4th and goal
5. Candle or light bulb
6. Amusement park or library
7. Home phone or cell phone
8. New York City or Omaha
9. Bridge or tower
10. Oak tree or evergreen



INTRODUCTION

SAY: Today we’re going to wrap up our discussion on the Sacrament of Confirmation by discussing the Rite of Confirmation. When we don’t understand the meaning of the signs and symbols within a Liturgy, we have difficulty entering into worship. As a result, a sacrament like Confirmation can seem like a “nice ceremony” rather than a powerful encounter with the Holy Spirit. In this session, we’ll discuss the signs and symbols that are present in the Rite of Confirmation.



OPENING PRAYER

SAY: Let’s begin prayer with a passage from Scripture.



“Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent to them Peter and John, who came down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit; for it had not yet fallen on any of them, but they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit.”

—Acts 8:14–17

PRAY: Heavenly Father, we pray for the Holy Spirit to descend upon us, just as He did in the early Church. Light us aflame with Your love, and empower us to go and make disciples of Jesus Christ in the world. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.



DISCUSS

SAY: Let's watch the first scene of this session.



Watch the first video segment. The video will last about 4 minutes. At the end of the segment, discuss.

SAY: The *Brothers Karamazov*, by Fyodor Dostoyevsky, is considered to be one of the greatest philosophical novels of all time. Here is a quote from the book:

"You must know that there is nothing higher and stronger and more wholesome and good for life in the future than some good memory, especially a memory of childhood, of home. People talk to you a great deal about your education, but some good, sacred memory, preserved from childhood, is perhaps the best education."

» In what ways does this quote stress the importance of ceremonies in our lives?

(Ceremonies create memories and it is important for us to have good memories of important events in our lives. These memories can provide for us hope, joy, and sense of purpose throughout our lives. If there were no God, and life had no meaning, then ceremonies would be meaningless. But, in truth, there is a God who created us for a purpose and therefore life is meaningful at every moment. Ceremonies usually contain ritual to emphasize the importance of the event or rite of passage.)

» As important as ceremonies are, why is Confirmation more than "a nice ceremony"?

(Confirmation is a ceremony with God as the guest of honor. Moreover, God is not there as an observer but rather acts in the ceremony by giving His life to those receiving the sacrament. The Catechism states: "The sacraments are efficacious signs of grace, instituted by Christ and entrusted to the Church, by which divine life is dispensed to us. The visible rites by which the sacraments are celebrated signify and make present the graces proper to each sacrament" [1131].)

» Imagine you are talking to someone who left the Catholic Church for a mega-church. How would you respond to this comment: "In my church we don't have dead ritual. We have awesome music, inspiring video, and a great message from our pastor."

(The question to ask is "Why do we go to church?" Worship is not about what we get but what we give, and ritual guides our worship as a group. Catholics understand that true worship offers God adoration and sacrifice. The Catechism states: "To adore God is to praise and exalt him and to humble oneself, as Mary did in the Magnificat, confessing with gratitude that he has done great things and holy is his name" [2097]. It also says, "The only perfect sacrifice is the one that Christ offered on the cross as a total offering to the Father's love and for our salvation. By uniting ourselves with his sacrifice we can make our lives a sacrifice to God" [2100]. Adoration and sacrifice take place in every Mass.)

- » Everett stated, “If we don’t understand on the day of Confirmation what is happening in the Rite, we are selling ourselves short.” Why are we selling ourselves short?

(The Catechism quotes St. Augustine: “God created us without us; but he did not will to save us without us” [1847]. In other words, God desires our cooperation or participation with His grace. He will not force this on us just like He will not force heaven on us. It is difficult to cooperate with the grace being received at Confirmation if you do not understand what is taking place.)

SAY: Let’s continue with Scene 2.



Watch the second video segment. The video will last about 7 minutes. At the end of the segment, discuss.

SAY: St. Augustine called a sacrament “a visible sign of invisible grace.” As Catholics, signs and symbols help us explain and understand how God is acting in our lives. For example, the baptismal candle flame is a symbol of the life of the Blessed Trinity now present within us as a result of the sacrament. The Sacrament of Confirmation is a sign of the Holy Spirit, already present within us, being fanned into flame through an increase of gifts within us.

- » How would you explain this statement: “All symbols are signs, but not all signs are symbols.”

(This is an important distinction because sacraments are signs and not symbols. A symbol represents something else, and a sign indicates something else. The email symbol, for example, represents messages delivered through electronic means. The email symbol is also a sign, or indication, that we now live in an electronic age. The material signs of the sacraments affect our senses and direct our minds to the spiritual reality they signify. For example, the consecrated bread and wine are not merely symbols; they are material signs that indicate Jesus’ body, blood, soul, and divinity are truly present under the appearance of bread and wine.)

- » Not too long ago the words “spiritual” and “religious” were understood to be essentially the same thing. Today, however, the phrase “spiritual but not religious” is used by those who believe in God but reject organized religion. What would you say in a conversation with a friend who says he is “spiritual but not religious”?

(Religion is defined as a set of beliefs and practices followed by those dedicated to God. So the question to ask someone who is “spiritual but not religious” is if they think beliefs and practices are important to God. The Catechism states: “The duty of offering God genuine worship concerns man both individually and socially” [2105]. God wants us to be “spiritual” with others and therefore what we believe and how we live out those beliefs are very important. It is for this reason that Jesus instituted an organized religion, the Catholic Church.)

- » If a sacrament makes visible an invisible reality—meaning that there is something spiritually happening that we cannot see—why is it so important to receive sacraments as often as possible?

(One of the greatest misconceptions about Catholicism is that we earn our way to heaven by our good works. This is impossible. No person can earn heaven—if we could, then there would have been no need for Jesus’ death and resurrection. There is work that God must do on our behalf, and this is grace. Through the sacraments, we receive grace, and our cooperation with that grace allows God to transform our lives—to make us holy. We need to receive the sacraments often—namely Mass and Reconciliation—so that God can transform us.)

SAY: Let’s continue with Scene 3.



Watch the third video segment. The video will last about 4 minutes. At the end of the segment, discuss.

SAY: In this segment, Everett explains the empowerment of the Holy Spirit within the Rite of Confirmation.

There are six questions asked when renewing your baptismal promises, and after each question you respond, “I do.” When it comes to your Confirmation, you should believe so strongly in these promises that you would be willing to stake your life on them.

- 1) Do you reject Satan?
- 2) And all his works?
- 3) And all his empty promises?
- 4) Do you believe in God, the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth?
- 5) 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?
- 6) Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting?

» Let’s take a deeper look at the questions. How do we practically reject Satan, his works, and his empty promises in our daily lives?

(“Reject” is defined as: “To refuse to accept, submit to, believe, or make use of.” The Bible says: “Be sober, be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking some one to devour” [1 Peter 5:8]. Therefore, to reject Satan and his works and promises is to be alert and watchful so that when your enemy attacks you are quick to reject his lies. Lies like “following God’s will is too hard and no fun; God is angry with me; there is nothing special about me; I can’t make a difference in the world, etc.” should be rejected immediately. It would be a mistake to think “I am not a satanist” so of course I reject Satan and all his works and promises. We are in a great spiritual battle and we need to be willing to fight.)

- » Are there any faith issues or moral issues where you would have difficulty saying, “I believe this because I am a disciple of Jesus Christ!”?

(Another way to ask this question is, “Do you believe everything in the Catechism of the Catholic Church and are you willing to defend and spread those teachings?” As Catholics, we believe the Catechism of the Catholic Church is the deposit of faith that Jesus has given the Church.)

- » Why is it significant to have a bishop, or his appointed representative, lay hands on your head?

(A bishop is a successor to the apostles [CCC 1313]. The Apostles received the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Laying on of hands was always the sign of the passing on of power from one person to another; we see this sign regularly used in the Jewish tradition. Also, in the Acts of the Apostles, we see occasions when the Apostles laid hands on people and they received the Holy Spirit [see Acts 8:17]. When the bishop lays hands on your head, he is continuing a practice that goes back to the very beginning of the Church. Confirmation reminds us as Catholics that our faith is apostolic.)

- » Why is it significant that in Confirmation we are anointed with Chrism oil?

*“Christ” comes from the Greek word Christos meaning “anointed one.” Jesus says in Luke 4:18: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor.” Jesus is “the Christ” because He is the anointed one from God. We are called “Christians” because we are “anointed ones” in Jesus Christ. We were first anointed with Chrism oil at our baptism. Chrism oil is a mixture of olive oil and balsam fragrance. The fragrance reminds us that we are sanctified and called to be what St. Paul calls Christians in 2 Corinthians 2:15: the “**aroma of Christ**” in the world.)*

SAY: Let’s continue with Scene 4.



Watch the fourth video segment. The video will last about 4 minutes. At the end of the segment, discuss.

SAY: Members of the early Church stoked the fire of the Holy Spirit in their lives by doing four things: “**They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers**” (Acts 2:42).

- » Where are these four practices—study, fellowship, sacraments, and prayer—in the H.A.B.I.T.S. acronym that we use?
- » Which of the four practices do you think you are doing well, and which of the four would you like to improve upon?



COMMIT



ACTIVITY

TAKE-AWAY

SAY: I am going to go around the circle, starting with the person on my right, and I'd like each of us to share something we remember that this person said tonight.

Take a minute and go around the group, asking everyone to share briefly. Then continue.

Now I want to go around the circle again, this time starting with the person on my left, and I'd like each of us to share one take-away from tonight. In other words, share something that resonates in your heart as a truth to live by.

Give everyone time to share, and then continue.

SAY: When something resonates with our hearts, we should be mindful to take that to prayer, as that is generally how the Holy Spirit works. So I encourage you to take whatever touched your heart in this session into your prayer this week. In addition to prayer, how are your spiritual H.A.B.I.T.S. coming along?

Encourage your group members to share how they have grown spiritually since your last meeting by practicing spiritual H.A.B.I.T.S. Ask them if there is any way you can help them in their commitment to developing spiritual H.A.B.I.T.S. You can find the H.A.B.I.T.S. in the Leader Guide for Follow Me, Session 5: The Cost, as well as in Session 3 of this Confirmation series. After everyone has shared, follow up on last week's commitments before discussing the new commitment.

This week's commitment is to focus on one of the four practices that stoked the fire of the Holy Spirit in the early Church. Will you make an effort to improve your study, fellowship, sacraments, or prayer?



CLOSING PRAYER

SAY: Let's close in prayer.

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

Let us pray, O God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit did instruct the hearts of Your faithful; grant that in the same Spirit we may be truly wise and ever rejoice in His consolation. Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.