

Sacrament of Confirmation Discussion Questions

1. What is the sacrament of Confirmation?

It is special outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon me so I can become a more faithful disciple and a stronger witness of Jesus. With Confirmation I am more fully prepared to receive the Eucharist (Jesus' Body and Blood).

2. When did the Holy Spirit first come to dwell within you?

The Holy Spirit first comes to dwell within me at Baptism. In Confirmation, I receive the fullness and strength of the Holy Spirit.

3. Do you see the Holy Spirit in Confirmation?

No. I will see the bishop anoint my forehead with the Sacred Chrism oil and lay his hands upon my head. I will hear the bishop say, "Be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit." This is the visible sign for an invisible reality.

4. Why does the Sacred Chrism oil smell?

The Sacred Chrism oil smells because it has balsam perfume in it. It is a sign that my whole life — every thought, word, deed and hope — will spread the fragrance of Christ. "For we are the aroma of Christ for God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing." 2 Cor 2:15

Prayer of Cardinal Newman

Dear Jesus, help me to spread Your fragrance everywhere I go. Flood my soul with Your Spirit and Life. Penetrate and possess my whole being so utterly that my life may only be a radiance of Yours. Shine through me and be so in me that every soul I come in contact with may feel Your presence in my soul. Let them look up and see no longer me but only Jesus! Stay with me and then I shall begin to shine as You shine, so to shine as to be a light to others. The light, O Jesus, will be all from You; none of it will be mine. It will be You, shining on others through me. Let me thus praise You in the way which You love best, by shining on those around me. Let me preach You without preaching, not by my words but by my example, by the catching force, the sympathetic influence of what I do, the evident fullness of the love my heart bears for You. Amen.

5. What does it mean to be "sealed with the Holy Spirit?"

A seal is like an invisible label or mark. I cannot see the seal with my eyes, but the seal is there. The seal of the Holy Spirit sets me apart as belonging totally to Jesus Christ and His Family, the Church.

6. What sacraments did you receive before receiving Confirmation?

Baptism and Reconciliation (and 1st Eucharist for many)

7. What happened when you were Baptized?

Original Sin and all my sins and their punishments were washed away. Then, the Holy Spirit came to live inside me. I became a member of God's family, a son or daughter of God the Father. Baptism left an indelible (permanent) mark on my soul.

8. What is an indelible mark?

An indelible mark can never, ever be removed. It is a permanent spiritual mark.

9. What happens in the sacrament of Reconciliation?

Reconciliation is the way Jesus has given to me to start over. In Reconciliation my sins are forgiven. A good confession is the sure way to be in the state of grace before receiving Confirmation.

10. What happens when you receive Confirmation?

I am more firmly united with Jesus and His Family the Church as a Child of God. I receive the power of the Holy Spirit. I am given the strength I need to live as a disciple and witness of Jesus Christ. Confirmation leaves an indelible mark on my soul, just like Baptism.

11. Why does the Holy Spirit strengthen you in Confirmation?

The Holy Spirit strengthens me in Confirmation so I can be Jesus' disciple and witness in everything I say and do. Not only with my family and at church, but also with my friends, classmates, teachers and with people I don't even know. Through Confirmation, I will have the strength to be like Jesus even when it is difficult.

12. What does it mean to be more fully united with Jesus and His Family, the Church?

To unite means to be joined together, like a family. When I am united with Jesus and His Family, the Church, I am more closely connected to Him and His Family.

13. What is the Church?

The Church is the family of God.

14. Who belongs to the Church, the Family of God?

The family of God includes the saints in heaven, the souls in purgatory and the faithful on earth.

15. What does it mean to be a disciple of Jesus?

A disciple of Jesus is someone who is committed to always seeking to know Jesus more and more. Some of the ways a disciple seeks to know Jesus better is through praying each day, receiving the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist often, reading the Bible, studying, asking questions and going out of the way to be kind to others (acts of charity).

16. What does it mean to be a witness of Jesus?

A witness of Jesus is someone who tries to be just like Jesus. A witness asks themselves "what would Jesus do?" A witness is someone who thinks, judges, acts and hopes like Jesus in their own lives.

17. What must I do to receive Confirmation?

- Be in the state of grace. Have no serious sin on my soul (go to Reconciliation beforehand).
- Open my heart to Jesus, to receive God the Father's grace and love.
- Renew my baptismal promises.
- Receive the strength and gifts of the Holy Spirit when the bishop anoints my head with Chrism oil.

- Pray for help to use the gifts of the Holy Spirit each day to be a good son or daughter of God.

18. How many times can I be confirmed?

Only once, like Baptism. Both last forever.

19. When did the Holy Spirit come upon Jesus?

The Holy Spirit came upon Jesus immediately after He was baptized by John the Baptist in the Jordan River. The Holy Spirit came upon Jesus in the form of a dove and then a voice from heaven proclaimed, "This is my beloved Son." (The full story is in Matthew 3:13-17.)

20. What did Jesus do after the Holy Spirit came upon Him?

After the Holy Spirit came upon Jesus, He went into the desert to be alone with God. In the desert, Jesus fasted and prayed for forty days. He was getting ready for the job God sent Him to do. In the desert, the devil came to tempt Jesus to reject or turn away from God. Jesus resisted the devil and the devil left. Then angels came to help Him. Next Jesus came out of the desert to proclaim the Good News about the Kingdom of God and did miracles to prove He was God's Son (see Matthew 4:1-11).

21. When were Peter and the other apostles filled with the Holy Spirit?

At Pentecost, ten days after Jesus has ascended to the Father (see Acts of the Apostles, chapter 2).

22. What happened to the apostles after they were filled with the power of the Holy Spirit?

First, the apostles were no longer afraid to talk about Jesus to other people, so that others could listen and decide to follow Jesus. Second, the apostles baptized and confirmed all those who believed their preaching so they could follow Jesus. (The full story is in Acts 2)

23. Who did Jesus give the power to do Confirmation?

The Twelve Apostles and their successors, the bishops. Sometimes, the bishop might also have priests help him. He gives them his permission. Priests also have the power to confirm when all three Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist) are celebrated at the Easter Vigil.

24. How do bishops get this power from Jesus today?

Through the sacrament of Holy Orders when they are ordained a bishop.

25. Be able to discuss your Confirmation name. Here are some possible questions.

- What saint have you chosen to be your confirmation name?
- Why did you choose this saint?
- What are they the patron saint of?
- When is their feast day?
- Where was the saint born?
- How old was the saint when they died?
- How many brothers and sisters did the saint have?
- Name two ways that the saint was a disciple and witness of Jesus Christ?

- Why do we need friends in heaven?

Gifts of the Holy Spirit

The gifts of the Holy Spirit take practice to see; they are not as easily seen as an artist's tools. Fortunately, the Holy Spirit is with us always as our interior teacher and guide. We can always ask the Holy Spirit for help. Learning the meaning of each of the gifts of the Holy Spirit is the start for understanding how to use them in our daily life as a Christian.

Wisdom - first and greatest gift; wisdom is having the ways and thoughts of God, the mind and heart of Jesus Christ; helps us to know as God knows; helps us to love the things of God; helps us to act the way God would wish. Wisdom is the ability to see how all things work together in God's plan of salvation.

Understanding - gift which gives us insight into the truths of faith. Understanding deepens our knowledge of God and the meaning of His teachings and life; a sort of divine intuition.

Counsel (Right Judgment) - gift that helps us to know the right decisions to make in our life, to see and choose correctly what will help most to follow God; helps us to seek advice and follow direction from godly people. Counsel is the gift that points out to us the path God wants us to follow and the dangers to avoid in order to reach heaven; sometimes called "Right Judgment"

Fortitude (Courage) - gift that gives us the strength to live our faith, to live as Jesus calls us to live, to obey the commandments; gives us the courage to love God in the face of all obstacles, even death, and gives us a willingness to suffer for the sake of the Kingdom of God; sometimes called "Courage"

Knowledge - gift which helps us know God, know ourselves and know the value of all created things as God intended.

Piety (Reverence) - gift of having devotion to God; gift that heals our hearts and helps us to open them tenderly towards God and others; helps us to love and worship God; helps us to pray and gives us a deep respect for God, for all of His people and for all of His creation; sometimes called "Reverence".

Fear of the Lord (Wonder and Awe) - gift that helps us recognize the majesty of God (how great He is) and how much we need Him; gives us the desire to avoid anything that would separate us from His love; helps us to pray to God and never lose trust in Him; sometimes called "wonder and awe".