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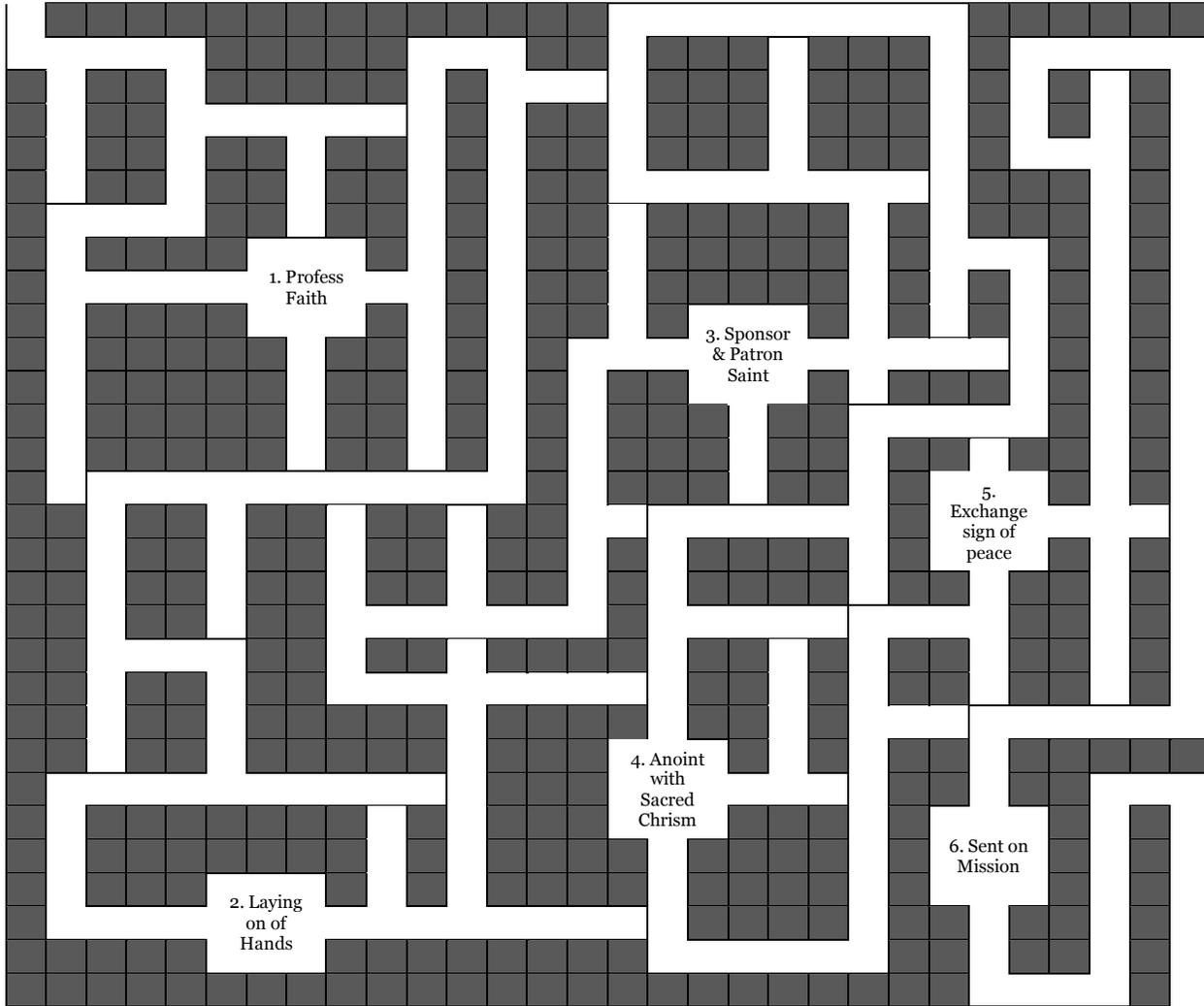


Confirmation Preparation  
Chapter Three  
***God Sends Us Out***

# 2 Warm Up

## Rite of Confirmation Maze

Start



End

Write down the 6 steps of celebrating Confirmation found in the maze:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_

## Opening Prayer: Come Holy Spirit

Come, Holy Spirit.

Fill our hearts with God's love.

Bless our time together and pour out your gifts of wisdom, knowledge and understanding, of right judgment, wonder and awe, of courage and reverence.

Help us grow closer to the Father who loves us,

to the Son who is our Lord and Savior,

and to You, dear Holy Spirit, who brings us new life.

May Our Blessed Mother, filled with God's Holy Spirit, pray for us. *Amen.*



## Margaret loses the race

Dominic and his mom were sitting on their front porch, enjoying popsicles when Margaret stomped up the sidewalk. She stood there with a grumpy face. Dominic's mom asked, "Are you okay, Margaret? You look upset."

"Hi Mrs. Conner," said Margaret, "Yeah, I'm really mad about something that happened at my first track meet."

"What happened?" asked Dominic.

"Well," began Margaret, "you know how I have always wanted to try to run the hurdles race? I'm a good jumper and thought it would be a lot of fun. I have been watching some videos with my mom on how to jump hurdles and I thought I was doing pretty well. The coach said I needed more practice, but I said I wanted to race. So I ran the 100 meter hurdles race at our first track meet. I came in last! Those girls I raced against looked so smooth,

and I think I bashed my leg on just about every hurdle. I didn't fall, but I just wasn't very fast. It was so embarrassing! I hate hurdles now! I don't think I even want to be on the team any more."

"I'm sorry you had such a tough time, Margaret," said Mrs. Conner, "but how was your time in the race? How did it compare to your training times?"

"Well, I got a PR in the race," said Margaret.

"What's a PR?" asked Dominic.

"That's a 'personal record,' explained Margaret, "I got the fastest time I've ever run hurdles—way faster than my practice times."

Mrs. Conner smiled, "That's great, Margaret! Congratulations! That's what happens when we get pushed by people who are really good—it helps us get better, too. If you'll be patient, I bet you'll race much better next time."

# 4 Table Talk



*Our talents and gifts get better when we practice and when we learn from people who are a lot better at them than we are. Talk to each other about your talents (sports, art, music, drama, business, school, or anything else):*

Tell about a talent you have that has gotten better as you practice it.	
Who would you love to learn from in order to get better at something?	
What would you suggest to someone who wants to get better at a talent you have?	

## Margaret and Dominic Think About the Saints

Next weekend, Margaret walked over to Dominic’s house. Dominic and his parents were outside finishing up washing the car. Dominic waved Margaret over and they sat down on the porch.

“Well, did you quit track?” asked Dominic.

“Oh no,” said Margaret, “and I feel silly for how upset I was! I thought about what your mom said, about my PR and how much better I got when I was competing with really good hurdlers. I decided if I could just be more humble and willing to be taught, I could get a lot better.”

“Good for you,” said Dominic’s Mom, “I think that is a great decision! Being around people who are excellent at something might be hard for our ego, but it usually helps us improve a lot!”

“That’s why we need to think about the saints,” agreed Dominic’s dad.

“Wait, I don’t get what you just said,” Margaret admitted, “how can thinking about the saints be like getting beaten by better runners?”

“Well, it’s not as if we are competing with the saints. God doesn’t want us to compete with each other in the same way as in a race. But it *is* true that being around excellence just inspires us. When we are around truly holy people, we see what it takes to *be* holy. We see *how* to be holy. We see what a difference it makes and it might just give us the motivation to try harder ourselves.”

“That’s right,” agreed Mrs. Conner, “when I learn about how hard the saints worked to grow in holiness, it reminds me not to be lazy in my prayers.”

“And remember,” added Mr. Conner, “the saints in heaven *want* to help us. They are cheering us on and doing all they can to help us get to heaven, too. The saints pray for us and intercede for us.”

Dominic thought for a moment and then said, “That’s why we need to pick a saint for Confirmation, isn’t it! It’s like picking a coach—someone who will teach us, inspire us and help us grow in excellence!”

Margaret smiled at Mrs. Conner, “Thanks so much for encouraging me the other day. I see what you mean about not giving up. I think I need to pray a lot about who I should pick as my Confirmation saint. That saint is going to help me get to heaven—and if I need help with hurdles, I know I need A LOT of help to get to heaven!”

“We all need help, Margaret,” smiled Mr. Conner, “that’s why Jesus gives us so many brothers and sisters in the faith—so that we can help each other become the saints God designed us to be.”

“I can’t wait to pick my Confirmation saint,” said Dominic, “Mom, where is that book of Saints?”

“I’ll come with you,” said Margaret, “I have some studying to do, too.”

*What is a Saint? Why do we choose a Confirmation saint?*

A **saint** is a person who has died and gone to heaven. God wants every person to become a saint.

A **canonized saint** is a saint recognized by the Catholic church as a “holy hero”

- who lives in the glory of heaven (as do all the saints, canonized or not)
- who lived a life that showed amazing and excellent holiness, sometimes even to the point of giving up their life for Jesus (a **martyr**)
- through whom God works miracles (verified by the Church)
- who can be a model and guide for our own journey to heaven

A Confirmation Patron saint is chosen by a person being confirmed—the patron saint...

- prays for those who call upon him or her
- inspires and guides us as we grow in our Catholic faith



You select a patron saint by learning about different saints and finding one with whom you connect in a special way—

- you could choose a saint who shares an interest, talent or skill with you
- you could choose a saint who shares a personality trait or situation in life with you
- you could choose a saint who has a job or lifestyle you want to prepare for
- you could choose a saint whose feast day is important in your life or who came from the same part of the world as you (or your ancestors) did

## Read these verses from the Bible to find out more about the Saints:

“Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us rid ourselves of every burden and sin that clings to us and persevere in running the race that lies before us.” (Hebrews 12:1-2)



“You are fellow citizens with the holy ones and members of the household of God, built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets ... through him the whole structure is held together and grows into a temple sacred in the Lord.” (Ephesians 2:19-21)

“I had a vision of a great multitude, which no one could count, from every nation, race, people, and tongue. They stood before the throne and before the Lamb...” (Revelation 7:9)

“Pray for one another, that you may be healed. The fervent prayer of a righteous person is very powerful.” (James 5:16)

# 6 Celebrating the Sacrament of Confirmation

## Dominic and Margaret Learn More About Confirmation

Dominic and Margaret were hanging out at Dominic's house after school when Dominic's brother Andrew came home from basketball practice.

"Hey Dominic, hi Margaret," said Andrew as he rummaged through the refrigerator looking for a snack, "how's Confirmation class going?"

"Great," Margaret and Dominic said together.

"I'm really excited to get confirmed," added Margaret, "but I am a little unsure about what actually happens. Do you remember your confirmation, Andrew?"

"I sure do," Andrew said, "it was a really important day. Would it help if I told you what happened at my Confirmation?"

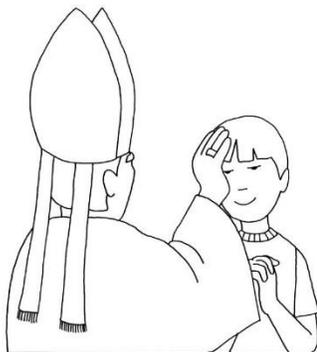
"Yes, please!" said both kids at once.

Andrew laughed. "Well, I remember going to Confession the weekend before my Confirmation. I wanted to get my soul ready for the Sacrament. Fr. Mark told us that going to Confession would make our souls as pure and holy as on the day of our Baptism. He called it 'being in a state of grace' for our Confirmation. After going to Confession, I felt so clean and new—and so ready for the Holy Spirit. It was like getting ready for people to visit at Christmas, when we clean the house extra carefully! But instead of cleaning our house, I was cleaning my soul."

"And our souls are God's Temple, aren't they," interrupted Margaret.

"They sure are," agreed Andrew, "well to get back to Confirmation, we were introduced to the Bishop, and he spoke right to us during the homily at the Mass. He told us to be open to the Holy Spirit because God wants to send us out into the world on mission. Our mission is to become saints in heaven and to bring people to Jesus.

He said the best way to do those things is love—loving God first and loving our neighbor as ourselves. He said when we get confirmed, the Holy Spirit gives us the gifts we need to do God's will—God works *through* us because God is *in* us."



Dominic smiled at Andrew and said, "I remember you and all the other kids were really dressed up, too. You all were wearing white and red."

"Those two colors are symbols of Baptism and Confirmation. Dressing up is a way to show God and others that we know Confirmation is really important. You know, you get confirmed once in your whole life—it's never repeated!"

"Wow," said Margaret, "that makes it really special, doesn't it?"

"Yep," agreed Andrew, "the graces of Confirmation will be with you your whole life long."

"How exactly do you get confirmed?" asked Margaret.

"The bishop first asks you to renew the promises of your Baptism. We said 'I do' to the promises our parents and godparents made for us when we were baptized. We said we rejected evil and believed in God. It made me feel very proud to stand up for what I believe. I remember Fr. Mark telling us that the martyrs were all willing to die rather than say they didn't believe—it's really serious!" said Andrew.

Dominic thought about it and said, "I think I'm ready to stand up for my faith."

"Then you are ready to be confirmed!" said Andrew. "The next thing that happened is that the Bishop held his hands out over us and prayed for the gifts of the Holy Spirit to come upon us. He named all seven gifts of the Spirit and spoke in the name of the Church for us to have them. Then we each were presented to the Bishop by our sponsor. Our sponsor introduced us by using the name of our patron saint. It was cool to hear myself being introduced as 'John Paul II' rather than as Andrew! It made me realize that by choosing St. John Paul II as my patron saint, I was saying that I wanted to be like him—so much that I was confirmed under his name."

"What did the bishop do to confirm you, did he put oil on your head?" asked Margaret.

"Yes, the bishop anointed my forehead with an oil called Sacred Chrism and told me 'be sealed by the Holy Spirit.' I answered, 'Amen,' and then he offered me his hand to shake as he said, 'Peace be with you.' I said 'And with your spirit.' Then I went back to my pew. I was confirmed!"

“Wow, did you feel really different after that?” asked Dominic.

“Well, I felt a lot of peace and happiness,” said Andrew, “but no, I didn’t *feel* really different. But I know I *was* really different. You see, I think God often works on our hearts in ways that are kind of secret and silent. That way, we don’t get more attached to strong feelings or emotions than to God Himself. We get to grow gradually rather than in an all-at-once way. Actually, I think it’s better that way—we have a chance to work with God.”

“I hope I feel the energy of the Holy Spirit guiding me. I want to be a stronger Catholic. Sometimes I am embarrassed to let people know I go to Mass every Sunday or pray the Rosary or read my Bible. I want to be able to explain my faith better to others,” admitted Margaret.

“I would say that’s the big effect of Confirmation,” said Andrew, “having the energy of the Holy Spirit guide you in living your faith and explaining it to others. The Holy Spirit can inspire you when someone asks you a question. Or, for me, the Holy Spirit can help me respond in a loving way when someone mocks my faith. I used to just go along when people made fun of Jesus or the Church. Now I stick up for my faith better.”

“Why do you think we get confirmed by the bishop and not just Fr. Mark?” asked Dominic.

“Well, our bishop is a direct successor of one of the apostles,” said Andrew, “he represents the Catholic Church in the fullest way possible. When he confirms, it is the same as when St. Peter or St. Paul laid hands on someone and prayed for the Holy Spirit to live in them. It connects each one of us to what happened at Pentecost.”

“Wow,” said Dominic, “that means we are touched by someone who is an apostle in our time—that makes it even more special!”

“When the bishop lays hands on us and anoints us, we are being consecrated to God. That means we are set apart for a holy purpose, just like a church building is consecrated for worship. You are a temple of the Holy Spirit. You have a holy purpose for your life,” said Andrew.

“Yeah, God designed us to be saints in heaven,” said Margaret with a smile, “you don’t get a holier purpose than that!”

## Some things to know and think about:

### The Steps of the Sacrament of Confirmation

1. **Profession of Faith**—you will renew the promises made for you at your Baptism.
2. **Laying on of Hands**—the Bishop will pray over you and ask the Holy Spirit to come into your heart with His seven gifts.
3. **Presentation to the Bishop**—your sponsor will introduce you to the Bishop with the name of your patron Saint.
4. **Anointing with Sacred Chrism**—the Bishop will say, “be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit.” You respond “Amen,” which means you agree with what God wants for you.
5. **Exchange a sign of Peace**—the Bishop will offer you the peace of Christ, you respond, “and with your spirit” and shake his hand.
6. **Sent on Mission**—you are confirmed in order to take on the mission of Jesus Christ in the world—to love and serve God and others in the name of Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit.

### The Graces You Receive in Confirmation

*Being confirmed is like experiencing your own personal Pentecost—when the Holy Spirit came upon the Apostles and filled them with energy and guidance. Confirmation deepens and increases the graces we received at Baptism:*

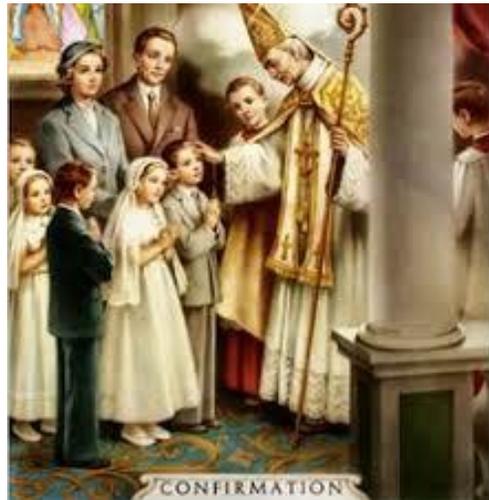
1. Confirmation roots us more closely to **God our Father**.
2. Confirmation unites us more strongly with **Jesus Christ our Savior**.
3. Confirmation increases the **gifts of the Holy Spirit** in us.
4. Confirmation strengthens our **connection to the Catholic Church**.
5. Confirmation gives us the strength to **spread and defend the faith** as a true witness.

# 8 Your Turn

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Can you number the steps of the Sacrament of Confirmation in the correct order?

- \_\_\_\_\_ Anointing with Sacred Chrism
- \_\_\_\_\_ Profession of Faith
- \_\_\_\_\_ Sent on Mission
- \_\_\_\_\_ Presentation to the Bishop
- \_\_\_\_\_ Exchange of Peace
- \_\_\_\_\_ Laying on of Hands



Circle the correct word of the two that are underlined to describe each of the special graces you will receive at Confirmation:

Confirmation will...

- Root you more closely/distantly to God the Father
- Unite you more weakly/strongly to Jesus Christ our Savior
- Increases/decreases the gifts of the Holy Spirit in you
- Strengthens/weakens your connection to the Catholic Church
- Takes away/Gives you the strength to spread and defend the faith

Cool Quote from the Catechism of the Catholic Church

“This seal (anointing with oil) of the Holy Spirit marks our total belonging to Christ, our enrollment in his service for ever, as well as the promise of God’s protection.”



Look up these verses in your Bible and fill in the words that are missing (the verses use the New American Bible, Revised Edition translation).

**2 Timothy 1:6** “For this reason, I remind you to \_\_\_\_\_ into \_\_\_\_\_ the gift of \_\_\_\_\_ that you have through the imposition of my \_\_\_\_\_.”

**Romans 8:26** “In the same way, the \_\_\_\_\_ comes to the aid of our \_\_\_\_\_; for we do not know how to \_\_\_\_\_ as we ought, but the \_\_\_\_\_ itself \_\_\_\_\_ with inexpressible groanings.”

**1 Corinthians 6:19** “Do you not know that your \_\_\_\_\_ is a \_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_ within you, whom you have from \_\_\_\_\_, and that you are \_\_\_\_\_ your own?”

<p><b>Invitation to Pray during Confirmation</b>  <i>At your Confirmation, the Bishop will speak to you about what God is offering you at Confirmation. He will ask all those present to pray for you:</i></p> <p>“My dear candidates for Confirmation, by your Baptism you have been <b>born again in Christ</b> and you have become <b>members of Christ and of his priestly people</b>. Now you are to <b>share in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit</b> among us, the Spirit sent by the Lord upon his apostles at Pentecost and given by them and their successors to the baptized.</p> <p>The promised strength of the Holy Spirit, <b>which you are to receive</b>, will make you <b>more like Christ</b> and help you to be <b>witnesses</b> to his suffering, death, and resurrection. It will <b>strengthen you to be active members</b> of the Church and to <b>build up the Body of Christ</b> in faith and love.”</p>	<p><b>Pray and answer these questions:</b></p> <p><i>The bishop says you have been born again in Baptism—you belong to God’s family. What are some things expected of you as a member of God’s family?</i></p> <p><i>The bishop says you will receive the promised strength of the Holy Spirit so that you will be more like Christ. In what way(s) do you want to be more like Christ?</i></p>
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# 10 Wrap Up

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## Margaret and Dominic Think about Saints and Grace

“Hi Margaret and Dominic,” called out Dominic’s mother. She was unloading groceries in the kitchen and stopped to give them a bowl of tortilla chips with some salsa for a snack.

“Thanks Mrs. Conner,” said Margaret, “and thanks again for your help when I was so upset about my race. Guess what? I raced again last night and I came in 5<sup>th</sup>! Got another PR and my form over the hurdles is much better! I asked our best hurdler to help me, and she’s really showing me how to improve. I am so glad I didn’t quit!”

“That’s great Margaret,” said Dominic’s mom with a big smile, “I’m happy you’re getting the help you need to get better. Hey, I heard Andrew helped both of you learn more about your Confirmation, too.”

“He sure did,” agreed Dominic, “he told us all about when he got confirmed and what the Bishop did and said. I can’t wait to get confirmed! And I am really close to choosing my patron saint. It’s been fun learning more about the saints. Reading their stories is really showing me how I can grow closer to God. Did you know that one boy not much older than us worked with his family to create a website about Eucharistic miracles? About a hundred years ago, another kid in Mexico gave up his life rather than reject his faith! These guys inspire me!”

“Me, too,” agreed his mom, “and you can be certain that they are praying for you, too.”

“That’s something I’ve wondered about,” admitted Margaret, “why do we ask saints to pray for us instead of just praying to Jesus? Sometimes people who aren’t Catholic say we turn saints into idols when we pray to them.”

“That’s a great question, Margaret,” said Dominic’s mom, “The truth is, we do not pray to a saint like we pray to God. When we pray to God, we offer him worship and adore Him as God. When we pray to a saint, we are asking that person to pray with us. We don’t ask for a saint’s help *instead* of praying to Jesus—we ask a saint to help us *AS* we pray to Jesus. Saints help us achieve greatness by their example and through the power of the Holy Spirit. They have no power in themselves.”

“Just like my teammate helping me with the hurdles. She can show me how to jump better, but I have to run my race. She can’t run it for me. But seeing someone else race does help me much more than just hearing my coach tell me what to do,” said Margaret.

“That’s a good example,” agreed Dominic, “saints don’t do anything apart from Jesus. We don’t need them instead of Jesus—everyone needs Jesus. But Jesus loves to work through others just like he sent out his apostles to preach and forgive sins and work miracles. Jesus sends us his Holy Spirit and asks us to do His work on earth. What a blessing it is to be part of such a mission!”

“Amen!” said Margaret with a big smile.

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### ***To Sum Up:***

When we receive the Sacrament of Confirmation, we are **rooted more deeply to God**—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—**and to the Church**. Choosing a patron saint is a way to be more connected to God’s Church—the **communion of saints** in heaven, in purgatory and on the earth.

The Sacrament of Confirmation gives us **special graces** as we experience a **personal Pentecost**—an outpouring of the Holy Spirit through the ministry of the Bishop who is a successor to the Apostles. The special graces of Confirmation **strengthen us to carry on the mission of Christ** to the world.

### Come, Holy Spirit

*At your Confirmation, the Bishop will ask the Holy Spirit to come upon you in the same way that He came to members of the early Church through the hands of the Apostles.*

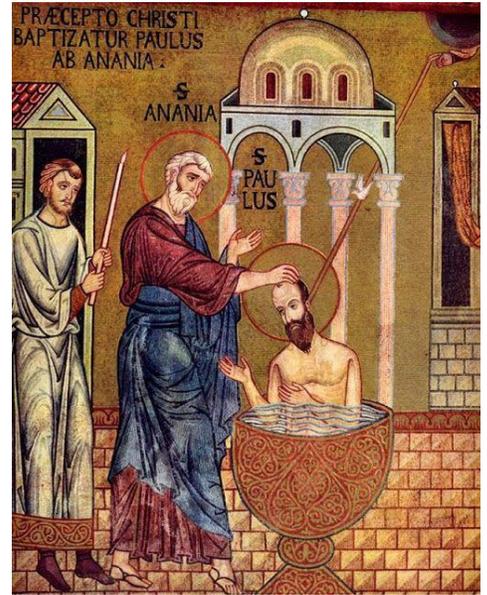
**Leader:** Let us begin in the name of the Father, + and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

**All:** Amen.

**Reader:** *A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.*

Paul ... came down to Ephesus where he found some disciples. He said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you became believers?" They answered him, "We have never even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." He said, "How were you baptized?" They replied, "With the baptism of John." Paul then said, "John baptized with a baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, in Jesus." When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied. *The Word of the Lord.*

**All:** Thanks be to God.



**Leader:** Come, Holy Spirit, send forth the heavenly radiance of your light.

**All:** Come, father of the poor, come, giver of gifts, come, light of the heart.

**Leader:** O most blessed light, fill the inmost hearts of your faithful.

**All:** Without your grace, there is nothing in us.

**Leader:** Cleanse that which is unclean, water that which is dry, heal that which is wounded.

**All:** Give to your faithful, those who trust in you, the sevenfold gifts.

**Leader:** Grant the reward of virtue, grant the deliverance of salvation, grant eternal joy.

**All:** *Amen*

*"May the fire of God's love descend to fill your hearts, unite you ever more fully to the Lord and his Church, and send you forth, a new generation of apostles, to bring the world to Christ!"*

Pope Benedict XVI, 7/20/2008

