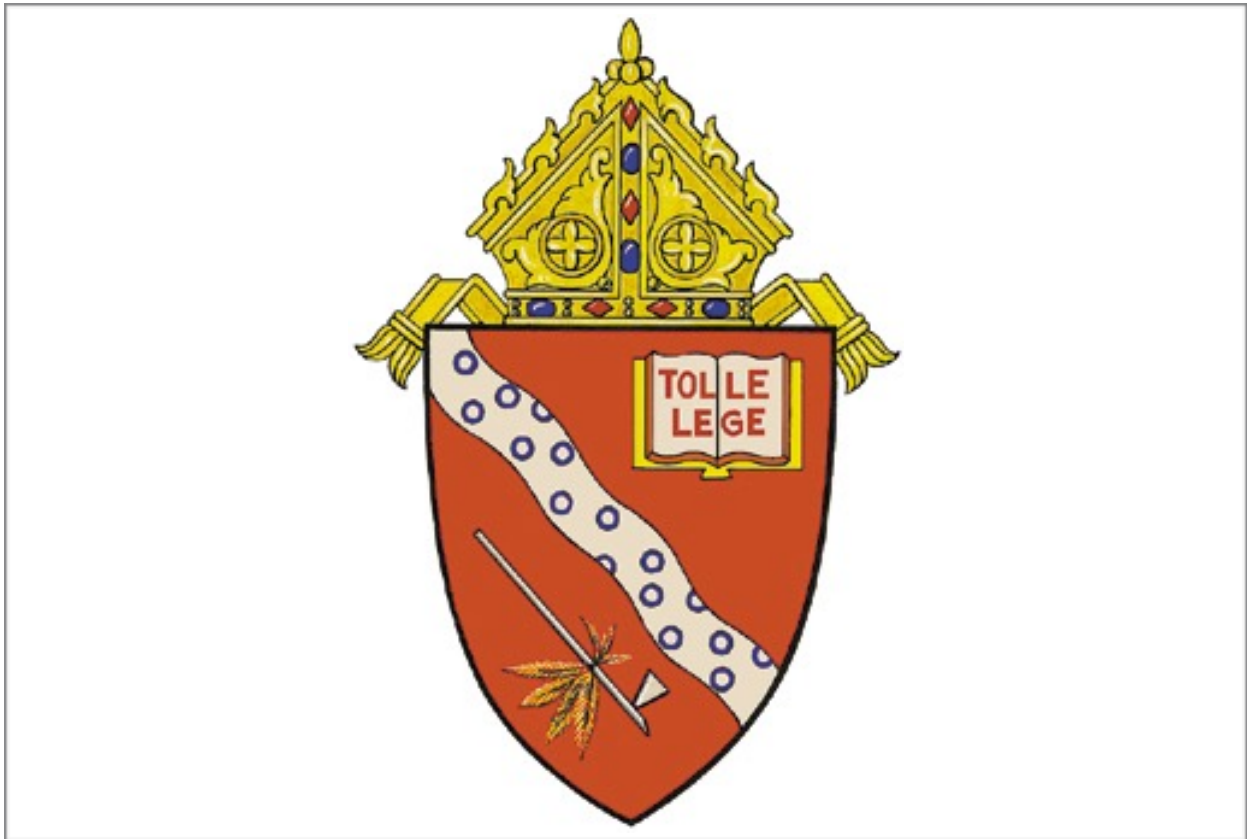


Confirmation Guidelines

Norms for Catechesis and Evangelization of Confirmation



Diocese of Kalamazoo
Promulgated September 2015

Purpose

Explanation of purpose of guidelines

The Diocese of Kalamazoo is promulgating these norms under the authority of Bishop Paul J. Bradley.

“And He spoke many things to them in parables, saying, ‘Behold, the sower went out to sow; and as he sowed, some seeds fell beside the road, and the birds came and ate them up. Others fell on rocky places, where they did not have much soil; and immediately they sprang up, because they had no depth of soil. But when the sun had risen, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. Others fell among thorns, and the thorns came up and choked them out. And others fell on the good soil and yielded a crop, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty.’” (MT 13:3-8)

The Church continues to sow the teachings of Christ within her faithful, even as we know the ground is not always fertile. We know that those who come to the church for this initiation sacrament have already received the gift of faith at baptism, however we can not assume that this gift has been planted in fertile ground, has been nurtured, and has grown into discipleship. The diocese desires to give guidance to the parishes on creating an atmosphere and conditions that will yield discipleship. It is paramount that families be bolstered in the faith, especially at these milestones in which there are children receiving sacraments. It will be important that the parents and guardians of those receiving sacraments of initiation are given the tools and guidance to provide the fertile ground of the seeds of faith that are sown by the Church.

The Diocese of Kalamazoo provides the following guidelines in accord with Canon 842 paragraph 2, “...those who seek the sacraments are prepared to receive them by proper evangelization and instruction, attentive to the norms issued by the competent authority.” By issuing these guidelines and norms, parishes are given the

tools create a unity among the parishes, and guidance toward the singular goal within initiation sacraments of fostering disciples that are ready to “love the Lord... with all [their] heart, and with all [their] soul, and with all [their] mind...[and] love [their] neighbor as [themselves]” (cf. MT 22:37-39). Yet, they still have a flexibility to maintain their own charisms and needs.

Profile

Description of an “ideal” candidate

The following is intended to describe what is an ideal candidate for confirmation. The goal of this is to assist those preparing students in knowing some of the desired outcomes of the preparation. All should realize that we do not live in an ideal world, and that our world is often messy and confusing. The hope is that we journey with those preparing, and their families, as we all strive toward holiness.

An ideal candidate for the sacrament of confirmation will be one mature in faith, not necessarily by age (see CCC 1308). They must be in the state of grace having received the sacrament of reconciliation, and desire to be continually reconciled to God and the Church through the sacraments. They are intimate with Jesus and are intentional in their discipleship. They have a meaningful prayer life, and frequently receive the Eucharist, while attending Masses on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation.

They should be a son or daughter of the Church, desiring to stay close to the Church and understand the Church as Bride to Christ. They will understand their role as the Body of Christ. They desire to be a part of their parish community, in striving to strengthen the parish and live as one of its members. They are willing and desirous of witnessing in their daily lives the love of Christ and His commands. They are evangelizing and bringing others into the Church and into relationship with Jesus.

Confirmation candidates will be in relationship with the Holy Spirit, seeking to continually foster the Gifts and Fruits of the Holy Spirit in their daily lives. They will be living lives of love of neighbor, responding to God's love by living the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy (works of charity and service). They will be actively seeking and discerning God's specific calling and vocation in their lives; both their universal call to holiness, but also their specific calling for their lives in service to Church (single, married, religious, priesthood).

Age

Norms for the age of reception of the sacrament of confirmation

In order to give unity across the diocese, to create similar experiences, and for the diocese to be able to provide similar programs to fit all parishes, and in accord with the norms of the USCCB that allows individual bishops to set the normative age for the Sacrament of Confirmation the diocese sets forth the following norm:

In the Diocese of Kalamazoo the normative age for receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation for those who were baptized as infants is between the ages of 13 and 16 (not before the end of the 8th grade school year and typically before the middle of their 11th grade school year). Those who have not reached the minimum age should not receive confirmation without the permission of the bishop, or out of danger of death.

In the Diocese of Kalamazoo these ages were chosen for the ripeness of ability to receive and live out the graces of the sacrament of confirmation more fruitfully.

Length of Preparation

Explanation of the time frame for preparation

To provide for the premium amount of time to evangelize and catechize the Diocese of Kalamazoo offers a requirement of length to the preparation:

All who are approaching the sacrament should have been in continuing catechesis throughout their lives. If someone approaches who is uncatechized, a process of catechesis to bring the candidate in union with the level of catechesis of their companions should be followed. All those who were baptized as infants and have received Holy Eucharist are to spend two years in preparation for the sacrament of confirmation. Candidates need to notify their parish at least two years prior to the sacrament of their desire to receive it.

During these two years the candidates will continue to receive the age appropriate catechesis found in the Diocesan Theology Curriculum Guide. The elements listed in these guides are to be completed during this two year period.

Baptismal Certificate

When does the parish need baptismal information

Parishes need to confirm that all candidates for confirmation, that have previously been baptized, received a valid baptism. Parishes must also notify the church of baptism once the candidate has received the sacrament of confirmation. The norm for the Diocese of Kalamazoo is for the parish to receive a baptismal certificate from the parish of baptism at the beginning of the two year time frame of the confirmation process. Each parish will establish a deadline to receive these documents before the candidate is officially enrolled in the preparation for the sacrament.

Covenant/Mutual Agreement

On the need of explaining expectations

It is important that every candidate and their family understand the commitment and expectations of the preparation process. It is therefore desirable that each parish utilize a covenant or mutual agreement form for every family that participates in sacramental preparation. This form provides the expectations of the parish, the participants, and the parents/guardians. A sample form is provided in the appendix and may be altered (or another form altogether used) according to the needs of the individual parish.

Mass Attendance

On the importance of Mass Attendance

The Eucharist is the source and summit of our faith. Our faith is centered around the community that forms and joins together for the breaking of the bread. The Eucharist is the divine food through which our spiritual lives are sustained, and we are strengthened for the journey of faith throughout the week. For those preparing for the reception of a sacrament, the nourishment of weekly Eucharist is necessary (even if they are not receiving the Eucharist). It is into this community the candidates were baptized, this community into which they are to be confirmed, and it is this community that gives strength of mind, heart, and soul to live as disciples of Christ. There is great importance in attendance at Mass, beyond the obligations of the Church, the desire for Worship of God and living in community needs to be fostered among those who belong to Christ.

Thus, it is expected that all candidates for confirmation and their families are attending Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation. The sacrament of

Confirmation may be delayed if a candidate persists in not attending Mass. Those in difficult family situations need to be accounted for, accompanied, and pastorally taken care of in all regards, but especially within this norm.

Implementations of this norm should be accounted for by the parish in some way, depending upon the size and structure of the parish. The following are some suggestions that have worked at various parishes:

- Having each candidate fill out a journal or form with information from the Sunday Liturgy (weekly or a sampling)
- Having discussions before each class session about mass attendance since the last session.
- Having parents or sponsors/mentors vouch for and discuss the liturgies with the candidates.
- Simple attendance chart where the candidate can note when they went to Mass.

Interview

On the importance of interview and “accompaniment”

It is extremely important that the Church accompany people on their journey of faith. One of the hallmarks of discipleship throughout the history of the Church was the mentoring and journey of individuals and families as they experienced the love of God, encountered the person of Christ, and became imbued with the gifts of the Holy Spirit. In order to enhance the experience of accompanying and journey of faith happening within the candidate and their family, interviews with the family and candidate are very important.

The norm in the Diocese of Kalamazoo is for all candidates for confirmation, along with their families to have an entrance interview. It is highly encouraged that this interview is facilitated by the pastor or another priest and may include the confirmation coordinator. There are circumstances and situations where the pastor

may need to delegate this to other leaders in the church community. This initial interview will take the “spiritual temperature” of the candidate and their family. It will entail a separate interview of the parents/guardians (or sponsors if the parents/guardians are unwilling) and the candidate. This is not meant to be a psychological intake, but a discussion and introduction of the family, candidate, and the parish. Notes are encouraged, to be kept in a candidate file and secured at the parish, to assist with spiritual growth and assessment at the end of the process. This is a great opportunity to discover spiritual and other needs of the family and candidates that the parish can assist in.

The following are suggested questions to be asked during the interview:

- What is your experience with God?
- What is your prayer life like?
- Do you attend Mass?
- Why is it important (not important) for you to attend Mass?
- Why do you want to be a part of the confirmation process?
- Who are some saints you know?
- Do you have a favorite saint?
- What does prayer look like as a family?
- What questions do you have about the faith?
- Tell me about your experience of family?

General answers from the collective group of interviews should be shared with the confirmation coordinator so that any general concerns can be addressed and evangelization can be prepared accordingly.

At a suitable time before reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation the norm is to conduct a second interview in a similar way to the first. Identical or similar questions are to be asked, in this the pastor or his delegate is looking for spiritual growth. Some sort of assessment (see later norm) should be provided to the pastor or delegate to tailor more specific questions toward any concerns. The desired effect of the confirmation preparation is a deeper relationship with Jesus, a deeper understanding of the life within the Church, and the Holy Spirit’s indwelling with the candidate (see CCC 1309). It is desired that candidates are ready to be

intentional disciples, but should at least be at the threshold of seeking (see appendix on thresholds). The pastor will determine if the sacrament is ready to be received based on the candidates relationship with Christ as a real person, their desire to know Him better, desire to live as part of the community, and desire to live out the Gifts of the Holy Spirit. Confirmation ought to be delayed if the pastor determines that the candidate is not prepared to fruitfully receive the sacrament, with a plan in place to provide the additional evangelization and catechesis necessary for their individual needs.

Saints

On the role of the lives of Saints in preparation

Candidates for Confirmation are initiated into the Communion of Saints. It is important that the candidates understand this community, build relationships with the saints, and see examples of lives of holiness.

The norm is that all those preparing for confirmation specifically study and learn about three different saints of their choosing. This research may be presented through variety of means, including but not limited to:

- A written report
- An oral report
- Saint form (see attached example in Appendix)
- Journal Entries
- Discussions with sponsor/mentor

In the scriptures we see many saints change their names as they take on greater missions from God. As the candidates take on more fully and are confirmed in their baptismal promises the diocese encourages candidates to signify this by taking on as a patronal name one of these saint's (or another saint) names. Candidates may retain their baptismal name so long as it does not conflict with Christian nature.

Works of Charity and Service

On the importance of fostering a life of Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy

The life of faith encourages within the faithful a life of good works. Those who have embraced the Cross of Christ, and become disciples, desire to live lives of charity and service. As St. James tells us, faith without works is dead (see James 2:14-26). This is an important part of the faith life of a disciple that needs to be fostered in the journey toward discipleship. Each candidate needs to grow in their maturity of faith, their desire to live a life of the works of mercy, and loving, Christ-like, service. The goal must be to incorporate the candidate into a life of love and service to and for others.

Thus the norm for the Diocese of Kalamazoo is that the preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation will unite service with Christ. It is preferable that every service opportunity in which the candidate participates for the preparation for the sacrament be tied to a corporal or spiritual work of mercy. In doing service, the desire is that the candidate comes to see Christ present in these opportunities. A component where the candidate can reflect on the works of mercy and Christ's presence in the service is to be done. Some ways to do this include, but are not limited to:

- Interview with the candidate after participation in service
- Written report on the student's participation in service
- Group discussions after participation in service
- Form to be filled out including a section on how it is tied to a work of mercy and Christ's presence
- Sponsor/Mentor discussions on the service

Sponsor / Mentor

On the role and duty of the sponsor and mentor

“Insofar as possible, there is to be a sponsor for the person to be confirmed; the sponsor is to take care that the confirmed person behaves as a true witness of Christ and faithfully fulfills the obligations inherent in this sacrament.” (Can. 892)

“§1. To perform the function of sponsor, a person must fulfill the conditions mentioned in Can. 874 (see below).

§2. It is desirable to choose as sponsor the one who undertook the same function in baptism.” (Can. 893)

“To be permitted to take on the function of sponsor a person must:

1. be designated by the one to be baptized, by the parents or the person who takes their place, or in their absence by the pastor or minister and have the aptitude and intention of fulfilling this function;
2. have completed the sixteenth year of age, unless the diocesan bishop has established another age, or the pastor or minister has granted an exception for a just cause;
3. be a Catholic who has been confirmed and has already received the most holy sacrament of the Eucharist and who leads a life of faith in keeping with the function to be taken on;
4. not be bound by any canonical penalty legitimately imposed or declared;
5. not be the father or mother of the one to be baptized.” (Can 874)

It is important for all sponsors to live as an example of the Catholic life for the candidate. They should be in the state of grace for the sacrament. Sponsors should take an active role in the preparation of the candidate.

There is a form in the appendix for the sponsor to fill out, have signed by their home parish, and be returned to the parish of confirmation by the beginning of the second year of preparation.

Due to the distance of many sponsors, or of the nature of the choice of sponsors, a parish may wish to train mentors to accompany the candidates on their preparation journey. They would participate with the candidates in some of the preparation elements, discuss the faith, share their own faith, and encourage a spiritual and service oriented life. If a parish decides to utilize mentors, they need to make sure they follow all safe environment policies and procedures that are pertinent to this type of relationship.

Retreat

On the importance of spiritual development and encounter

One of the key factors in evangelization of youth and bringing them into a lifelong relationship with Christ are opportunities of encounter. Studies have shown that retreat opportunities are one of the most effective ways of allowing a personal encounter with Jesus Christ. Times away from the normal situation of catechesis, with a focus on prayer, encountering sacraments, adoration, and focus on meeting Jesus will encourage this deeper relationship.

It is desirable that confirmation candidates attend a retreat in both years of their confirmation process. It is the norm for all candidates to attend at least one retreat during their preparation process.

The retreat should give an opportunity for a more intense relationship with Jesus. The candidates should have an opportunity to meet Jesus, especially in His Eucharistic Presence. Thought should be given to offering the sacrament of reconciliation at or around the time of the retreat. An invitation for the candidates to make a personal decision to follow Christ should be intentionally made.

Evangelization and Catechesis

Explanation of diocesan norms specific to evangelization and catechetical sessions

Although this entire document sets forth norms for evangelization and catechesis of the candidates for confirmation, this section will focus on the primary program of topics, processes, means, and norms for specific evangelization and catechetical sessions of learning. Learning about the faith is an important part of the evangelization and catechetical journey toward the reception of sacraments. These norms will assist those preparing the candidates in facilitating an environment and course of study that will encourage a deeper understanding and desire of knowledge of God and the Church.

All candidates are to be receiving ongoing Catechesis via one of three normal means: a Catholic School, Parish Religious Education program, or through Catholic Homeschooling. It is desired that all candidates have been receiving ongoing catechesis since first grade, if the candidate has not been in ongoing catechesis prior to registering for the sacrament the parish needs to develop a means for them to “catch up” before they enter the confirmation program, or during their first year.

During these two years the components of the “works of mercy”, “saint reports”, “retreats” any sponsor or mentor programs, journaling or other ancillary programs as listed above are to be entered into. These may be done as groups, through meetings, or on their own (or with families) and proper documentation needs to be turned in to the parish at certain times, as established by the parish, throughout the two years.

In addition to the normal ongoing catechesis the candidate receives, the parish also must provide formal proximate evangelization and catechesis for the candidates, their families, and sponsors. No matter how the normal ongoing catechesis is received, all candidates will need to attend these proximate preparation sessions. It is the norm for at least one parent/guardian (or sponsor) to attend parent sessions (either specifically for parents or in unison with the candidates), in order that they might have a common language and promote a more vivid faith life at home. It is preferable that all parents /guardians attend these sessions. It is envisioned to have eight sessions covering the eight topics for formal evangelization and catechesis. However, a parish could cover the topics in more or less than eight sessions. The following eight topics must be covered:

- 1) Called by name/the Kerygma overview
- 2) Baptismal Promises
- 3) Gifts/Fruits of the Holy Spirit
- 4) Life of prayer
- 5) Apostolic mission
- 6) Martyrdom
- 7) Evangelization
- 8) Life in the Spirit.

Outlines are included in the appendix.

All sessions must be attended or they must be made up in some way, to be determined by the parish.

In order to build a cohesive parish family, and instill parish community life with the candidates, for the pastor to confirm that their parishioners are properly instructed (see Canon 890), and for the candidates to have a sense of belonging to the parish community (see CCC 1309) the norm for proximate preparation sessions for Confirmation is to be done at the parish of residence.

Reconciliation

On the importance of Mercy and Reconciliation during preparation

“God never tires of forgiving us, but it is we who tire of asking for forgiveness.” (Pope Francis) An encounter of the mercy of God is always important in the journey of faith. It is this mercy that is central to the kerygmatic message of the saving grace of Jesus Christ, who died for us. Candidates for confirmation need to understand the mercy that is given through the Sacrament of Reconciliation, that this is a sacrament of mercy and not a sacrament of punishment.

The sacrament of reconciliation needs to be a constant invitation to the candidates, their parents and sponsors. There cannot be a preparation for any sacrament in which the life of Christ and His healing power through the sacrament of reconciliation is not present.

It is the norm for students to be offered the sacrament of reconciliation formally at least once each year (can be done during normal Parish reconciliation services, or normal reconciliation times). In addition to this the sacrament of reconciliation should be offered to all candidates, parents (recommended), and sponsors (recommended) the day before or the day of the celebration of the sacrament of confirmation.

Assessment

Explanation of the need for assessment as part of accompaniment

If we are truly committed to journeying with our candidates for confirmation, we need to make sure that we are constantly aware of what their needs are, and where

they are in their journey. The assessment piece is not intended to be a judgement, or a test to determine the theological readiness of the candidates, although this could be part of the assessment. This is instead intended to assist with knowing the candidate, seeing where they are in their journey, and developing a plan to prepare the candidate the best way possible. It might even be worthwhile to do multiple assessments and multiple types of assessment throughout the two years.

A sample assessment form is included in this packet. The assessment is to be filled out by the coordinator for confirmation or by the catechist working with the candidates, it may also be of benefit for sponsors, parents, and the candidates themselves to fill out assessments on the candidate. The intent of the assessment is to assist the pastor in the final interview. It will include information about the disposition of the candidate toward the reception of the sacrament. This can assist in directing the final interview to determine the evangelistic and catechetical preparedness of the candidate for confirmation.

It should be noted that the assessment should not be construed as a test. The sacrament cannot be earned through the passing of a test. Though a test might be used to assess knowledge, this is only one factor in the overall assessment of the readiness of a candidate. If there are tests, these scores may be included on the assessment given to the pastor.

Letter to the Bishop

A guide to the letter to the bishop

The bishop truly desires to know and understand the candidates he is going to confirm. He wants to know about their journey of faith, their relationship with God and the Church, and their desire for the grace of the sacrament. Thus every candidate is asked to prepare a letter to the bishop.

These letters must include the following parts:

- 1) an introduction to who they are (name, age, grade, school attends, and interests)
- 2) information they learned from the saints they researched
- 3) what name they will be taking/retaining
- 4) a way they grew closer in relationship to God through the confirmation process
- 5) how they lived the works of mercy
- 6) why they want to be confirmed
- 7) who their sponsor is and why
- 8) a formal request for confirmation.

Location of the Sacrament

A guide to understanding the norms of location of reception of Confirmation

Norms are established within the Diocese of Kalamazoo as to the location a candidate would receive the sacrament of confirmation. This is to assist with the verification of the proper process of evangelization and catechesis. While implementing these norms, pastoral concern needs to be taken to ensure the ability for the candidates to receive the sacrament and live fruitfully the grace of the sacrament.

The normative location for the administration of the Sacrament is the parish of residence for the candidate. In some situations (i.e. size of confirmation class, conflict of dates) the candidate may receive the sacrament at the Diocesan Cathedral during the Diocesan Confirmation Masses. On some occasions there may be pastoral reason for a candidate to receive Confirmation at another parish location. If this occurs the candidate must receive a letter from their Pastor assuring they are prepared in accord with these norms, and granting permission for the candidate to receive Confirmation at another parish. This letter, accompanied by a letter requesting permission to receive at the alternative parish, must be

presented to the pastor of the alternative parish. When these have been received the Pastor may grant permission.

No matter who prepared the candidate for confirmation, the Parish in which the confirmation takes place must record the confirmation in their records and must inform the parish of baptism.

Mystagogia

Explanation of need for further formation and study

The reception of the sacrament of confirmation is not the end of, or graduation from evangelization and catechesis. All who are full members of the Church need to continue to learn and grow in faith throughout the entirety of their lives. Parishes will need to be prepared to have some program of evangelization and catechesis for those recently confirmed to enter. These programs should have some element of living out the baptismal and confirmation graces they have received, as well as living a Eucharistic life.

When we utilize the opportunities to form our youth and their parents into disciples during our sacrament preparation processes we should expect growth in the life of the Church. We ought to expect and anticipate the growth of faith and increase in desire of the faith life of individuals within the context of the Parish, and prepare accordingly for it. If we are preparing well, the youth and their parents will want to continue to grow in the love and grace of Christ through and with His Church.

There will need to be an intentional effort on all parishes to continue to develop those who have gone through sacramental preparation. A formal mystagogia (exploring of the mysteries/deeper catechesis) ought to be instituted in every parish, specific to the sacrament. Beyond that, programs and processes must be established to allow the youth to live within the life of the Church. Some ways this could be done include, but are not limited to, through continued formal catechesis of religious education, or through a youth group, or small christian communities.

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Confirmation Covenant

I, _____ desire to enter into preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation. I understand that there are certain requirements of me as I prepare for this Sacrament. I will be open to learning more about my faith, be open to deepening my prayer life, and trying to know Jesus better during this time. I am committing only to the openness to God, and allowing Him to move in my life, so that I may freely choose the reception of the Sacrament at the appropriate time.

I understand that as part of the preparation I will need to make certain commitments that include the following:

- Sunday Mass attendance
- Attendance at religious education or school theology classes
- Attendance at Confirmation specific sessions
- Commitment to deepen/establish a life of prayer
- Commitment to a life of service to God and others
- Attendance at designated retreats
- A study of multiple saints lives

X _____ Date: _____

As _____'s_ parent/guardian/sponsor I understand that I am making a commitment to prepare my child for the Sacrament of Confirmation. I am committed to deepening my own prayer life, continuing to be formed in the faith, and sharing this faith with my child. I am committed to helping my child in discerning the call to the Sacrament of Confirmation at the appropriate time, and will encourage their openness to the faith and the sacrament until that time.

I understand that as part of supporting and preparing my child for the sacrament I need to make certain commitments that include the following:

- Sunday Mass attendance with my child
- Attendance at all meeting and confirmation sessions for parents
- Commitment to deepen/establish a life of prayer
- Commitment to pray with my child, and discuss my faith with my child
- Commitment to being a role model of faith for my child

X _____ Date: _____

Relationship to Confirmation candidate: _____

_____ parish will provide catechesis and evangelization opportunities for all confirmation students and their families/sponsors. The parish will provide schedules in advance for all requirements. The parish will assist with discussion, retreat opportunities, service opportunities, and prayer experiences for those preparing.

X _____ Date: _____

Saint Report - Confirmation

Name of Saint: _____

Feast Day: _____ Patron of: _____

Date of Birth (including year): _____ Date of Death: _____

List three things you learned about the saint:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

What did you like most about this saint?

How is this saint an example of the life of Christ?

Signed X _____ Print name: _____

Confirmation Sponsor Form

A confirmation sponsor must be at least 16 years of age & be a practicing Catholic in good standing with the church. This means that the person follows the commandments of God, participates each week in Sunday Mass, frequents the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and their marriage has been blessed by the Catholic Church. The sponsor must have received all sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Eucharist, and Confirmation) and may not be a parent of the Confirmation Candidate.

Name of Confirmation Candidate: _____

Sponsor Information

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

E-mail: _____ Birth date: _____

Name of parish you attend: _____

City: _____ State: _____

What is your relationship to the candidate? _____

How long have you known the candidate? _____

Sacraments

Have you been baptized?	Yes / No	<input type="checkbox"/> I have included a letter from my Parish, validating that I am a Catholic in good standing with the Roman Catholic Church.
Have you received First Penance?	Yes / No	
Have you received First Eucharist?	Yes / No	
Have you been Confirmed?	Yes / No	

Responsibilities

The confirmation sponsor's role is one of a mentor in the Catholic faith. He/she will present the candidate to the Bishop on the day of confirmation and in doing this, state that the candidate is fully prepared to not only receive the sacrament of Confirmation, but also to live the Christian life. The sponsor should continue to support the candidate in his/her Catholic faith in the years ahead.

Any questions about your responsibilities: _____

What you can do

-Pray for your candidate daily. -Live an exemplary Catholic lifestyle. -Participate in a required service project with your candidate. -Go to adoration, confession or Mass together & then go to lunch and share your own faith. -Help your candidate study the Catechism, or teach him/her your favorite Catholic devotion.

Sponsor Signature

Date

Confirmation Candidate Assessment

Candidate Name : _____

This assessment is not intended to determine the readiness of the candidate for confirmation, but to give insight into the potential readiness of the candidate. This will assist with the final interview with the pastor or his designate in determining if the candidate has established a life of faith and desire for continued conversion in the faith.

Did the candidate attend religious education/school requirements for confirmation? Yes / No (if no what was missed) _____

Has the candidate shown a commitment/desire to practicing the faith by attending Mass weekly? Yes / No (explain) _____

Has the candidate shown a commitment/desire to live a life of the spiritual and corporal works of mercy, and life in Christ? Yes / No (explain) _____

Has the candidate shown a commitment/desire for a life of prayer? Yes / No (explain) _____

Has the candidate indicated their desire to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation? Yes / No (explain) _____

Has the candidate shown through speech, action, and life a desire for continued conversion through the Catholic faith? Yes / No (explain) _____

Are there any concerns in the candidate receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation? _____

Are there specific questions that should be asked during the interview process with the candidate? _____

Anything else that should be known about the candidate? _____

Would you vouch for the readiness of the candidate for the Sacrament of Confirmation? Yes / No

What Threshold of Faith do you believe the candidate is at (see definitions on separate page)

No Trust / Trust / Curiosity / Openness / Seeking / Intentional Discipleship

This form was filled out by:

Name

Relationship to candidate

Contact number or e-mail address

Date

THRESHOLDS OF FAITH

- **No Trust:** This is really previous to the thresholds of faith. Those who are in this threshold have no desire to do anything with the Church. Many in this threshold will have a negative view of the Church, have been hurt by someone in the Church and do not want to be a part of it because of this. Those in this threshold need to see witnesses of the faith, and have bridges of trust made in order to even think about having a relationship with the Church.
- **Trust:** This threshold describes those who have an open relationship with the Church. Those who are within the trust threshold have had a primarily positive experience with the Church, or at very least do not have a negative view of the Church. They will not typically enter into discussion or questions of the faith, but will observe, often building their trust in the Church to a greater degree. Bad experiences, scolding, negative moral teachings, pushing participation, and unwelcoming atmospheres can often quickly lead someone in this threshold away from the Church. The best experience for someone in this threshold are the witness and lives of faithful Catholics.
- **Curiosity:** This threshold describes those who have moved beyond the trust threshold and are now starting to wonder what the Church is all about. Questions are starting to form, but those in this threshold are not typically looking for deep theological answers. They are looking toward and for a witness of faith. Overwhelming someone in this threshold with deep theological discussions and vocabulary, quarreling over the internals of church politics and doctrine will often turn people in this threshold away from the Church, or at least move them back into the trust threshold. The best experience for someone in this threshold are sessions that satiate their curiosity.
- **Openness:** This threshold describes those who have moved beyond the threshold of curiosity and are now open to the possibility of personal and spiritual change. Those in this threshold are willing to seek answers to what needs to be changed in their lives, and are starting to show more signs of initial

faith. Those in this threshold will probably willingly attend liturgies and discussions on faith life at the Church. Faithful Catholics steeped in the life of Christ are integral to witnessing the life of faith, and the spiritual changes needed in their lives. Forcing the whole of the teachings of the Church, or asking for too much change too quickly at this threshold could move someone back out of this threshold. Discernment is key during this threshold, assisting someone in their decision to move forward with the process.

- **Seeking:** This threshold describes those who have moved beyond the threshold of openness. Those in this threshold are seeking out answers to deeper questions of faith and life. In this threshold many will seek out catechesis, catechetical sessions and theological programs are utilized by those in this threshold. Those in this threshold will seek information on their own, and it is often beneficial to not only give them Church teaching, but also allow them to seek out answers through research, community and action. Giving too little information, or not encouraging people in this threshold to find information outside of the direct catechesis could move someone back out of this threshold. Uniting those in this threshold with those who are living out the doctrinal, moral, and missionary teachings of the Church, and assisting with finding answers are key to this threshold.
- **Intentional Discipleship:** This threshold describes those that are willing to “drop their nets” and follow Jesus. People in this threshold are making a conscience commitment to follow Jesus, to turn their lives toward Him, to change that which holds them back, and to transform their lives through Him. Intentional Disciples are ready for the Sacraments of Initiation. Those in this threshold will be found trying to satiate their appetite for God through actions and study. They are found doing the spiritual and corporal works of mercy, they are living out their charisms, and are evangelizing others. This is the threshold we should all aim for. Liturgy, prayer, study, fellowship and works are all needed to sustain this threshold.

DOK Confirmation Topic Outline

Kerygma (Called by Name)

What will be learned:

- We are created in love by God, for communion with God
- Original Sin ruptured our relationship with God
- Concupiscence effect passed on with Original Sin
- Personal sin has continued
- We are all guilty of original sin and personal sin
- God became man (Jesus Christ)
- Christ's crucifixion is highest form of love, redeems from death
- Grace through crucifixion and resurrection necessary to love
- Church established to transmit grace through sacraments
- We are called to believe, trust, love, repent, pray, obey, accept, & serve

Biblical Figure for lesson:

Jonah-called by name, loved by God even in his rejection of God's mission, typology of Christ in the three days in the belly of the fish, turned to God, showed His mercy, helped turn back the Ninevites (even through his own disapproval). (Book of Jonah)

Vocabulary used:

- **Original Sin:** The sin by which the first human beings disobey the commandment of God, choosing to follow their own will rather than God's will. As a consequence they lost the grace of original holiness, and became subject to the law of death; sin became universally present in the world. Besides the personal sin of Adam and Eve, original sin describes the fallen state of human nature which affects every person born into the world, and from which Christ, the "new Adam" came to redeem us.
- **Concupiscence:** Human appetites or desires which remain disordered due to the temporal consequences of original sin, which remain even after Baptism, and which produce an inclination to Sin.
- **Sin:** An offense against God as well as a fault against reason, truth, and right conscience. Sin is a deliberate thought, word, deed, or omission contrary to the

eternal law of God. In judging the gravity of sin, it is customary to distinguish between mortal and venial sins.

- **Personal sin:** Sin that is acted out by an individual, as opposed to original sin that is passed to all generations.
- **Mortal sin:** A grave infraction of the law of God that destroys the divine life in the soul of the sinner, constituting a turning away from God. For a sin to be mortal, three conditions must be present: grave matter, full knowledge of the evil of the act, and full consent of the will.
- **Venial sin:** Sin which does not destroy the divine life of the soul, as does mortal sin, though it diminishes and wounds it. Venial sin is the failure to observe necessary moderation, in lesser matters or moral law, or in grave matters acting without full knowledge or complete consent.
- **Grace:** The free and undeserved gift that God gives to us to respond to our vocation to become His adopted children. As sanctifying grace, God shares His divine life and friendship with us in a habitual gift, a stable and supernatural disposition that enables the soul to live with God, to act by his love. As actual grace, God gives us the help to conform our lives to His will. Sacramental grace and special grace are gifts of the Holy Spirit to help us live out our Christian vocation.
- **Church:** The name given the “convocation” of “assembly” of the People of God has called together from “the ends of the earth”. In Christian usage, the word “church” has three inseparable meanings: the People that God gathers in the whole world; the particular or local church (diocese); and the liturgical assembly. The Church draws her life from the Word and the Body of Christ, and so herself becomes the Christ’s Body. In the Creed the sole Church of Christ is professed to be one, holy, catholic, and apostolic.

* Most definitions from the Catechism of the Catholic Church

Resources:

Catechism of Catholic Church: 1-165, 396-412, 654, 748-945, 1264, 1426, 1849-1862, 1996-2000, 2515

Scripture: Genesis 1-3, John 1, John 15:12-17, John 18-20, Matthew 16:18, Matthew 28:16-20

Media:

<http://reallifecatholic.com/video/#7750-video-grid/1/8036-youre-kind-of-a-big-deal>

<http://reallifecatholic.com/video/#7750-video-grid/1/7770-ocean-of-mercy>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lildQ-m8Qtw>

DOK 12 Truths Document

DOK Confirmation Topic Outline

Baptismal Promises

What will be learned:

- What it means to make Promises in the Church
- Reject Satan, all his works, all his empty promises
- Believe in God, the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth
- Believe in Jesus Christ ...
- Believe in the Holy Spirit ...
- What does it mean to reject Sin?
 - turn away from that which separates us from God
 - continually search and rid ourselves of evil things (with God's help)
- What does it mean to believe in God?
 - Seek His will, being grafted to Christ, sharing in His nature
 - Spouse of God, under His mission, communicate with Him
 - Transmit the faith
- Conversion
- Sanctifying Grace
- Necessity of Baptism

Biblical Figure for lesson:

Nicodemus-One of the Pharisees who sought to understand God more fully by meeting with Jesus in private, Jesus told him that for eternal life he must be born again of water and spirit. (Jn 3:1-21)

Vocabulary used:

- Promises (in relation to baptism): Promises are similar to vows, they are agreements made before God and the Church about your reaction of sin and acceptance of God. At infant baptism the parents and godparents speak these promises for the child. Each year during the Easter Season the promises are recommitted to.
- Sanctifying Grace: The grace which heals our human nature wounded by sin by giving us a share in the divine life of the Trinity. It is habitual, supernatural gift which continues the work of sanctifying us "perfect", holy, and Christlike.

- **Conversion:** A radical reorientation of the whole life away from sin and evil, and toward God. This change of heart or conversion is a central element of Christ's preaching, of the Church's ministry of evangelization, and of the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation.
- **Faith:** Both a gift of God and a human act by which the believer gives personal adherence to God who invites his response, and freely assents to the whole truth that God has revealed. It is this revelation of God which the Church proposes for our belief, and which we profess in the Creed, celebrate in the sacraments, live by right conduct that fulfills the twofold commandment of charity, and respond to in our prayer of faith. Faith is both a theological virtue given by God as grace, and an obligation which flows from the first commandment of God.

Resources:

Catechism of Catholic Church: 199-384, 422-658, 683-747, 977-978, 1217-1274, 1423-1431, 1814-1816, 1999-2000, 2101, 2087-2089

Scripture: Mt 28: 16-20, Jn 3:1-21, Romans 6:1-14, 1 Pet 3:13-2,

Media:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fV8uu9-sYSk>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u9-bc1RfjsA>

DOK Baptismal promise worksheet

DOK Confirmation Topic Outline

Gifts/Fruits of the Spirit

What will be learned:

- List of Gifts and Fruits of the Spirit
- The gifts and fruits are present currently in you from baptism
- The strengthening of the gifts and fruits through confirmation
- Why the gifts and fruits are important in our lives
- Virtue built through gifts and fruits of the Spirit
- Developing relationship with the Spirit
- Understanding charisms

Biblical Figure for lesson:

Cornelius-a Gentile in the scriptures who exhibited signs of the Holy Spirit in his life before he was visited by Peter. Peter then baptized him as the gifts and fruits showed God's merciful love and grace in his life. (Acts 10)

Vocabulary used:

- Gifts of the Holy Spirit: Permanent dispositions that make us docile to follow the promptings of the Holy Spirit. The traditional list of seven gifts of the Spirit is derived from Isaiah 11:1-3.
- Fruits of the Holy Spirit: The preselections that the Holy Spirit forms in us as the "first fruits" of eternal glory. The tradition of the Church identifies twelve fruits of the Holy Spirit.
- Confirmation: One of the ensemble of the Sacraments of Initiation into the Church, together with Baptism and Eucharist. Confirmation completes the grace of Baptism by a special outpouring of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which seal or "confirm" the baptized in union with Christ and equip them for active participation in the worship and apostolic life of the Church.
- Holy Spirit: The third divine person of the Blessed Trinity, the personal love of Father and Son for each other. Also called the Paraclete (Advocate) and Spirit of Truth, the Holy Spirit is at work with the Father and the Son from the beginning the completion of the divine plan for our salvation.

- **Charism:** A specific gift or grace of the Holy Spirit which directly or indirectly benefits the Church, given in order to help a person live out the Christian life, or serve the common good in building up the Church.

Resources:

Catechism of Catholic Church: 685, 736, 799, 951, 1285-1303, 1830-1832

Scripture: Is 11:1-3, Galatians 5, 1 Cor 2:11, 1 Cor 12:4-30, Rom 8:14-17, Rom 8:26-27, Jude 1:17-24

Media:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7uraapClj5o>

DOK Confirmation Topic Outline

Life of Prayer

What will be learned:

- Daily and Sustaining prayer life
- Creating a Rhythm of prayer
- Liturgy of the Hours
- Reading of Scriptures (Lectio Divina as option)
- Sacrifice of Mass as ultimate Prayer
- Communication with God
- Various ways and methods of prayer

Biblical Figure for lesson:

Mary-we look to Mary as an example of what it means to communicate with God, as she did with her Son. In the scriptures we hear that she took all these things to her heart. She stayed with Jesus even through the crucifixion, she points us to Him now. (cf.

Vocabulary used:

- **Prayer:** The elevation of the mind and heart to God in praise of His glory; a petition made to God for some desired good, or in thanksgiving for a good received, or in intercession for others before God. Through prayer the Christian experiences a communion with God through Christ in the Church
- **Mass:** The Eucharist or principal sacramental celebration of the Church, established by Jesus at the Last Supper, in which the mystery of our salvation through participation in the sacrificial death and glorious resurrection of Christ is renewed and accomplished. The Mass renews the paschal sacrifice of Christ as the sacrifice offered by the Church. It is called “Mass: (from the Latin *missa*) because of the “mission” or “sending”with which the liturgical celebration concludes.
- **Liturgy:** In its original meaning, a “public work” or service done in theme of or on behalf of the people. Through the liturgy Christ our high Priest continues the work of our redemption through the Church’s celebration of the Paschal mystery by which he accomplished our salvation.

- **Liturgy of the Hours:** Liturgical prayer divided into different “hours” (times) throughout the day, prayed by clergy. May religious and lay faithful choose to pray certain parts of the Liturgy of the Hours as well.
- **Contemplation:** A form of wordless prayer in which mind and heart focus on God’s greatness and goodness in affective, loving adoration; to look on Jesus and the mysteries of His life with faith and love.
- **Meditation:** An exercise and a form of prayer in which we try to understand God’s revelation of the truths of faith and the purpose of the Christian life, and how it should be lived, in order to adhere and respond to what the Lord is asking.
- **Oration:** a form of prayer that is spoken, it can be individually done or part of a group.
- **Chaplet:** A collective term for prayers that are prayed on beads with repetitive prayers and meditation.

Resources:

Catechism of Catholic Church: 1067-1069, 1332, 1382, 2192, 2559-2565, 2628, 2623, 2648, 2705, 2715

Scripture: MT 6:9-13, Luke 18:1-8, Rom 6:26, Phil 4:6, 1Thes 5:12-22,

Media:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tfIzRyTGtWY>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yxjntZ8mXNw>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qIS3ynVdcc>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mpfcBsqlXGE>

DOK Confirmation Topic Outline

Apostolic Mission

What will be learned:

- Go and Preach to all nations, baptizing them... (MT 28)
- Bring Christ to all others
- Care for the Church (precepts of the Church)
- Care for the “least of my brethren” (precepts of the Church)
- Evangelize
- Catechize
- Forgiveness

Biblical Figure for lesson:

Paul-one of the greatest persecutors of the early church, Paul found forgiveness and lived out the apostolic mission of the Church, he took Christ and His teachings to all corners of the Earth that he could. Paul taught love, conversion, hope, and repentance. At times you see him evangelizing, catechizing, preaching good works, and showing love amongst the people of the Way. (cf Acts, Letters of Paul)

Vocabulary used:

- **Precepts:** Positive laws made by the Church authorities to guarantee for the faithful the indispensable minimum in prayer and moral effort, for the sake of their growth in love of God and neighbor.
- **Apostle:** The term meaning one who is *sent* as Jesus was sent by the Father, and as he sent His chosen disciples to preach the Gospel to the whole world. He called the twelve to become His apostles, chosen witnesses of His Resurrection and the foundation on which the Church is built.
- **Apostolic Succession:** The handing on of apostolic preaching and authority from the Apostles to their successors the bishops through the laying on of hands, as a permanent office in the Church.
- **Evangelization:** The proclamation of Christ and His Gospel by word and the testimony of life, in fulfillment of Christ’s command.

- **Redemption:** Jesus Christ, redeemer of mankind. Christ paid the price of His own sacrificial death on the cross to ransom us, to set us free from the slavery of sin, thus achieving our redemption.
- **Forgiveness (christian):** The act of understanding that we have all received undeserved reconciliation with God, and need to pass that same reconciliation on to anyone who harms us.

Resources:

Catechism of Catholic Church: 571, 601, 857, 861, 905, 1372, 2041

Scripture:

Media:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D02cCl61GSs>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZI-nWx_RtZs

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9MBW1SBQuA8>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GjGBB5kew6E>

<http://reallifecatholic.com/video/#7750-video-grid/1/8042-why-am-i-so-in-to-this-my-testimony>

DOK Confirmation Topic Outline

Martyrdom

What will be learned:

- Martyrdom means witness
- Examples from China, Middle East, and Africa of modern martyrs
- Early Church martyrs
- Not only martyrdom by death
 - reputation
 - giving up old ways of life
 - heroic examples of life
- How we can witness in America
- Confirmation calls us to martyrdom

Biblical Figure for lesson:

Stephen-one of the first deacons of the Church, the first person martyred for faith in Jesus Christ. His last words live on to us in the scriptures as an example of heroic love and faith in Jesus Christ. (Acts 7:54-60)

Vocabulary used:

- **Martyr:** A witness to the truth of the faith, in which the martyr endures even death to be faithful to Christ. Those who die for the faith before having received Baptism are said to have received a “baptism of blood”, by which their sins are forgiven and they share in the death and resurrection of Christ.
- **Witness:** The Christian example every person initiated into the Church is called to give. It is a personal testimony to one’s commitment to Christ and the Christian way of life, as well as a sign of personal desire to seek first the kingdom of God.

Resources:

Catechism of Catholic Church: 1258, 2473

Scripture: MT 24:9, Jn 16:2, Mt 10:28, Mt 16:24-25, Hebrews 12:4, Mk 6:21-28, Act 7:54-60, Acts 2:12, Hebrews 11:37

Media:

<http://reallifecatholic.com/video/#7750-video-grid/1/8032-north-american-martyrs>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ICiW_frCCZA

<http://reallifecatholic.com/video/#7750-video-grid/1/7760-mass>

DOK Confirmation Topic Outline

Evangelization

What will be learned:

- It is the duty of all Christians to evangelize
- Living the joy of the Gospel
- Knowing our “reason for hope”
- Understanding and being able to state “our story”
- Accompaniment
- Overcoming the “culture of silence” in the Catholic faith
- Difference between evangelization, teaching, and apologetics

Biblical Figure for lesson:

Philip-an early christian in the scriptures who joined up with an Egyptian on a journey, met him where he was at, witnessed the faith, opened up the scriptures to him and baptized him. (Acts 8:26-40)

Vocabulary used:

- **Evangelization:** The proclamation of Christ and His Gospel by word and the testimony of life, in fulfillment of Christ’s command.
- **Apologetics:** The action of giving a defense of the faith, to respond to and answer questions about the faith, or to defend a teaching of the faith.
- **Our Story:** The telling of our relationship with God and the Church in an understandable and simple way.
- **Culture of Silence:** A term coined and used to articulate the American Catholic mindset of not talking about: faith, Jesus, God, or the Church.

Resources:

Catechism of Catholic Church: 905, 1313, 1816,2087

Scripture: 1Peter 3:15, Mt 28:19, 1 John 5:5-12, Mt 5:16, 1 Cor 9:16, Mk 16:15, Rom 10:14-17, Eph 3:8, 1 Tim 2:4, Mt 10:32-33

Media:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KfpdvpZPwrg>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FMLYBvmMbPE>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cfeu42qoonE>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wp1ozgFz7Ac>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wrr54FjqjLM>

DOK Confirmation Topic Outline

Life in the Spirit

What will be learned:

- How to put it all together
- What does it mean to live as a spouse of God
- Keeping the Holy Spirit alive in your heart
- Charismatic gifts
- Life of the Cross
 - Forgiveness
 - Redemptive Suffering
 - Joy of resurrection
- Reliance on God

Biblical Figure for lesson:

John-the beloved disciple, close friend of Jesus and the only one of the apostles not martyred. John was very close to Mary, Jesus' mother, was very in tune with the Spirit of God, wrote the most theological and spiritual Gospel, was taken to Heaven and shown what heaven was like, giving us the Book of Revelation. (cf: Gospel of John, Book of Revelation)

Vocabulary used:

- **Charismatic:** A spirituality in which someone is attune to the charisms given by the Spirit of God and lives according to them.
- **Redemptive Suffering:** A term used by the church to understand the value and purpose of suffering in this life. All suffering has been transformed by Jesus' suffering on the Cross, and our participation with his Cross transforms our suffering and unites it to His redemption.

Resources:

Catechism of Catholic Church: 768, 1502-1505, 1699-1769

Scripture: Gal 5:16-17, Gal 5:25, John 6:63, John 15:4, Romans 8,

Media:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h157Zu2EOFc>

<http://reallifecatholic.com/video/#7750-video-grid/1/7773-why-does-god-let-us-suffer>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l0uXpvxyR28>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QH3tF7abpts>

Other Documents:

Salvivici Dolores