

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Faith Talks

## Confirmation Candidate/Sponsor Discussion Guide

# Apprenticeship

**Read the scripture story below and discuss the questions that follow.**

Acts 8:26-31; 34-36, 38-39

## **Philip Teaches a Man from Ethiopia**

<sup>26</sup> An angel of the Lord spoke to Philip. The angel said, “Get ready and go south on the road that leads down to Gaza from Jerusalem—the road that goes through the desert.”

<sup>27</sup> So Philip got ready and went. On the road he saw a man from Ethiopia. He was an important official in the service of Candace, the queen of the Ethiopians. He was responsible for taking care of all her money. This man had gone to Jerusalem to worship. <sup>28</sup> Now he was on his way home. He was sitting in his chariot reading from the book of Isaiah the prophet.

<sup>29</sup> The Spirit said to Philip, “Go to that chariot and stay near it.” <sup>30</sup> So he went toward the chariot, and he heard the man reading from Isaiah the prophet. Philip asked him, “Do you understand what you are reading?”

<sup>31</sup> The man answered, “How can I understand? I need someone to explain it to me.” Then he invited Philip to climb in and sit with him.

<sup>34</sup> The official<sup>[a]</sup> said to Philip, “Please, tell me, who is the prophet talking about? Is he talking about himself or about someone else?” <sup>35</sup> Philip began to speak. He started with this same Scripture and told the man the Good News about Jesus.

<sup>36</sup> While they were traveling down the road, they came to some water. The official said, “Look, here is water! What is stopping me from being baptized?” <sup>38</sup> Then the official ordered the chariot to stop. Both Philip and the official went down into the water, and Philip baptized him. <sup>39</sup> When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord took Philip away; the official never saw him again. The official continued on his way home. He was very happy.

**Discussion Questions** (put a few words or a sentence or two about your discussion below each discussion point):

- How do you think the story of Philip and the Ethiopian relates to you and your sponsor?
- Sponsors please share when and where you were Confirmed. What do you remember most vividly? How old were you? Did you choose a Confirmation name? If so, why that name?
- Candidates, please share something that you are really interested in (art, music, games, sports, drama, etc.) and some way that you have shared your interest with someone else (teaching someone to ride a bike or play a game, coaching younger athletes, or teaching a dance).
- Both sponsors and candidates: Describe a time (or more) about when you have been an apprentice – learning something from a mentor as a trainee or in another capacity.

# The Seven Sacraments of the Church

**Read & Discuss the Seven Sacraments of the Church and discuss the questions that follow.**

Christ instituted the sacraments. There are **seven**: Baptism, Confirmation, the Eucharist, Reconciliation, Anointing of the Sick, Holy Orders, and Matrimony. The seven sacraments touch stages and important moments of Christian life.

**Sacraments of Christian Initiation**: The sacraments of Christian initiation lay the foundations of our Christian life.

1. Baptism – Holy Baptism is the basis of the whole Christian life, the gateway to life in the Spirit, and the door which gives access to the other Sacraments. Through Baptism we are initiated into Christianity as followers of Jesus.
2. Confirmation – The reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation is necessary for the completion of baptismal grace. By the Sacrament of Confirmation, the baptized are enriched with a special strength of the Holy Spirit. Hence, they are, as true witnesses of Christ, strengthened to be disciples.
3. Eucharist – Holy Eucharist completes Christian initiation. The Eucharist is the source and summit of our faith.

**Sacraments of Healing**: Jesus has willed that His Church continue, in the power of the Holy Spirit, His work of healing and salvation.

4. Reconciliation– Those who approach the Sacrament of Reconciliation to obtain God’s mercy and love for an offense that hurts their relationship with God.
5. The Anointing of the Sick – By the sacred anointing of the sick, the Church commends those who are ill to Jesus, for spiritual strength and healing, and sometimes physical healing.

**Sacraments of Service/Vocation**: These Sacraments are directed towards service to others. They confer a particular mission in the Church and serve to build up the People of God.

6. Holy Orders – Holy Orders is the Sacrament through which the mission entrusted by Christ to his apostles continues to be exercised in the Church until the end of time. Deacons, priests, and bishops receive Holy Orders.
7. Matrimony – The matrimonial covenant, by which a man and a woman establish between themselves a partnership of the whole of life, is to bring Christ’s goodness to the spouses and Christian education of offspring.

Look up the following Bible verses and match each verse with a sacrament of the Church:

Mark 10: 6-9  
Matthew 28: 19  
John 20: 23  
Luke 22: 19-20  
Acts 1: 8  
Acts 6: 2-6  
James 5:14

Baptism  
Confirmation  
Eucharist  
Reconciliation  
Anointing of the Sick  
Holy Orders  
Marriage

What is something you learned?

Candidate: Explain to your sponsor what you have learned about what it means to be confirmed?

# Faith Life

Sponsor: How have you been living out your Catholic faith?

Candidate: How have you been living out your Catholic faith?

Sponsor: What do you appreciate most about being Catholic?

Candidate: What do you appreciate most about being Catholic?

What is something you are struggling with or a question you still have about being Catholic?

Name someone who is a witness of faith for you and explain why that person is an example for you in living the Catholic faith.

Sponsor: Set a goal for your prayer life.

Candidate: Set a goal for your prayer life.

Together write a prayer intention for your Confirmation journey:

# Preparing for Mass

Read St. Paul's admonitions about the way in which the Christian community in Corinth was gathering to celebrate the Eucharist. Paul is teaching and clarifying how the Eucharist is to be celebrated.

## 1 Corinthians 11:17-26

<sup>17</sup> In the things I tell you now I don't praise you. Your meetings hurt you more than they help you. <sup>18</sup> First, I hear that when you meet together as a church you are divided. And this is not hard to believe <sup>19</sup> because of your idea that you must have separate groups to show who the real believers are!

<sup>23</sup> The teaching I gave you is the same that I received from the Lord: On the night when the Lord Jesus was handed over to be killed, he took bread <sup>24</sup> and gave thanks for it. Then he divided the bread and said, "This is my body; it is for you. Eat this to remember me." <sup>25</sup> In the same way, after they ate, Jesus took the cup of wine. He said, "This cup represents the new agreement from God, which begins with my blood sacrifice. When you drink this, do it to remember me." <sup>26</sup> This means that every time you eat this bread and drink this cup, you are telling others about the Lord's death until he comes again.

## Discussion Questions:

Candidate/sponsor complete the following statement: "When I gather with my parish community to celebrate the Mass, I feel...."

Think about the ways in which you and your parish community gather as you prepare to celebrate Mass. Share with one another what you observe about your parish community/ies.

What are two specific things you can do to better prepare your mind and heart to gather for worship with your parish community?

Share with your candidate/sponsor your favorite Scripture story from the Old or New Testament. Explain why the story has special meaning for you.

Discuss the importance of God's Word in your life. Share an experience of how the Scriptures have influenced the way you live.

How will listening more attentively to God's Word at Mass help you to be a better witness for Christ?

# Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit

The Church describes Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit which come from Scripture. The Sacrament of Confirmation strengthens these gifts in us. The following descriptions are from the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis' website. Please read through them together and answer the discussion points below.

**Wisdom** is first gift of the Holy Spirit. It is the ability to exercise good judgment. It is grounded in common sense and comes from life experience, thoughtful reflection, and learning life's lessons in "The School of Hard Knocks." Wisdom distinguishes between right and wrong, seeks and upholds truth and justice, and balances personal good with the common good. In the Old Testament wisdom is personified in Sophia, the mythical mother of faith, hope, and love; while in the New Testament wisdom is personified in Jesus himself.

**Understanding** is the gift of intelligence and enlightenment. It is the ability to perceive, comprehend, and interpret information; to have insight and discern meaning.

**Counsel** is good advice. It is the ability to teach and inform, guide and direct, warn and admonish, recommend and encourage. The Holy Spirit offers this special gift to parents, teachers, coaches, mentors, advisors, supervisors, elders, and the like. Counsel is not only the ability to give good advice, but to receive it as well.

**Fortitude** is an unwavering commitment to God or a proper course of action, and it shows itself in moral strength, courage, determination, patient endurance, long suffering, a resolute spirit, stamina, and resiliency.

**Knowledge** is the ability to study and learn; to acquire, retain, and master a wide spectrum of information; and to put it to good use for constructive purposes.

**Fear of the Lord** is awe, reverence, and respect for God. It downplays human self-sufficiency and acknowledges that everything comes from God. Consequently, those who "Fear the Lord" gladly offer their praise, worship, and adoration to God alone.

**Piety** is the only gift not part of Isaiah's original list. Piety is personal holiness, the ability to live a decent life, free of sin, devoted to God, and obedient to God's will.

## Discussion Questions:

Think about the sevenfold gift of the Holy Spirit (wisdom, understanding, right judgment, courage, knowledge, reverence, wonder and awe) the bishop prays for as he lays hands on candidates during Confirmation. Share with your candidate/sponsor the gift you most desire to grow in. Explain the reason for your choice.

When are you most aware of the Holy Spirit's presence as a Helper and Guide in your life?

# Being Disciples

When we went through module/lesson 2, we chose one of the following quotes by Bishop Frank as our favorite. You are going to choose again—maybe your choice is the same or maybe it is different than it was when you completed the module. Choose one quote below from Bishop Frank that you like the most and think of an experience from your life that it relates to—perhaps someone you admire or an experience of your own.

**1 Peter 2:9** - <sup>9</sup> But you are his chosen people, the King’s priests. You are a holy nation, people who belong to God. He chose you to tell about the wonderful things he has done. He brought you out of the darkness of sin into his wonderful light.

## Quotes from Bishop Frank

1. “God is love. Anytime, anyplace, with any person, that we truly love the way God wants us to love them, God is present.”
2. “The mission is to love, and discipleship is to do it in the name of Jesus. That’s what we are called to do.”
3. “That’s the genius of being a Christian. It’s not complicated. Love God above all things, love your neighbor as yourself; Jesus put them together. That’s missionary discipleship.”
4. “Love is most needed in the shadows of society. . . . All those individuals who society would really prefer go away, I call those ‘the people in the shadows.’ Those are the people who need to be loved.”
5. “Anyone who goes out to reach out to those in need, who tries to love them, comes away with more than they gave to the person in need. That’s the beauty of love.”
6. “When you love, you’re also loved back. It’s a beautiful thing; it’s the way of God.”

## Discussion Questions:

My favorite quote is number \_\_\_\_\_. It reminds me of (something you or someone else did) . . .

Complete the sentence: “I am doing what I believe when I . . .

What does it mean to you to be a Christian—someone who shares in Christ’s mission?

How can you publicly witness to your faith in Jesus Christ in your daily life?