



2011-2012  
Saint Cecilia Catholic Church  
Confirmation Manual





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## 2011-2012 Saint Cecilia Catholic Church Confirmation Expectations

1. **Submission of Baptismal and First Communion certificates.** This should be completed as soon as possible. If your child received their First Communion at Saint Cecilia, we should already have a copy of their Baptismal Certificate. All certificates are submitted to Patty Streit in the Faith Formation Office.
2. **Attendance.** We ask that candidates please attend each of the quarterly confirmation sessions. We will have make-up sessions in December and April for those who miss one class in the Fall or Spring. If a candidate is unable to make up all sessions that they've missed, they will need to repeat that year of formation.
3. **Life Teen mass.** We will host a Life Teen mass after the 9<sup>th</sup> grade preparation classes and before the 10<sup>th</sup> grade classes begin from 6-7pm. We encourage Confirmation candidates to attend this mass for their Sunday obligation and participate in the liturgy with their fellow candidates. Families are more than welcome to attend!
4. **Service & Worship.** Every candidate is required to carry out at least 20 hours of community service and 20 hours of "worship" activities before they are Confirmed at the end of Year Two. 10 hours of each should be completed by the end of Year One (Freshman Year.) Service can be completed independently at home or through a high school service organization, or any regular service activity that the candidate already performs. Worship hours can be attained through adoration, attending Life Teen or Small Group, attending daily mass, etc. (Regular Sunday mass does not count as a Worship Hour.)
5. **Sponsor Form.** We are unable to help Sponsors fulfill their duties unless we have their contact information. Please submit a Sponsor Form as soon as possible. Sponsors should be chosen at the beginning of ninth grade, though we understand if it takes candidates awhile to decide. As soon as a sponsor is chosen, we will begin sending them information on how to fulfill their duties. Sponsors must be at least sixteen years of age, they must be Confirmed, and if they are married, they must have been married or have their marriage blessed by the Catholic Church. Godparents do not have to be the candidate's sponsor; it is most important that candidate's select a sponsor who is truly a living example of strong Catholic faith.
6. **Retreats.** In ninth grade, candidates have 2 daylong retreats. In tenth grade, the candidates will attend the fall kick-off retreat with the ninth graders, as well as a weekend retreat in January.
7. **Coursework.** We will send assignments or projects for the candidates to complete in their own time between classes (they will have about 2 months to complete them.) These will be simple journal reflections, readings from scripture, or questionnaires for them to complete with a parent or sponsor. They will be collected and discussed at the following class, so please help them stay on top of these assignments.
8. **Interviews.** These short, informal interviews will take place at the Kick-Off Retreat for 9<sup>th</sup> graders and in September and April for the 10<sup>th</sup> graders. They are group interviews that take approximately 20 minutes. Interviews are not pass/fail, but simply an opportunity to see how they feel about the Sacrament and the commitment that it requires.
9. **Confirmation Practice.** In tenth grade, we will have one practice session on the Wednesday night prior to Confirmation.
10. **Rite of Entrance and Covenant:** In tenth grade, we have 2 Rites at 10:30am liturgies to mark the candidate's progress as they come closer to receiving the Sacrament. Sponsors are involved in the Rite and should be present if possible, but parents may substitute. A potluck lunch is served for the families and sponsors following the mass.

# First Year Confirmation Preparation

2011-2012

Sunday, September 11 <sup>th</sup>	KICK OFF RETREAT, 11am -7pm Meet at Saint Cecilia
Sunday, October 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Confirmation Preparation 4-6pm  Mass at 6pm
Sunday, December 4 <sup>th</sup>	Confirmation Preparation, 4-6pm  Mass at 6pm
Wednesday, December 7 <sup>th</sup>	Confirmation Make-Up Class, 7pm
Sunday, January 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Saint Thomas Aquinas Purity Retreat, 11:30am – 8pm
Sunday, February 5 <sup>th</sup>	Confirmation Preparation, 4-6pm  Mass at 6pm
Sunday, April 1 <sup>st</sup>	Confirmation Preparation, 4-6pm Service & Worship Hours Due  Mass at 6pm
Wednesday, April 4 <sup>th</sup>	Confirmation Make-Up Class, 7pm

**An updated calendar will be included with 2011-2012 Registration Materials in August/September 2011. No dates/times will be changed, only details will be added.**

# 2012 – 2013 Tentative Second Year Calendar

(For 2011-2012 Freshmen/2012-2013 Sophomores)

**Sunday, September 9<sup>th</sup>:** Kick Off Retreat

**Sunday, October 7<sup>th</sup>:** Confirmation Preparation, 7-9pm

**Sunday, October 21<sup>st</sup>:** Rite of Entrance at 10:30am Mass

**Friday, November 16<sup>th</sup> – Sunday, 18<sup>th</sup>:**  
**Weekend Retreat**

**Sunday, December 2<sup>nd</sup>:** Confirmation Preparation, 7-9pm

**Sunday, January 20<sup>th</sup>:** Rite of Covenant at 10:30am Mass

**Sunday, February 3<sup>rd</sup>:** Confirmation Preparation, 7-9pm

**March:** Confirmation Interviews

**Wednesday, April 3<sup>rd</sup>:** Confirmation Rehearsal (Tentative)

**Sunday, April 7<sup>th</sup>:** Confirmation (Tentative)

**Wednesday, May 1<sup>st</sup>:** Mystagogia, 7pm

# Second Year Confirmation Preparation

2011-2012 Calendar

An updated calendar will be included with 2011-2012 Registration Materials in August/September 2011. No dates/times will be changed, only details will be added.

**Sunday, September 11<sup>th</sup>:** Kick Off Retreat, 11am to 7pm  
Meet at Saint Cecilia

**September:** Confirmation Interviews

**Sunday, October 2<sup>nd</sup>:**  Mass at 6pm  
Confirmation Preparation, 7-9pm

**Sunday, October 16<sup>th</sup>:** Rite of Entrance at 10:30am Mass  
**Candidates & Sponsors (or Parent Substitute) Arrive by 10am.**  
**Potluck will follow mass in the Education Center Multi-Purpose Room.**

**Sunday, December 4<sup>th</sup>:**  Mass at 6pm  
Confirmation Preparation, 7-9pm

**Friday – Sunday, January 20<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup>:** Weekend Retreat, 6pm – 12noon

**Sunday, January 29<sup>th</sup>:** Rite of Covenant at 10:30am Mass  
**Candidates & Sponsors (or Parent Substitute) Arrive by 10am.**  
**Potluck will follow mass in the Education Center Multi-Purpose Room.**

**Wednesday, December 5<sup>th</sup>:** Confirmation Make-Up Class, 7pm

**Sunday, February 5<sup>th</sup>:**  Mass at 6pm  
Confirmation Preparation, 7-9pm

**March:** Confirmation Interviews

**Sunday, April 1<sup>st</sup>:**  Mass at 6pm  
Confirmation Preparation, 7-9pm  
Service & Worship Hours Due

**Wednesday, April 4<sup>th</sup>:** Confirmation Make-Up Class, 7pm

**Wednesday, April 11<sup>th</sup>:** Confirmation Rehearsal, 7:15pm (Tentative)

**Sunday, April 15<sup>th</sup>:** Confirmation (Tentative)

**Wednesday, May 23<sup>rd</sup>:** Mystagoga (Pre-Pentecost Party), 7pm

## **CONFIRMATION SERVICE & WORSHIP HOURS**

CANDIDATES ARE ASKED TO COMPLETE 10 WORSHIP HOURS AND 10 SERVICE HOURS EACH YEAR OF PREPARATION (20 WORSHIP AND 20 SERVICE, 40 HOURS TOTAL). WE WILL ALSO PROVIDE STRUCTURED SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS TO COMPLETE THESE OPPORTUNITIES IN SMALL GROUPS, AND WILL KEEP FAMILIES NOTIFIED OF OPPORTUNITIES

### **PLEASE KEEP A LOG OF ALL ACTIVITIES TO BE SUBMITTED ON APRIL 1, 2012.**

NINTH GRADE CANDIDATES WILL SUBMIT ONE FORM THIS YEAR AND ANOTHER NEXT YEAR. IF THEIR SERVICE & WORSHIP HOURS ARE COMPLETED IN ONE YEAR, THEY WILL NOT BE ASKED TO SUBMIT ANOTHER SERVICE/WORSHIP LOG.

#### SERVICE HOUR OPPORTUNITIES:

- APPALACHIA WAREHOUSE (SATURDAY MORNINGS – 2 SERVICE HOURS)
  - VISIT [HTTP://WWW.APPALACHIACOMMITTEE.ORG](http://www.appalachiacommittee.org)
- FOOD AT FIRST (TUESDAY NIGHTS AT FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH– 2 SERVICE HOURS)-
  - VISIT [HTTP://FOODATFIRST.WORDPRESS.COM](http://FOODATFIRST.WORDPRESS.COM)
- SERVING IN A LITURGICAL ROLE AT MASS (1 SERVICE HOUR)
- SMALL GROUP SERVICE PROJECTS
- CATHOLIC HEART WORK CAMP 2012 (20 SERVICE HOURS)

#### WORSHIP HOUR OPPORTUNITIES:

- LIFE NIGHT (1 WORSHIP HOUR)
- INVOLVEMENT IN A WEDNESDAY NIGHT SMALL GROUP (10 WORSHIP HOURS/YEAR)
- SERVING IN A LITURGICAL ROLE AT MASS (1 WORSHIP HOUR)
- 1 HOUR OF ADORATION (1 WORSHIP HOUR)
- STEUBENVILLE (20 WORSHIP HOURS)
- NATIONAL CATHOLIC YOUTH CONFERENCE (10 WORSHIP HOURS)
- ATTENDING EASTER VIGIL (2 WORSHIP HOURS)
- ATTENDING A LIFE TEEN RETREAT (10 WORSHIP HOURS)



## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Why do we have a two year program?**

The Archdiocese requires that candidate's participate in one year of religious education prior to entering into preparation for the Sacrament. We feel that the extra year also helps provide them with more time to think and pray over the decision to become Confirmed, and helps alleviate some of the stress of extra requirements in tenth grade, which is typically a busier year overall for high school candidates.

### **Why do we Confirm at the end of the tenth grade?**

The age of Confirmation is set by the Bishop of each individual diocese. That is why some of your Catholic friends and relatives may have been Confirmed in 8<sup>th</sup> grade, the recent age set by the Diocese of Des Moines (though they have recently moved that age to 12<sup>th</sup> grade.)

### **Why should my child be Confirmed? Should I "require" my child to be Confirmed?**

These are good questions. Confirmation only finishes what was already begun in Baptism. Perhaps we should first be asking, why was your baby baptized? If you are Confirmed, think back to your experience. What has Confirmation meant to you? I would recommend sharing with your child about your reception of the Sacrament, and why you chose to have them Baptized as an infant. You may also want to share with them that to be married in the Catholic Church, you often need to be Confirmed in the Catholic Church.

St. Augustine once said, "To fall in love with God is the greatest of romances, to seek Him the greatest adventure, to find Him the greatest human achievement." Candidates should be Confirmed because they want to seek, find and fall in love with God with all of their heart. Not because they don't have any doubts, not because they have it all figured out. As Catholics, we truly believe that God can be found in the Sacraments as visible symbols of his invisible grace. Candidates should be Confirmed for the same reason we receive the Eucharist: because we want to have a stronger relationship with God and want to commit ourselves to a lifelong pursuit of Him.

Confirmation is called the Sacrament of Maturity, not the Sacrament of Graduation from Religious Ed. Candidates will continue to drop away from the faith unless we as a Church are able to share the way God continues to touch our heart through the graces of the Sacraments. Unless they develop a personal relationship with Jesus, as witnessed by their peers and family, they may not continue to be interested in Church. (This is another reason for having a two year program; it helps deepen that relationship even more.)

You may want to encourage your child to attend a retreat or participate in Life Teen for one year before they enter into Sacrament Preparation if they don't feel ready to enter into Confirmation Preparation. This is a decision to be prayed over by your family, and we are here to support you in whatever is best for your child & their relationship with God.

### **Why do they only have 4 sessions per year?**

Because we have a two year program, 4 sessions each year is more than sufficient for preparation for the Sacrament. Confirmation is not the primary faith formation for teenagers at Saint Cecilia, so they should choose a weekly program to attend as often as possible – either Life Teen or a Small Group.

### **What is the role of the sponsor?**

The Sponsor is a mentor or guide for the candidate as they journey through the Confirmation process. What we study in class or on retreat is only half of the preparation. The other half takes part in the prayer life of the Candidate, and the Sponsor is meant to be their individual friend, counselor and leader as the Spirit moves.

### **What is the role of the parent?**

The Parent is also a guide and source of support for the candidate. It is important to discuss what we study in Confirmation preparation, and continue to educate them in the faith at home. As the primary catechist of your child,

our programs can do nothing without your help and encouragement. Though Confirmation may seem like a step away from childhood and needing your help, the teenagers need your time and attention and prayers more than ever. Encourage them to participate in youth ministry programming so that Confirmation truly becomes something that means something to them. We are doing everything we can to help foster a relationship between your child and Jesus Christ, but if that relationship is not supported at home, they may not benefit from Confirmation at all.

### **What will they be learning in class?**

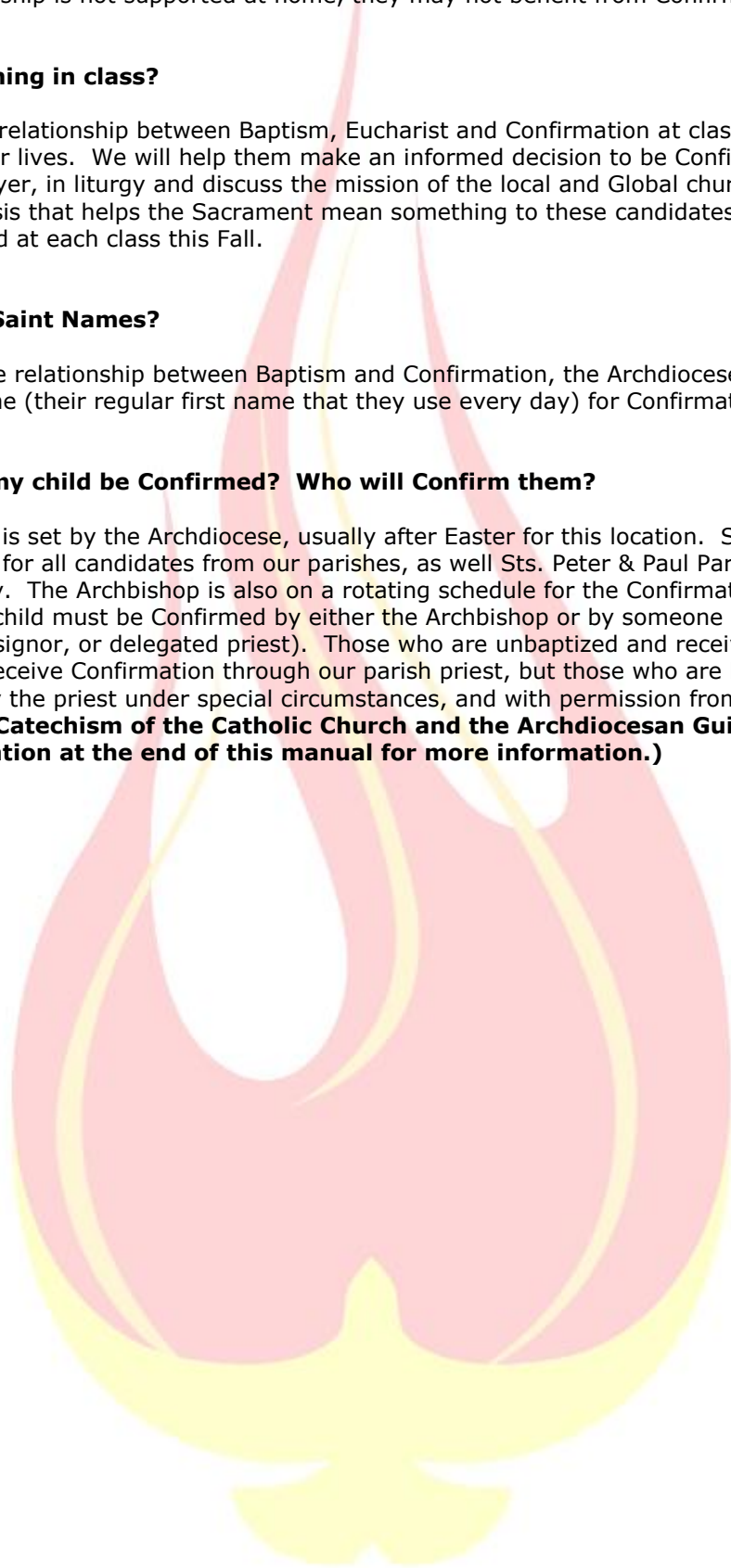
We will mainly study the relationship between Baptism, Eucharist and Confirmation at class. We will discuss their individual faith and prayer lives. We will help them make an informed decision to be Confirmed and to follow Christ. We will spend time in prayer, in liturgy and discuss the mission of the local and Global church. Our primary goal is to provide relevant catechesis that helps the Sacrament mean something to these candidates. We hope to provide a calendar of topics covered at each class this Fall.

### **Why don't we choose Saint Names?**

In order to emphasize the relationship between Baptism and Confirmation, the Archdiocese suggests that candidates keep their Baptismal name (their regular first name that they use every day) for Confirmation.

### **When and where will my child be Confirmed? Who will Confirm them?**

The date of Confirmation is set by the Archdiocese, usually after Easter for this location. St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Cecilia host Confirmation for all candidates from our parishes, as well Sts. Peter & Paul Parish, each year and they are all confirmed as one body. The Archbishop is also on a rotating schedule for the Confirmations that he celebrates. As baptized Catholics, your child must be Confirmed by either the Archbishop or by someone he has given permission to confirm them (i.e. a Monsignor, or delegated priest). Those who are unbaptized and receive the sacraments through RCIA, for example, can receive Confirmation through our parish priest, but those who are baptized – like your child – can only be Confirmed by the priest under special circumstances, and with permission from the Bishop. **(Please see the excerpts from the Catechism of the Catholic Church and the Archdiocesan Guidelines for the Sacrament of Confirmation at the end of this manual for more information.)**



# PART TWO THE CELEBRATION OF THE CHRISTIAN MYSTERY

## SECTION TWO THE SEVEN SACRAMENTS OF THE CHURCH

### CHAPTER ONE THE SACRAMENTS OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION

#### ARTICLE 2 THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION

**1285** Baptism, the Eucharist, and the sacrament of Confirmation together constitute the "sacraments of Christian initiation," whose unity must be safeguarded. It must be explained to the faithful that the reception of the sacrament of Confirmation is necessary for the completion of baptismal grace.<sup>89</sup> For "by the sacrament of Confirmation, [the baptized] are more perfectly bound to the Church and are enriched with a special strength of the Holy Spirit. Hence they are, as true witnesses of Christ, more strictly obliged to spread and defend the faith by word and deed."<sup>90</sup>

#### I. CONFIRMATION IN THE ECONOMY OF SALVATION

**1286** In the Old Testament the prophets announced that the Spirit of the Lord would rest on the hoped-for Messiah for his saving mission.<sup>91</sup> The descent of the Holy Spirit on Jesus at his baptism by John was the sign that this was he who was to come, the Messiah, the Son of God.<sup>92</sup> He was conceived of the Holy Spirit; his whole life and his whole mission are carried out in total communion with the Holy Spirit whom the Father gives him "without measure."<sup>93</sup>

**1287** This fullness of the Spirit was not to remain uniquely the Messiah's, but was to be communicated to *the whole messianic people*.<sup>94</sup> On several occasions Christ promised this outpouring of the Spirit,<sup>95</sup> a promise which he fulfilled first on Easter Sunday and then more strikingly at Pentecost.<sup>96</sup> Filled with the Holy Spirit the apostles began to proclaim "the mighty works of God," and Peter declared this outpouring of the Spirit to be the sign of the messianic age.<sup>97</sup> Those who believed in the apostolic preaching and were baptized received the gift of the Holy Spirit in their turn.<sup>98</sup>

**1288** "From that time on the apostles, in fulfillment of Christ's will, imparted to the newly baptized by the laying on of hands the gift of the Spirit that completes the grace of Baptism. For this reason in the *Letter to the Hebrews* the doctrine concerning Baptism and the laying on of hands is listed among the first elements of Christian instruction. The imposition of hands is rightly recognized by the Catholic tradition as the origin of the sacrament of Confirmation, which in a certain way perpetuates the grace of Pentecost in the Church."<sup>99</sup>

**1289** Very early, the better to signify the gift of the Holy Spirit, an anointing with perfumed oil (*chrism*) was added to the laying on of hands. This anointing highlights the name "Christian," which means "anointed" and derives from that of Christ himself whom God "anointed with the Holy Spirit."<sup>100</sup> This rite of anointing has continued ever since, in both East and West. For this reason the Eastern Churches call this sacrament *Chrismation*, anointing with *chrism*, or *myron* which means "chrism." In the West, the term *Confirmation* suggests that this sacrament both confirms and strengthens baptismal grace.

#### Two traditions: East and West

**1290** In the first centuries Confirmation generally comprised one single celebration with Baptism, forming with it a "double sacrament," according to the expression of St. Cyprian. Among other reasons, the multiplication of infant baptisms all through the year, the increase of rural parishes, and the growth of dioceses often prevented the bishop from being present at all baptismal celebrations. In the West the desire to reserve the completion of Baptism to the bishop caused the temporal separation of the two

sacraments. The East has kept them united, so that Confirmation is conferred by the priest who baptizes. But he can do so only with the "myron" consecrated by a bishop.<sup>101</sup>

**1291** A custom of the Roman Church facilitated the development of the Western practice: a double anointing with sacred chrism after Baptism. The first anointing of the neophyte on coming out of the baptismal bath was performed by the priest; it was completed by a second anointing on the forehead of the newly baptized by the bishop.<sup>102</sup> The first anointing with sacred chrism, by the priest, has remained attached to the baptismal rite; it signifies the participation of the one baptized in the prophetic, priestly, and kingly offices of Christ. If Baptism is conferred on an adult, there is only one post-baptismal anointing, that of Confirmation.

**1292** The practice of the Eastern Churches gives greater emphasis to the unity of Christian initiation. That of the Latin Church more clearly expresses the communion of the new Christian with the bishop as guarantor and servant of the unity, catholicity and apostolicity of his Church, and hence the connection with the apostolic origins of Christ's Church.

## II. THE SIGNS AND THE RITE OF CONFIRMATION

**1293** In treating the rite of Confirmation, it is fitting to consider the sign of *anointing* and what it signifies and imprints: a spiritual *seal*.

Anointing, in Biblical and other ancient symbolism, is rich in meaning: oil is a sign of abundance and joy;<sup>103</sup> it cleanses (anointing before and after a bath) and limbers (the anointing of athletes and wrestlers); oil is a sign of healing, since it is soothing to bruises and wounds;<sup>104</sup> and it makes radiant with beauty, health, and strength.

**1294** Anointing with oil has all these meanings in the sacramental life. The pre-baptismal anointing with the oil of catechumens signifies cleansing and strengthening; the anointing of the sick expresses healing and comfort. The post-baptismal anointing with sacred chrism in Confirmation and ordination is the sign of consecration. By Confirmation Christians, that is, those who are anointed, share more completely in the mission of Jesus Christ and the fullness of the Holy Spirit with which he is filled, so that their lives may give off "the aroma of Christ."<sup>105</sup>

**1295** By this anointing the confirmand receives the "mark," the *seal* of the Holy Spirit. A seal is a symbol of a person, a sign of personal authority, or ownership of an object.<sup>106</sup> Hence soldiers were marked with their leader's seal and slaves with their master's. A seal authenticates a juridical act or document and occasionally makes it secret.<sup>107</sup>

**1296** Christ himself declared that he was marked with his Father's seal.<sup>108</sup> Christians are also marked with a seal: "It is God who establishes us with you in Christ and has commissioned us; he has put his seal on us and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee."<sup>109</sup> This seal of the Holy Spirit marks our total belonging to Christ, our enrollment in his service for ever, as well as the promise of divine protection in the great eschatological trial.<sup>110</sup>

### The celebration of Confirmation

**1297** *The consecration of the sacred chrism* is an important action that precedes the celebration of Confirmation, but is in a certain way a part of it. It is the bishop who, in the course of the Chrism Mass of Holy Thursday, consecrates the sacred chrism for his whole diocese. In some Eastern Churches this consecration is even reserved to the patriarch:

The liturgy of Antioch expresses the epiclesis for the consecration of the sacred chrism (myron) in this way: "[Father . . . send your Holy Spirit] on us and on this oil which is before us and consecrate it, so that it may be for all who are anointed and marked with it holy myron, priestly myron, royal myron, anointing with gladness, clothing with light, a cloak of salvation, a spiritual gift, the sanctification of souls and bodies, imperishable happiness, the indelible seal, a buckler of faith, and a fearsome helmet against all the works of the adversary."

**1298** When Confirmation is celebrated separately from Baptism, as is the case in the Roman Rite, the Liturgy of Confirmation begins with the renewal of baptismal promises and the profession of faith by the confirmands. This clearly shows that Confirmation follows Baptism.<sup>111</sup> When adults are baptized, they immediately receive Confirmation and participate in the Eucharist.<sup>112</sup>

**1299** In the Roman Rite the bishop extends his hands over the whole group of the confirmands. Since the time of the apostles this gesture has signified the gift of the Spirit. The bishop invokes the outpouring of the Spirit in these words:

All-powerful God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
by water and the Holy Spirit  
you freed your sons and daughters from sin  
and gave them new life.  
Send your Holy Spirit upon them  
to be their helper and guide.  
Give them the spirit of wisdom and understanding,  
the spirit of right judgment and courage,  
the spirit of knowledge and reverence.  
Fill them with the spirit of wonder and awe in your presence.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord.<sup>113</sup>

**1300** The *essential rite* of the sacrament follows. In the Latin rite, "the sacrament of Confirmation is conferred through the anointing with chrism on the forehead, which is done by the laying on of the hand, and through the words: '*Accipe signaculum doni Spiritus Sancti*' [Be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit.]"<sup>114</sup> In the Eastern Churches of Byzantine rite, after a prayer of epiclesis, the more significant parts of the body are anointed with myron: forehead, eyes, nose, ears, lips, chest, back, hands, and feet. Each anointing is accompanied by the formula *Σφραγίς δωρεάς Πνεύματος Ἁγίου (Signaculum doni Spiritus Sancti): "the seal of the gift of the Holy Spirit."*<sup>115</sup>

**1301** The sign of peace that concludes the rite of the sacrament signifies and demonstrates ecclesial communion with the bishop and with all the faithful.<sup>116</sup>

### III. THE EFFECTS OF CONFIRMATION

**1302** It is evident from its celebration that the effect of the sacrament of Confirmation is the special outpouring of the Holy Spirit as once granted to the apostles on the day of Pentecost.

**1303** From this fact, Confirmation brings an increase and deepening of baptismal grace:

- it roots us more deeply in the divine filiation which makes us cry, "Abba! Father!";<sup>117</sup>
- it unites us more firmly to Christ;
- it increases the gifts of the Holy Spirit in us;
- it renders our bond with the Church more perfect;<sup>118</sup>
- it gives us a special strength of the Holy Spirit to spread and defend the faith by word and action as true witnesses of Christ, to confess the name of Christ boldly, and never to be ashamed of the Cross:<sup>119</sup>

Recall then that you have received the spiritual seal, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of right judgment and courage, the spirit of knowledge and reverence, the spirit of holy fear in God's presence. Guard what you have received. God the Father has marked you with his sign; Christ the Lord has confirmed you and has placed his pledge, the Spirit, in your hearts.<sup>120</sup>

**1304** Like Baptism which it completes, Confirmation is given only once, for it too imprints on the soul an *indelible spiritual mark*, the "character," which is the sign that Jesus Christ has marked a Christian with the seal of his Spirit by clothing him with power from on high so that he may be his witness.<sup>121</sup>

**1305** This "character" perfects the common priesthood of the faithful, received in Baptism, and "the confirmed person receives the power to profess faith in Christ publicly and as it were officially (*quasi Ex officio*)."<sup>122</sup>

### IV. WHO CAN RECEIVE THIS SACRAMENT?

**1306** Every baptized person not yet confirmed can and should receive the sacrament of Confirmation.<sup>123</sup> Since Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist form a unity, it follows that "the faithful are

obliged to receive this sacrament at the appropriate time,<sup>124</sup> for without Confirmation and Eucharist, Baptism is certainly valid and efficacious, but Christian initiation remains incomplete.

**1307** For centuries, Latin custom has indicated "the age of discretion" as the reference point for receiving Confirmation. But in danger of death children should be confirmed even if they have not yet attained the age of discretion.<sup>125</sup>

**1308** Although Confirmation is sometimes called the "sacrament of Christian maturity," we must not confuse adult faith with the adult age of natural growth, nor forget that the baptismal grace is a grace of free, unmerited election and does not need "ratification" to become effective. St. Thomas reminds us of this:

Age of body does not determine age of soul. Even in childhood man can attain spiritual maturity: as the book of Wisdom says: "For old age is not honored for length of time, or measured by number of years. "Many children, through the strength of the Holy Spirit they have received, have bravely fought for Christ even to the shedding of their blood."<sup>126</sup>

**1309** *Preparation* for Confirmation should aim at leading the Christian toward a more intimate union with Christ and a more lively familiarity with the Holy Spirit - his actions, his gifts, and his biddings - in order to be more capable of assuming the apostolic responsibilities of Christian life. To this end catechesis for Confirmation should strive to awaken a sense of belonging to the Church of Jesus Christ, the universal Church as well as the parish community. The latter bears special responsibility for the preparation of confirmands.<sup>127</sup>

**1310** To receive Confirmation one must be in a state of grace. One should receive the sacrament of Penance in order to be cleansed for the gift of the Holy Spirit. More intense prayer should prepare one to receive the strength and graces of the Holy Spirit with docility and readiness to act.<sup>128</sup>

**1311** Candidates for Confirmation, as for Baptism, fittingly seek the spiritual help of a *sponsor*. To emphasize the unity of the two sacraments, it is appropriate that this be one of the baptismal godparents.<sup>129</sup>

## V. THE MINISTER OF CONFIRMATION

**1312** The *original minister* of Confirmation is the bishop.<sup>130</sup>

In the East, ordinarily the priest who baptizes also immediately confers Confirmation in one and the same celebration. But he does so with sacred chrism consecrated by the patriarch or the bishop, thus expressing the apostolic unity of the Church whose bonds are strengthened by the sacrament of Confirmation. In the Latin Church, the same discipline applies to the Baptism of adults or to the reception into full communion with the Church of a person baptized in another Christian community that does not have valid Confirmation.<sup>131</sup>

**1313** *In the Latin Rite*, the ordinary minister of Confirmation is the bishop.<sup>132</sup> If the need arises, the bishop may grant the faculty of administering Confirmation to priests,<sup>133</sup> although it is fitting that he confer it himself, mindful that the celebration of Confirmation has been temporally separated from Baptism for this reason. Bishops are the successors of the apostles. They have received the fullness of the sacrament of Holy Orders. The administration of this sacrament by them demonstrates clearly that its effect is to unite those who receive it more closely to the Church, to her apostolic origins, and to her mission of bearing witness to Christ.

**1314** If a Christian is in danger of death, any priest can give him Confirmation.<sup>134</sup> Indeed the Church desires that none of her children, even the youngest, should depart this world without having been perfected by the Holy Spirit with the gift of Christ's fullness.

## IN BRIEF

**1315** "Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent to them Peter and John, who came down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit; for it had not yet fallen on any of them, but they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit" (Acts 8:14-17).

**1316** Confirmation perfects Baptismal grace; it is the sacrament which gives the Holy Spirit in order to root us more deeply in the divine filiation, incorporate us more firmly into Christ, strengthen our bond with the Church, associate us more closely with her mission, and help us bear witness to the Christian faith in words accompanied by deeds.

**1317** Confirmation, like Baptism, imprints a spiritual mark or indelible character on the Christian's soul; for this reason one can receive this sacrament only once in one's life.

**1318** In the East this sacrament is administered immediately after Baptism and is followed by participation in the Eucharist; this tradition highlights the unity of the three sacraments of Christian initiation. In the Latin Church this sacrament is administered when the age of reason has been reached, and its celebration is ordinarily reserved to the bishop, thus signifying that this sacrament strengthens the ecclesial bond.

**1319** A candidate for Confirmation who has attained the age of reason must profess the faith, be in the state of grace, have the intention of receiving the sacrament, and be prepared to assume the role of disciple and witness to Christ, both within the ecclesial community and in temporal affairs.

**1320** The essential rite of Confirmation is anointing the forehead of the baptized with sacred chrism (in the East other sense-organs as well), together with the laying on of the minister's hand and the words: "*Accipe signaculum doni Spiritus Sancti*" (Be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit.) in the Roman rite, or: *Signaculum doni Spiritus Sancti* [the seal of the gift of the Holy Spirit] in the Byzantine rite.

**1321** When Confirmation is celebrated separately from Baptism, its connection with Baptism is expressed, among other ways, by the renewal of baptismal promises. The celebration of Confirmation during the Eucharist helps underline the unity of the sacraments of Christian initiation.

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89 Cf. *Roman Ritual*, Rite of Confirmation (OC), Introduction 1.

90 LG 11; Cf. OC, Introduction 2.

91 Cf. *Isa* 11:2; 61:1; *Lk* 4:16-22.

92 Cf. *Mt* 3:13-17; *Jn* 1:33-34.

93 *Jn* 3:34.

94 Cf. *Ezek* 36:25-27; *Joel* 3:1-2.

95 Cf. *Lk* 12:12; *Jn* 3:5-8; 7:37-39; 16:7-15; *Acts* 1:8.

96 Cf. *Jn* 20:22; *Acts* 2:1-14.

97 *Acts* 2:11; Cf. 2:17-18.

98 Cf. *Acts* 2:38.

99 Paul VI, *Divinae consortium naturae*, 659; cf. *Acts* 8:15-17; 19:5-6; *Heb* 6:2.

100 *Acts* 10:38.

101 Cf. CCEO, Can. 695 § 1; 696 § 1.

102 Cf. St. Hippolytus, *Trad. Ap.* 21:Sch 11,80-95.

103 Cf. *Deut* 11:14; *Pss* 23:5; 104:15.

104 Cf. *Isa* 1:6; *Lk* 10:34.

105 2 *Cor* 2:15.

106 Cf. *Gen* 38:18; 41:42; *Deut* 32:34; *CT* 8:6.

107 Cf. 1 *Kings* 21:8; *Jer* 32:10; *Isa* 29:11.

108 Cf. *Jn* 6:27.

109 2 *Cor* 1:21-22; cf. *Eph* 1:13; 4,30.

110 Cf. *Rev* 7:2-3; 9:4; *Ezek* 9:4-6.

111 Cf. SC 71.

112 Cf. CIC, can. 866.

113 OC 25.

114 Paul VI, apostolic constitution, *Divinae consortium naturae*, 663.

115 *Rituale per le Chiese orientali di rito bizantino in lingua greca*, Pars Prima (Liberia Editrice Vaticana, 1954) 36.

- 116 Cf. St. Hippolytus, *Trad. Ap.* 21:Sch 11,80-95.  
117 *Rom* 8:15.  
118 Cf. *LG* 11.  
119 Cf. Council Of Florence (1439): DS 1319; *LG* 11; 12.  
120 St. Ambrose, *De myst.* 7,42:PL 16,402-403.  
121 Cf. Council Of Trent (1547): DS 1609; *Lk* 24:48-49.  
122 St. Thomas Aquinas, *STh* III,72,5, *ad* 2.  
123 Cf. CIC, can. 889 § 1.  
124 CIC, can. 890.  
125 Cf. CIC, cann. 891; 883, 3°.  
126 St. Thomas Aquinas, *STh* III,72,8, *ad* 2; Cf. *Wis* 4:8.  
127 Cf. *OC* Introduction 3.  
128 Cf. *Acts* 1:14.  
129 Cf. *OC* Introduction 5; 6; CIC, Can. 893 §§ 1-2.  
130 Cf. *LG* 26.  
131 Cf. CIC, Can. 883 § 2.  
132 Cf. CIC, Can. 882.  
133 Cf. CIC, Can. 884 § 2.  
134 Cf. CIC, Can. 883 § 3.

