

*Guidelines for Preparation for the
Sacrament of Confirmation*

Element Two

Learning Centers

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BISHOP OF THE DIOCESE OF SAINT CLOUD, MINNESOTA

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Silhouettes: S. Lucia Aschenbrener, SSND
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Printed and bound in the United States of America

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Learning Centers *Element Two*

Significant relationship – candidate and parents

The materials contained in this booklet are sample outlines of seven learning centers to be completed by the confirmation candidate and his/her parent(s). The learning centers include individual modules of active learning experiences shared between the parent(s)/guardians and candidate to assist them in a greater understanding of the elements of the Sacrament of Confirmation. Each parish will create a set(s) of these learning center outlines to be used by the parish. For each center, there is an Items Needed list for the person designing the learning centers. The centers take approximately one hour and forty-five minutes to two hours to complete. Optional technology ideas for the person designing these centers are listed for use when access to various technologies is available. The content is based on pg. 122-123 of the National Directory for Catechesis. The step-by-step process is for each candidate and his/her parent to complete together.

The goals of the learning centers are:

- to assist the parents/guardians and the candidate in intentional faith-sharing experiences
- to support parents/guardians in their role as primary faith educators of their children, focusing on the Sacrament of Confirmation
- to foster an informed and lived discipleship

LEARNING CENTER (#1) – NAMES ARE IMPORTANT

Items Needed: baby name book and/or Saint name book, 3"x5" blank index cards,

blank name badges, writing utensils, markers, stickers, etc., a basket with cards containing each candidate's name - one name per card

Process:

Step One: At baptism, the priest or deacon asks the parents: What name do you give your child? Parents: talk about why you chose that name for your son/daughter. Look in the baby name book and find the meaning of your name (parents, too). Everyone: What meaning does your name hold for you? Do you like your name? What are some of the nicknames people call you? Do you mind the nicknames?

Create a name badge and decorate it. Include your name and meaning. Bring it home.

Step Two: Read Luke 1:26-33 (the naming of Jesus). - Who do you say that I am?

Which of the following names for Jesus do you most relate to? Why? Recall some ways we name Jesus and discuss what the different names mean.

- Son of Abraham – he is a person with a family, roots
- Son of Man – he is fully human, one who laughs and cares like us
- Son of God – he has a special relationship to God
- Rabbi, Teacher – he is one we can learn much from
- Storyteller – he teaches through the parables
- Word of God – he is that which God has spoken to us
- Messiah – he is the fulfillment of a scriptural promise
- Servant – he came not to lead, but to serve
- Miracle Worker – he heals those who suffer
- Forgiver – he came to free us from our sins
- Brother – he is part of our family
- Friend – he was a friend to the Apostles
- Eucharist – he gave us his body and blood
- Lord – he is the risen Lord, come to redeem us
- Other?

Step Three: Read Isaiah 43:1.

What does it mean to carry the “name” Christian? What does it mean to you to have God call you by name?

Step Four: Candidate may choose to use his/her own name, given at Baptism, or choose a new name, such as the name of an admired saint or other Christian. Create a nametag with your confirmation name and the meaning on an index card and decorate it.

Step Five: It is important to support each other in prayer. Take a card from the basket with the name of another Confirmation candidate. Pray for him/her as part of your preparation to

receive the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Optional Technology Piece:

Find the meaning of your name on www.name-meaning.com. Copy and paste your name and the meaning into a wordle™. Go to www.wordle.net to create the wordle. Save the wordle by screen capture, then paste it into another document and print.

Show the clip from YouTube on the Abbot and Costello skit “Who’s on First.”

LEARNING CENTER (#2) – A WALK THROUGH THE LITURGY

Items Needed: velcro pieces of the Mass parts (below), poster board to match the order of the Mass, copy of the parts of the Mass Checklist (pg. 6), copies of First Reading, Second Reading, and the Gospel used for the Confirmation Liturgy to give to each student to take home and pray. Hint: the director may want to make each section of the Order of Mass a different color for ease of the correct order

Process:

Step One: Discuss with each other one of your “favorite” family stories. Why do you think this story is told over and over again? What are some of the important events in your life or the lives of your ancestors that you want to remember? Why is it important to do this? In the liturgy we are remembering...

Step Two: To review the order of the Mass, take each part of the liturgy (each piece should have Velcro on the back) and put it in the correct order on the poster board. Verify your answers with the checklist.

Step Three: Take a copy home with you of one of the readings that will be proclaimed at your Confirmation Mass and pray this each evening from now until your Confirmation. Let this be a time of reflection on the Scripture readings as part of your preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Optional Technology Piece:

Use PowerPoint game to have students and parents walking through the liturgy “Jeopardy!” style. *PowerPoint game available by calling Catholic Education Ministries at (320)251-0111 or email cem@gw.stcdio.org.*

RANDOM ORDER OF THE MASS PARTS

(Print and cut out each definition and attach Velcro to be used on the poster board.)

Penitential Rite – We recall our sins and the need for mercy and reconciliation

Homily – The presider shares reflections on the Scripture message that we have just heard and connects it to our daily lives

Blessing and Dismissal – We are sent forth to live the Eucharist with strength and courage

Profession of Faith (Creed or Renewal of Baptismal Promises) – We stand to profess what we believe

Gloria – We sing this joyful hymn of praise

Presentation and Preparation of Gifts – We bring our gifts of bread and wine to the altar; we also offer ourselves

Sign of Peace – The community shares a sign of peace to show we forgive and love one another

Second Reading – We listen to a reading from the letters of the New Testament

Lord's Prayer – As we prepare to receive communion, we pray the prayer that Jesus taught us

Responsorial Psalm – We respond to God's word in the reading through the words and music of a psalm

Opening Prayer – The presider gathers together all our need and presents them to God; we respond, "Amen"

First Reading – The lector proclaims a reading from the Old Testament (during the Easter season these readings are taken from the Acts of the Apostles); we answer, "Thanks be to God"

Preface; Eucharistic Prayer – The presider begins this great prayer by praising God for the wonderful works of creation and redemption. This prayer includes the Holy, Holy, Holy; the Memorial Acclamation, the Great Amen and the Consecration of the Eucharist

Prayer Over Gifts – The presider invites us to pray with him that God will accept our gifts

Communion – We receive Jesus in the bread and wine and say "Amen," which means "Yes, I believe"

Lamb of God – We sing this litany for the breaking of the bread, asking for mercy and peace

Gospel – We stand as we listen to the Good News proclaimed; we respond, "Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ"

Opening Hymn – We begin our celebration together by praising God through song and joining as one united community

Gospel Acclamation – We prepare to hear the good news by standing and singing "Alleluia"

Prayer After Communion – The presider prays that our reception of Jesus will change us – that we will be more like Jesus

General Intercessions – We pray for those who are in need

PARTS OF THE MASS CHECKLIST

Introductory Rites

- Entrance Song
- Sign of the Cross
- Greeting (by the priest)
- Rite of Blessing and Sprinkling of Holy Water

(optional in place of the Penitential Rite)

- or -

- Penitential Rite (Lord, have mercy or Act of Contrition)
- Gloria (not during Advent and Lent or most weekdays)
- Opening Prayer

Liturgy of the Word

- First Reading
- Responsorial Psalm
- Second Reading (not on most weekdays)
- Gospel Acclamation (Alleluia)
- Gospel Reading
- Homily
- Profession of Faith (the Creed or Renewal of Baptismal Promises)
- General Intercessions (Petitions or Prayers of the Faithful)

Liturgy of the Eucharist

- Preparation of the Altar and Gifts
- Prayer over the Gifts
- Preface; The Eucharistic Prayer – Includes the Acclamations Holy, Holy, Holy Lord; Memorial Acclamation; Great Amen; and the Consecration of the Eucharist
- Communion Rite
 - Lord's Prayer
 - Sign of Peace
 - Lamb of God
 - Communion
 - Communion Song
 - Period of Silence after Communion or Song of Praise
 - Prayer after Communion

Concluding Rite

- Greeting
- Blessing
- Dismissal
- Song for Sending Forth (not part of Mass, but is an option)

LEARNING CENTER (#3) – GIFTS AND FRUITS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Items Needed: a poster board with seven different areas, labeling each of the Gifts of the Spirit and enough room for people to add their half-sheets of paper, a list of the gifts of the Holy Spirit and short definitions (pg. 9), half-sheets of paper with the below sentence to complete, writing utensils, tape, Bible, fruits of the Holy Spirit on packages of Starburst or Skittles candies (enough for each student) on a poster board of a “fruit” tree

Process:

Step One: Name one gift you see in each other.

Step Two: Look up and read Isaiah 11:2. What does this mean to you?

Read the brief explanations of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. See *Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit* on pg. 9.

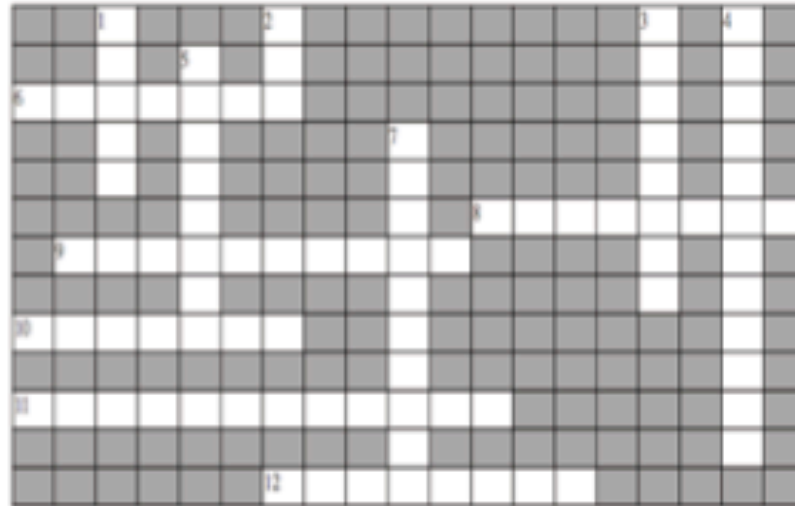
For each person (candidate and parent), give an example of when you see the gifts of the Spirit in action in everyday life. You do not need to sign your name or use real names. On the half sheet of paper, complete the sentence. I see (name a gift of the Spirit) when... paste, tape, etc. your example to the poster board. Read at least one other example besides your own.

I see the Gift of the Holy Spirit, _____, when...
(name the gift of the Holy Spirit)

Step Three: Look up and read Galatians 5:22-25. Discuss this quote, “By your fruits you will know them.” What does that mean to you? Take a package of candy from the “fruit tree.” Use

these to help you complete the Fruit of the Spirit crossword puzzle (pg. 8).

Fruit of the Spirit Crossword Puzzle



ACROSS

6. Mother Theresa founded the Missionaries of _____ and also known for this quality.
 8. Parents often pray for more of this.
 9. Giving the shirt off your back.
 10. Not drawing undue attention to ourselves
 11. dedicated, steadfast, devoted, dependable
 12. purity in conduct and intention

DOWN

1. A common sign used in the 60s and 70s.
 2. A popular Christmas carol, "_____ to the World."
 3. The state or quality of being good.
 4. You would like to eat dessert before dinner but instead you exercise the fruit of _____
 5. _____ is in our power, even when fondness is not. ~Samuel Johnson
 7. Deer, rabbits, koala, and sloths typically exhibit this quality.

Optional Technology Piece:

- Begin by showing a clip from YouTube on the gifts and/or Fruits of the Holy Spirit.
- Use texting to vote for the gift of the Holy Spirit that the candidate most would like to have in his/her life at the moment. Check out www.polleverywhere.com
- Find an image of the Holy Spirit on the internet. Print off the image and bring it home. Why do you like that image? What does it say to you about your relationship with God at the moment?

Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Wisdom – helps us to see reality with clarity. To look at God, others, self as God sees us. Seeing the whole picture.

Courage (Fortitude) – gives us the inner strength to stand up for what we believe in and to live up to the decisions we make no matter what obstacles become known. It also gives us special help to overcome fears when faced with challenges.

Reverence (Piety) – enables us to treat and sustain all life and creation with tenderness, care, and respect ; we can be respectful toward all of God's creation, including the environment, for us and for God.

Understanding – helps us to open our minds and hearts to others so we can identify with their feelings and see life from their point of view.

Right Judgment (Counsel) – gives us the important ability to make good decisions, to determine the difference between right and wrong, and to live according to God's ways.

Knowledge – gives us the opportunity to reflect clearly, intelligently, and perceptively.

Wonder and Awe in God's Presence (Fear of the Lord) – allows us to recognize all of life and creation as a gift from God with profound amazement that God's presence is in everything we do. This gift helps us continue to work to improve our relationship with God and to respond to the needs of others. It makes us aware of God's greatness and power.

LEARNING CENTER (#4) – BASIC SYMBOLS OF CONFIRMATION

Imposition of hands, the anointing with Sacred Chrism, words of the sacramental formula

Items Needed: bottles of Holy Water for each student, room blessing, the parish's bottle of Sacred Chrism, baby or scented oil, prayer for blessing, Bible

Process:

Step One: Imposition of Hands - Read Acts 8:17 and 2 Timothy 1:6. In these passages we see the Holy Spirit given by the laying on of hands. During Confirmation, the Bishop extends his hands over the entire group and prays for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The laying on of hands was one way the apostles called on the Spirit to come upon new Christians. This gesture was commonly used to symbolize a blessing and the power of God. The laying on of hands is a symbol of commissioning.

What kinds of things or people do you bless in your household? How do you bless them?

Take a bottle of Holy Water to bring home. Bless your room using the blessing provided.

Protect us, Lord, as we stay awake; watch over us as we sleep, that awake we may keep watch with Christ, and asleep, we may rest in his peace.

Grant this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Step Two: Anointing with Chrism - Take the Sacred Chrism, open the bottle, and smell the oil. What does it remind you of? Do you like the smell? Why do you think we use oil to anoint? The word *Chrism* has the same root as the word Christ. At Baptism, the signing with Chrism reminds us of our call to be priest, prophet, and king. Oil is used to seal, protect, and bind us together as Christians. It is an ancient symbol for strength.

Step Three: Words of Sacramental Formula - During the anointing, the Bishop dips his right thumb in the Chrism and makes the Sign of the Cross on the forehead of the candidate; the following dialogue takes place. Practice this action and dialogue (without the Chrism).

Bishop: **(Name), be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit.**

Candidate: ***Amen.***

Bishop: ***Peace be with you.***

Candidate: ***And with your Spirit.***

Step Four: As a reminder that you have been chosen by God in baptism, use the scented or

baby oil and make the sign of the cross on each other's hands, blessing each other using these or similar words:

Remember, name of person, you have been chosen by God, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Optional Technology Piece:

Play a video of the Bishop breathing on the oils during the Chrism Mass.

LEARNING CENTER (#5) – WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT?

Items Needed: Bible, symbols of the Holy Spirit – wind, flame, dove, oil, water; writing utensils, balloons, poster board to pin on inflated balloons

Process:

Step One: When you think of the Holy Spirit, what images come to mind? The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity. In our prayers and art, we use several images to represent the Holy Spirit, all of them with biblical backgrounds.

Step Two: The Spirit is present at the time of Creation. Read - *Genesis 1:2* and *Genesis 2:7*. In these passages, the Spirit of God comes as wind and breath. The word wind is translated from the Hebrew word *ruah*, which tells of God's mysterious, powerful, and life-giving presence. The wind that appeared on Pentecost was reminiscent of the wind that blew over the waters at the beginning of Creation. The wind calls awareness to the Holy Spirit breathing life into the Church.

Step Three: Read - *Acts 2:2-4*. Jesus' promises to send the Spirit were fulfilled on the feast of Pentecost. Pentecost is a Greek word meaning "fiftieth day." The fire that appeared on Pentecost was reminiscent of the fire in the burning bush on Mount Sinai from which God spoke to Moses. Fire calls attention to the strength and force of the Holy Spirit.

Step Four: A dove returned to Noah with a fresh olive branch to signify the end of the Great Flood. At Jesus' baptism, the Holy Spirit, in the form of a dove, comes down on him and remains with him. (*Matthew 3:16; Mark 1:10; Luke 3:22*).

Step Five: Water represents the cleansing and life-giving action of the Holy Spirit at Baptism. Water is used as a symbol of the Holy Spirit because it provides life-giving water.

Step Six: Anointing with oil is a symbol of the Holy Spirit's uniting us with Jesus, the Messiah, the Anointed One. Official documents carry a seal on them, so the seal is a symbol of the permanent effect of the Holy Spirit on the lives of those who are filled with the Spirit.

Step Seven: Take a moment, be still, and notice your breath. Breathing is essential to who we are, yet we rarely notice it or think about it. Blow up a balloon. How is it different? The Spirit breathes life into us. Attach one of the images of the Holy Spirit that speaks most to you at this time to your balloon and pin them to the poster board.

Take home one of the other symbols of the Holy Spirit as a reminder of how it is active in your life.

Optional Technology Piece:

Find a Holy Spirit prayer from YouTube. What are the images you see and how are they used?

Use texting to vote for the image of the Holy Spirit that the candidate most likes at the moment. Check out www.polleverywhere.com

LEARNING CENTER (#6) – A WALK THROUGH THE RITE OF CONFIRMATION

Items Needed: Notebook, writing utensils

Process:

Step One: The Rite of Confirmation takes place after the Liturgy of the Word. When Confirmation is conferred during Mass, the Liturgy of the Eucharist follows. This is fitting because the candidates take on a new identity through the Sacrament of Confirmation. They approach the Eucharist with a more deeply committed faith. With the help and strengthening of the Holy Spirit, they are able to personally affirm their faith within the assembled community of the Church.

Step Two: Presentation of the Candidates – After the Gospel is proclaimed, the bishop or confirming priest sits and either the pastor or another minister comes forward to present the candidates for Confirmation. Typically, the presenter calls the name of each candidate and you simply stand at your seat. Each candidate will respond, “here” or “present.” The presenter then briefly informs the confirming bishop or priest of the efforts made by the candidates to prepare for the sacrament and gives an opinion as the readiness of the candidates for Confirmation.

Step Three: Homily or Instruction – During the weeks and months of immediate preparation for Confirmation, candidates do well to listen attentively to God’s word and to ponder prayerfully the lives of the saints. One final act of helping prepare the hearts and minds of the candidates for receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit is the homily heard during the celebration of the sacrament. After we listen to the readings and witness the candidates being presented, the Rite calls for a homily that helps all who are present to focus on the mystery about to be celebrated. The presiding bishop or priest offers words that attempt to connect our lives, the scripture readings just proclaimed, and the sacrament of Confirmation. These homilies or instructions vary in length and in focus, but most of them address the topic of God working in our everyday lives.

Step Four: Renewal of Baptismal Promises – After the homily, the candidates will stand and the bishop or priest will invite you to renew your baptismal promises. This replaces the recitation of the creed or Profession of Faith. For the renewal of baptismal promises, you will first renounce or turn away from sin and then profess your faith through a series of questions that the confirming bishop or priest will ask you. To each question, all the candidates together will respond, “I do.”

Step Five: Laying on of Hands – After you have affirmed your faith commitment by renewing your baptismal promises, the bishop or confirming priest faces the assembly and asks them all to pray with him that God will pour out the Holy Spirit on those to be confirmed. In the manner of Paul in Acts 19:6, he then extends his hands over all the candidates and invokes the Spirit to come upon them as helper and guide.

After the Confirmation prayer and the laying on of hands, the deacon, another priest, or assisting minister brings the Sacred Chrism to the bishop or ordaining priest. If they are still at their places, the candidates and the sponsors come forth from the assembly and approach the bishop. Your sponsor will present you to the bishop for Confirmation. Your sponsor will place his/her right hand on your shoulder, a fitting symbol of support and nomination, and another "laying on of hands."

Step Six: Anointing with Chrism – The anointing consists of three elements: the naming of the candidate, the anointing of the newly confirmed with the Sacred Chrism on the forehead, and the bishop saying the words, "Be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit."

Step Seven: General Intercessions – As the Rite of Confirmation ends and candidates return to their seats within the assembly, all prepare to offer the general intercessions, also known as the Prayer of the Faithful. These intercessions follow a prescribed liturgical pattern of intentions for the needs of the Church, for public authorities, for the afflicted, and for the local community. More attention will likely be given to the newly confirmed, their sponsors, loved ones, and the sacrament just celebrated.

In the notebook provided, write down something or someone for which we could pray for today.

LEARNING CENTER (#7) – LIVING IN DISCIPLESHIP GAME

Items Needed: Living in Discipleship game board, set of Living in Discipleship cards,
1 die, game pieces

Process:

Step One: Find two other sets of candidates and parents to play the game with you.

Step Two: The person with a birthday closest to the celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation goes first. Shake the die and move your game piece the number of spaces the die indicates. Take a card, read aloud, and answer the question or statement. The winner of the game is the person who reaches the end of the game first.

Game available for purchase by calling Catholic Education Ministries at (320)251-0111 or email cem@gw.stcdio.org.

For more information, contact:

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www.stclouddiocese.org/cem