

Sacraments of Confirmation



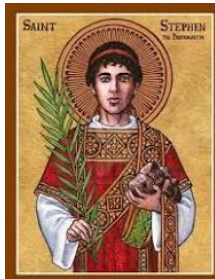
“Then they laid hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit.” (Acts 8:17)

BREAD Resource Page: [Latest News from Faith Formation](#)

This month we focus on:

- I. Confirmation in Salvation History
- II. The Celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation
- III. Sacred Art Discussion: Pentecostés

Saints of the Month:



PG: 104-105
AB: 102-103

Word to know:

Anoint
Apostle
Confirmation
Holy Spirit
Pentacost
Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Chapter Overview
Acts 3:17
PG 83-88
AB 74-79

Do activity #1
“Marking
Something as Your
Own”
PG:89-90

Bonus Activity:
Confirmation
Sketch Pad Video
PG: 91

Do activity #2
“Confirmation
Prefigured”
PG:92-94
AB 80-83

Bonus Activity
PG 95

St. Stephen the First Martyr:

Stephen the Martyr was one of the first deacons of the early Christian church, known for his great faith and for performing miracles. He was falsely accused of blasphemy, brought before the Sanhedrin, and stoned to death around 34 AD. During his trial, Stephen gave a long speech recalling salvation history and accusing the Jewish leaders of killing the prophets and resisting the Holy Spirit. At his death, he had a vision of heaven and asked Jesus to receive his spirit, while also praying for his executioners to be forgiven

All Christians have the same mission as the Apostles by virtue of our Baptisms: to evangelize. God gives us a **special outpouring of the Holy Spirit**, as He gave the Apostles on Pentecost. We receive this in the **Sacrament of Confirmation**.

The Sacrament of Confirmation

I. Confirmation in Salvation History

Let's begin by exploring the roots and origins of this Sacrament in Scripture.

A. **The Old Testament**

1. In the book of Exodus, we learn that God wants His people to be a Kingdom of priests and a holy nation.
2. God desired to make His people a royal priesthood who would proclaim and glorify His name to all the nations and serve Him in Love.
3. Later in Israel's History kings were anointed with holy oil as a symbol of consecration. This anointing set them apart as belonging to God and it also symbolized an outpouring of God's spirit upon them.
 - a. All Davidic kings were anointed
 - b. They became “messiahs” or “christs” meaning, anointed ones.
4. Later the prophets foretold an outpouring of the Spirit on all flesh.

B. **The New Testament**

1. Jesus spoke to His Apostles about and promised an Advocate that would come to them after He was no longer with them.
2. “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8).
3. Then at Pentecost when the Blessed Mother and the Disciples were in the Upper Room the Spirit descended on them like a strong rushing wind with tongues of fire appearing over each of them. They were suddenly emboldened with the power and courage to begin preaching the Gospel. They all began speaking in different tongues, or languages. Peter stood up and preached for the first time and over 3,000 were baptized that day.
4. This is a stunning moment. They suddenly received the courage and strength to begin preaching and healing in the name of Jesus. It is here that the Sacrament of Confirmation is instituted. The book of Acts is full of the mighty deeds and preaching the Apostles did in Christ's name by the power of His Spirit.

II. The Celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation

- A. What happens at Confirmation
 1. The tradition of anointing with Holy oil as the seal of the Holy Spirit continues today in the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Do activity #3
PG: 96-98
AB: 84-87

Do activity #4
"Ascension and Pentecost"
PG: 99-100
AB: 88-89 &/or 90-93

Bonus Activity
PG: 101
AB: 94-95

Do Activity #5
"Gifts of the Holy Spirit"
PG: 102-103

Do Activity #6 "I Belong to Jesus"
PG: 104
AB: 97-99

Practice the sign of the cross EVERY day.
Practice the basic Catholic prayers: Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be.
Practice the Hail Holy Queen too!
Practice the Apostles' Creed.
This prayer is the focus for last year of faith formation.
Have you been blessing your child with the Holy Water?

- a. The bishop, who is the ordinary minister of the Sacrament anoints the person being confirmed with Holy oil and says the words, "Be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit"
 - b. The bishop also calls down the Holy Spirit upon those being confirmed by a laying on of hands.
 - c. **These words and actions bring about God's desire for His people to be a royal priesthood.**
 - d. Oil is used to symbolize a "sealing" with the Spirit. Once we are confirmed we are "marked" and "set apart" as God's. We are now drafted into God's army and called to be living witnesses of Christ through the power we receive from the Holy Spirit.
- B. The effects of Confirmation
1. Completes and perfects Baptismal Grace
 2. Increases the gifts of the Holy Spirit with us
 3. Gives us a special strength of the Holy Spirit to spread and defend the faith by word and action as true witnesses of Christ
 4. Gives us the fullness of the Christian mission.
 5. It makes us full members of the Church (not "adult" members as is the common misconception.)
- C. Who can receive Confirmation?
1. Every baptized person not yet confirmed should receive the Sacrament.
 2. In the early Church Baptism and Confirmation were received together. This showed the strong tie and connection between the two Sacraments.
 3. With increasing infant Baptisms, it became too difficult for a Bishop to be present at every instance and so the two began to be celebrated separately.
 4. In the Latin Rite the Sacrament is most commonly received after the age of reason, with the age being set by the bishop. The Eastern Church continues the tradition of offering Confirmation at the same time as Baptism (and Eucharist). The newly baptized receive Confirmation and Eucharist right away, being fully initiated into the Church.
- D. Conclusion
1. Confirmation is not about "knowing enough" or being "old enough" to receive it. It is a gift of grace.
 2. It is about receiving everything we need from the Holy Spirit to be a living witness of Christ out in the world.

Next time we will focus on the final Sacrament of Initiation, the Holy Eucharist

III. Sacred Art Discussion: Pentecostés by Fray Juan Bautista Maino

- A. What event is depicted in this painting? How do you know?
1. The event depicted is the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.
 2. The dove, and the little tongues of fire emanating from it are both clues that this is a painting of Pentecost. It may also be guessed easily that the people pictured are the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mary Magdalene, and the disciples.
- B. Does the scene look still, or full of energy? Explain your answer, and why you think the artist painted it that way.
1. The scene looks very energetic: there is a lot of emotion on the people's faces; some of them look almost thrown backwards; expressive, moving hands.
 2. The energy in the painting conveys how the coming of the Holy Spirit filled the disciples with courage and energy to preach the good news of Christ to the world. Remember that, after St. Peter preached to the crowds on Pentecost, 3000 people were baptized that day!
- C. Why do you think the man at the bottom right is writing?
1. The story of Pentecost is told in the book of Acts. The Holy Spirit inspired the writers of Scripture too, because that is another way that Christ's followers proclaimed Him to the world, and they needed special grace and courage to do that as well!
- D. Read Acts 2: 1-4. How does this painting help you understand this Scripture passage?
1. *"When the time for Pentecost was fulfilled, they were all in one place together. And suddenly there came from the sky a noise like a strong driving wind, and it filled the entire house in which they were. Then there appeared to them tongues as of fire, which parted and came to rest on each one of them. And they were all filled with the holy Spirit and began to speak in different tongues, as the Spirit enabled them to proclaim"* (Acts 2:1-4).
 2. **Accept reasoned answers.**
- E. How does this Scripture passage help you understand the Sacrament of Confirmation?
1. It gives us an image of how Jesus fulfilled His promise to send the Holy Spirit on Pentecost. What is happening to the people in this painting is what happens to us in Confirmation: we are filled with energy and courage and the desire to proclaim God through word and deed. The *Catechism* tells us that Confirmation "gives 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" (1303). Remember that many of the disciples gave up their lives and became martyrs, and they had the courage to do that because of this event.
 2. Confirmation gives us that same ability!