

Confirmation Instruction Questions

1. What is a sacrament? (YouCat 171, sidebar)

Sacraments are

- **holy**, [*“dedicated to God”*]
- **visible signs**, [*something we can see, touch, smell. Ex: In baptism the sign is water*]
- **instituted by Christ**, [*Jesus invented them*]
- **of an invisible reality**, [*Something real happens to us but we cannot see it. Ex: In reconciliation our sins are really forgiven, but we cannot see this happening*]
- **in which the Christian experiences the healing, forgiving, nourishing, strengthening presence of God that enables them to love in turn;**
- **this is possible because grace works in the sacraments.** [*Grace is God’s free, loving gift to us, His helping goodness, and the life that comes from Him.*]

2. Why do we need sacraments? (YouCat 173)

1. **To become more like Jesus.** In the sacraments Jesus helps us, gives us the grace, to outgrow our petty human life (selfishness, pride, sin, etc.) and become more like Him.
2. **To build up the Body of Christ.** Sacraments help strengthen the Church.
3. **To give worship to God.**
4. **To instruct us.** The sacraments use words and objects to nourish and express our holy faith.

3. What are the other sacraments you should have received before receiving Confirmation?

1) Baptism, 2) Reconciliation and 3) Eucharist.

4. What happens when I receive Baptism?

Original sin and all my sins and their punishments are washed away. The Holy Spirit comes to live inside me and I become a Child of God. Baptism leaves an indelible mark on my soul.

5. What is an indelible mark?

It is a real change that God makes on our soul that makes us more like Jesus. The mark especially gives us a share in the Priesthood of Jesus. An indelible mark can never, ever be removed.

6. Which sacraments give an indelible mark?

Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Orders.

7. What happens in the sacrament of Reconciliation?

In Reconciliation my sins that I commit after I am baptized are forgiven. A good confession is the sure way to be in the state of grace before receiving Communion and Confirmation.

8. What is Confirmation? (YouCat 203)

Confirmation:

1. Is a **sacrament**, one of the three sacraments of initiation (Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist)
2. **Completes baptism.** We first receive the Holy Spirit at Baptism. In confirmation we receive the fullness and strength of the Holy Spirit.
3. **More fully prepared to receive the Eucharist**, the Body and Blood of Jesus.
4. **Makes us witnesses of Jesus Christ.** We receive the strength to witness to God’s love in word and deed.
5. **Become a full-fledged, responsible member of the Catholic Church**

9. What does the word “Confirmation” mean?

It means “strengthening” or “making strong”.

10. What does Sacred Scripture say about the sacrament of Confirmation? (YouCat 204)

Old Testament: the People of Israel expected a Messiah (“anointed one”, saviour) who would be filled with the Holy Spirit. Jesus is the Messiah.

New Testament: Jesus lived His life in a special Spirit of love and in perfect union with His Father in heaven. The Holy Spirit came upon Jesus after His baptism. *Although Jesus never used the word “confirmation”, He promised often to send the gift of the Holy Spirit upon His followers.* The Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus’ disciples 50 days after Easter, on Pentecost. After they received the Holy Spirit, the disciples were no longer afraid to talk about Jesus to other people.

11. Confirmation is an outward sign of God’s grace. What signs are used in Confirmation?

In Confirmation the signs used are:

1. The imposition of hands
2. Signing with the cross on forehead
3. Holy oil (chrism)

The “imposition of hands” comes first. The Bishop extend his hands over those to be confirmed and recite a prayer calling down the Holy Spirit. Next the Bishop dips his thumb in chrism and marks the sign of the cross on the forehead of each candidate while saying to each, using their saint’s name: “N. be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit”.

12. What is Chrism? Why does it smell?

Chrism is a mixture of olive oil and a perfume called balsam. It is blessed by the Bishop at the Chrism Mass which happens during Holy Week, before Holy Thursday. Chrism smells as a sign that your whole life – every thought, word, deed and hope – will spread the aroma of Christ (2 Cor. 2:15)

13. What does the sign of the cross mean in Confirmation?

The sign of the cross reminds us:

1. We are saved from sin and death because of Jesus' death on the Cross.
2. We should be willing to carry our own cross, to share in the sufferings of Jesus.

14. What happens when I receive Confirmation? (YouCat 205)

1. **My soul is imprinted with an indelible mark** (also called “seal” or “character”) that can be received only once and never removed.
2. **Receive the power of the Holy Spirit** which gives me the strength to live as a disciple and witness of Jesus in whatever I do and whoever I am with even when it is very difficult. I become part of the great army of Christians fighting for God in the world.
3. **I am more firmly united with Jesus and His Family, the Church.**
4. **I make a covenant with God.** I say to God: “I believe in You and want to follow You”. God says to us: “I believe in you, you are my child, I will give you My strength and never forget you no matter what”.

15. What are the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit that you receive at Confirmation? (YouCat 310)

- The seven gifts of the Holy Spirit are: wisdom, understanding, counsel, knowledge, fortitude, piety and fear of the Lord.
- With these gifts the Holy Spirit gives Christians particular powers that go beyond their natural abilities, helping us to be better witnesses of Jesus.

16. What does it mean to be a witness of Jesus?

Witnesses of Jesus:

1. **Imitates Jesus** in the way they think and act towards God and others. Witnesses must:
 - a. **Know:** what Jesus taught (in New Testament and Church teaching)
 - b. **Obey:** the commandments of God
 - c. **Worship:** God by praying, receiving the sacraments, attending Mass
2. **Evangelize:** bring people closer to Jesus and the Church by word and example

17. Who can be confirmed, and what is required of a candidate for Confirmation? (YouCat 206)

Any Catholic Christian who

- has been baptized
- is in a state of grace (means not to have committed any serious [mortal] sin)
 - by a serious sin a person separates himself from God and can be reconciled with God only by making a good confession.
- Has not been confirmed before. Like Baptism, you can only receive the sacrament of Confirmation once because it lasts forever.

18. Who may confirm? (YouCat 207)

Normally Bishops confirm because they are the successors of the apostles. In special circumstances the Bishop will give a priest authority to confirm.

19. What is the name of our Bishop?

Because our Bishop is the bishop of the Archdiocese of Vancouver he is called “Archbishop”. His name is Archbishop Michael Miller. He is addressed as “Your Grace” or “Your Excellency”.

20. Why have sponsors at Confirmation? Who can be a sponsor?

Sponsors help us to prepare well to receive the sacrament. After Confirmation sponsors help us to live as good witnesses to Jesus by their prayers, words and good example. To do this a sponsor must be a mature, practicing Catholic. The same person who was sponsor at Baptism may be sponsor at Confirmation.

21. Why do you take a saint's name at Confirmation?

At Confirmation we take the name of a saint who inspires us to be a better witness to Jesus. We try to imitate this saint and ask the saint to pray for us.

22. You will be expected to know and explain:

- Nicene Creed
- 7 Corporal Works of Mercy
- 7 Spiritual Words of Mercy