

My Catholic Worship! Study Group

Session 3 - Confirmation

Pre-meeting Prep

Participants should be asked to read Chapter Four of the *My Catholic Worship!* book prior to this meeting.

5 minutes - Gather

Snacks and informal social time as people arrive. Try to be punctual and gather everyone together no longer than 5 minutes after the scheduled starting time.

5-10 minutes - Opening prayer and Scripture

Everyone sits quietly as the leader begins with the Sign of the Cross and then invites a period of silence in the following way:

"Let us quiet ourselves as we begin this study of our glorious Catholic worship together. 'Lord, as we sit here for a minute in silence, help each one of us to bring our own questions, concerns, fears, and joys to You. Help us, in this moment of silence, to be attentive to Your gentle voice speaking to us, directing us, and calling us to a deeper faith.'"

Take about a minute in silence with eyes closed so that each person can speak to our Lord about their own particular cares and concerns.

Leader reads the following invitation:

Let us ponder the Word of God. Let us reflect upon our own faith journey with the following questions: Do I believe? How deep is my faith? Am I open to letting God speak to me? Am I open to the Word of God and willing to let God's truth sink in more deeply? Am I willing to let this new faith change my life?

The leader of the night prayerfully reads the following Scriptures, one at a time, pausing for about 30 seconds between each verse:

[Isaiah 61](#) says the following:

The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the afflicted, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, release to the prisoners, to announce a year of favor from the LORD and a day of vindication by our God; To comfort all who mourn; to place on those who mourn in Zion, a diadem instead of ashes, to give them oil of gladness instead of mourning, a glorious mantle instead of a faint spirit.

Luke 12:1: For the Holy Spirit will teach you at that moment what you should say .
John 7:38-39: Whoever believes in me, as scripture says: ‘Rivers of living water will flow from within him.’” He said this in reference to the Spirit that those who came to believe in him were to receive. There was, of course, no Spirit yet, because Jesus had not yet been glorified.

John 16:7: But I tell you the truth, it is better for you that I go. For if I do not go, the Advocate will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you.

Acts 2:1-13: 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...

Leader then says: ***Let us take a moment in silence to reflect upon these words.*** (a minute of silence)

The Leader invites everyone to pray quietly as the following prayer is said:

***Come Holy Spirit,
fill the hearts of your faithful
and kindle in them the fire of your love.
Send forth your Spirit
and they shall be created.
And You shall renew the face of the earth.***

***O, God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit,
did instruct the hearts of the faithful,
grant that by the same Holy Spirit
we may be truly wise and ever enjoy His consolations,
Through Christ Our Lord.
Amen.***

The prayer time concludes with everyone professing the Apostles' Creed:

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord: Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary; suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, is seated at the right

hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of Saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

45-50 minutes - Discussion questions

Each person should be invited to share something or ask a question if he/she chooses regarding the questions/discussion starters below. Go through one question at a time, and give each person an opportunity to say something if he/she chooses. Avoid having one or two persons dominate the discussion. Go around the circle and do not be afraid to share! Your insights might assist someone else in their understanding of the topics. Your question might very well be the same question someone else has. Some of the questions below will invite a personal sharing; other questions will invite you to share with others what you read in the chapter for this discussion. The goal is to share personally and to make sure that the faith of our Church is clearly expressed and understood by all.

1. What is Confirmation about? Is it a maturity rite in the Church? Is it the opportunity for your adult choice to be Catholic? Is it graduation time from religious education? If it's none of these, what is it truly?
2. Have you ever thought about the Holy Spirit as a Person? Given that fact, do you realize that the Third Person in the Blessed Trinity wants to have a personal relationship with you? Confirmation is the way to deepen and strengthen this relationship and, thus, experience its effects. Share any thoughts about the idea of having a personal relationship with God the Holy Spirit.
3. The opening Scriptures in this session revealed various promises and experiences of the Holy Spirit. Did anything from those Scriptures stand out to you? What struck you the most?
4. The Catechism explains the effects of Confirmation in the following ways. Discuss each effect. How do you see this manifestation of the Holy Spirit in your life or in the life of the Church?
 1. *It roots us more deeply in the divine filiation which makes us cry, "Abba! Father!"*;
 2. *it unites us more firmly to Christ*;
 3. *it increases the gifts of the Holy Spirit in us*;
 4. *it renders our bond with the Church more perfect*;
 5. *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.*
5. The Gifts of the Holy Spirit could be broken into two categories. Discuss each one of the Gifts, and offer any insights into the way that each particular Gift is manifested in your life or the life of the Church. Use the definition of each in the book if necessary to discuss each Gift more thoroughly:

1. Helping me know God's will
 - i. Wisdom,
 - ii. Understanding,
 - iii. Counsel,
 - iv. Knowledge
2. Helping me do God's will
 - i. Fortitude,
 - ii. Reverence,
 - iii. Fear of the Lord
6. What's the ideal age for the Sacrament of Confirmation and why? There is no clear set answer since it's currently up to the bishop of each diocese to set the age. It can take place, at the bishop's discretion, anytime after age 7. What age do you think is best and why?
7. The ideal minister of Confirmation is the bishop. He uses chrism and the laying on of hands. Say a few words about these aspects of the ritual. Why does God the Holy Spirit want to come to us in this way?

20 minutes - Final Reflections and sharing

Go around and give each person an opportunity to share what might have stood out the most to them from the discussion or what left them the most confused, so as to gain further clarity or insight from others.

5 minutes - Closing prayer

Leader begins with the Sign of the Cross and invites a minute of silence with all eyes closed. Each person should reflect upon what was discussed, especially what stood out to him/her the most.

Leader then prays the following prayer:

Holy Spirit, You are God Almighty. You are consubstantial with the Father and the Son. Help us come to know You personally and in that relationship; help us to become transformed by You living in us.

Holy Spirit, come and fill us with You powerful gifts. Fill us with the gifts of wisdom, understanding, counsel, and knowledge so that we may indeed know You and Your divine will. Fill us with fortitude, reverence, and holy fear so that we may fulfill Your divine will.

Holy Spirit, descend upon us and Your whole Church. Sanctify us and make us one in Christ, living for the glory of the Father.

Leader then invites everyone present to offer their own prayer in the following way (Note: This can be done out loud, but it might be preferable if it's done in silence at the discretion of the leader):

Let us now each bring our own personal concerns before our Lord, trusting that He hears us and knows all we need. Let us entrust these prayers to Him with full confidence that He desires to take control.

(Take a minute of silence for each person to speak to God about their own personal needs).

Leader then invites everyone to close with the Our Father, Hail Mary and Glory Be.