

Overview

The Confirmation process is patterned after the R.C.I.A. (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) and involves two years of preparation.

The first five sessions are a Period of Invitation, “inviting” the candidates to explore and inquire about faith, religion, and the church. This is followed by professing a desire to continue in the process by participating in the Rite of Entrance.

The heart of the program is the Formation Period. Education about Jesus, his message and the meaning of his message is stressed. Candidates begin to form their own personal commitment to Christ’s message and what it means in their lives.

The Rite of Covenant is a pledge to continue the program followed by a Period of Reflection. These nine sessions concentrate on Catholic Christianity and reflect on the Sacrament of Confirmation.

The Period of Mission serves as an introduction to encourage those who have been confirmed to participate in ongoing parish life.

The Period of Invitation

The Period of Invitation is exactly what it implies: an invitation to explore faith. The emphasis is on raising questions and exploring together what the candidates currently think and believe. Candidates are encouraged to explore such questions with openness and honesty.

Invitation 1 Personal Uniqueness: Promise and Pain

As the beginning of the Confirmation process, the focus of this opening session is to promote cooperation among the candidates and create a welcoming and open atmosphere. The candidates will also reflect and grow in appreciation of their uniqueness and dignity as individuals.

Scripture: Matthew 7: 24-28

Invitation 2 Identity: Looking for the Real You

Candidates have the opportunity to gain some insight into the qualities of their own personality and recognize some of the attitudes they hold about themselves. Real understanding of one’s personality comes only with patient reflection and inner work. Real acceptance comes only with the recognition of one’s self as a unique gift of God the Creator.

Scripture: Matthew 5: 13-16

John 8:12

Invitation 3 Faith: More Than the Eye Can See

The candidates reflect on current ideas and understandings of God. In doing so, the candidates are made aware that reflecting on matters of faith requires “seeing with new eyes” and that exploring matters of faith can be exciting and enjoyable.

Scripture: Luke 18: 35-43

1 Samuel 3: 1-10

Mark 8: 18

Invitation 4 Trusting in God

Candidates are asked to begin serious reflection on their attitudes and understanding of Jesus. Candidates are made aware that any act of faith requires some element of risk and therefore, some degree of personal courage.

Scripture: Luke 9: 18-21

Mark 9: 14-29

Mark 16:16

Invitation 5 The Church: A Community of Disciples

The candidates examine the purpose of church as a community of believers committed to living out the values and vision of Jesus. Candidates are encouraged to continue participation in the Confirmation process and are prepared for the Rite of Entrance.

Scripture: Acts 2: 38-47

Matthew 28: 20

Psalms 139

1 Corinthians 12: 12

Rite of Entrance

Candidates express their desire to continue the process of Confirmation by participating in the Rite of Entrance. This occurs at Mass where the faith community in support of this decision acknowledges them.

The Period of Formation

The formation period involves using a variety of strategies intended to deepen the candidates understanding of Jesus, of the meaning of his message, of the nature of the Christian church, and of the implications of a personal commitment to all of these realities. The expected outcome of this period of formation is the candidates' free decision to accept Confirmation and only then begin immediate preparation for celebration of the sacrament.

Formation 1 Revelation: Coming to Know Our God

In this session the candidates will be given an overview of the content and goals of the formation period. They will also learn how God's revelation comes to Catholics through scripture and Tradition

Scripture: *Acts 17: 22*
 Genesis 12: 3
 Luke 22: 20
 Exodus 6: 28-30
 Galatians 5: 13-15
 2 Timothy 3: 14-17

Formation 2 Prepare the Way of the Lord: Jesus's Identity is Revealed

The candidates will learn, discuss, and more maturely appreciate the Gospel stories of Jesus' birth, his baptism, and his temptations in the desert. Discussion includes when he began to discover his true identity and to embrace his true mission, as well as when he was confronted with and rejected destructive forms of power. All of this will attempt to spark real interest in the Bible.

Scripture: *Mark 1: 1-13*
 Matthew 3: 13-17
 Matthew 4: 1-11
 Luke 3: 21-22
 Luke 4: 1-13
 John 1: 14

Formation 3 The Reign of God: Jesus's Mission

The intent of this session is to awaken the candidates to the meaning and central significance of Jesus' vision of the Reign of God in his life, ministry, and mission. By awakening the candidates in this way, the lesson encourages them to reflect on the central values of Jesus' message and mission and to consider the responsibility of his followers to adopt and try to live those values.

Scripture: *Matthew 13: 10-53*
 Matthew 25: 40
 Mark 1:15
 Luke 4: 16-22
 Romans 14: 17
 Isaiah 61: 1-2

Formation 4 Parables and Miracles: Jesus Teaches and Heals

The session will help the candidates recognize Jesus as one who not only talked about his vision of the Kingdom of God but also acted upon that vision. The parables (with their uniqueness and significance) and the miracles (special signs of God's healing power) are presented as illustrations of how Jesus did act upon this vision of his.

Scripture: *Matthew 8: 1-4*
 Matthew 9: 20-22
 Matthew 21: 18-22
 Matthew 15: 32-39
 Mark 3: 1-6
 Mark 10: 46-52
 Luke 8:22-25
 John 10: 38

Formation 5 Sin: An Obstacle to the Reign of God

Providing the candidates with a mature, balanced, and realistic understanding of the nature of sin and its destructive power is the intent of this lesson. The candidates will evaluate contemporary culture in the context of their new understanding of sin and reflect on how they might take action to counter the effects of cultural sin in their own lives

Scripture: *Romans 6: 15-23*
 Genesis 2: 5 – 3: 24
 Romans 7: 14-25
 Romans 12: 9-14, 21

Formation 6 Jesus Rejected: The Meaning of the Cross

The key point here is to help the candidates confront and deal with the reality of death in a positive way and to see the acceptance of death as a key to fullness of life. This point is presented using the series of events surrounding the Passion and death of Jesus.

*Scripture: Matthew 26 & 27
Mark 11: 15-19*

Formation 7 The Resurrection: God is Victorious!

The death of Jesus, his Resurrection, and his Ascension will be explored by the candidates to awaken them to the central significance of this story in their faith journey.

*Scripture: John 20: 1-18
Matthew 27: 62-66 and 28: 1-20
Mark 15: 42-47 and 16: 1-20
Luke 23: 50-56 and 24: 1-53
John 19: 38-42 and 21: 1-25
1 Corinthians 15: 14, 19*

Formation 8 Pentecost: Gift of the Spirit

In this session the candidates will come to understand the church as a community of people who profess faith in the Risen Jesus and his message and who, through the power of the Spirit, live in loving service to all people.

*Scripture: Acts 2: 1-13
Luke 24: 13-35, 49
Luke 2: 1-2
John 20: 21*

Rite of Covenant

Candidates express their desire to continue the process of Confirmation by participating in the Rite of Covenant. This occurs at Mass where the faith community support of this decision acknowledges them. It is a pledge to enter in a more deeply personal way into the preparation for the immediate preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation

The Period of Reflection

The Period of Reflection helps the candidates to prepare in a more personal, intense, and prayerful way for the celebration of the Rite of Confirmation. A reasonable level of commitment to the gospel and the church is presumed and has been celebrated in the Rite of Covenant.

Reflection 1 Guided and Strengthened by the Holy Spirit

This session guides candidates toward understanding the nature and activity of the Holy Spirit and celebrating the presence of the Spirit in their lives and in the life of the Church. The focus is also on discerning the presence of the Holy Spirit is a lifelong task to which they are committed as members of the Church.

Scripture: *Luke 1: 29-32, 35*
 Luke 4: 1-2, 14-21
 Luke 10: 21
 Luke 24: 46, 48-49
 Genesis 1: 1-2
 Luke 3: 22
 Acts 2: 1-8
 1 Corinthians 12: 4-7
 Joel 2: 15-17, 28-29

Reflection 2 Prayer: Communion with God

This session will help the candidates identify ways to deepen their personal prayer life which is a continual process of changing, growing, and deepening. There will be a focus on the actual practice of prayer.

Scripture: *1 Thessalonians 5: 18*
 Luke 11: 1-13

Reflection 3 Christian Morality: What Does Love Look Like?

Candidates will explore the moral vision of Jesus and that living a moral life is to respond to the Gospel mandate to love as Jesus loved. They will also examine scriptural sources for living a life of love.

Scripture: *Matthew 5: 3-26, 38-48*
 Matthew 6: 1-34
 Matthew 7: 1-11, 15-29
 John 15: 9, 12-17
 Mark 12: 29-31
 Luke 6: 20-26

Reflection 4 Christian Service: Witnessing to God's Justice

Candidates will be invited to wrestle with the meaning of justice and identify obstacles that stand in the way of justice and the fullness of God's Reign. The session will address justice and service as the outward focus of morality, that is, action for justice is necessary for individuals who are committed to living morally.

Scripture: *Luke 4: 16-21*
 Matthew 25: 31-46
 Luke 19: 1-10
 Matthew 10: 1-40

Reflection 5 Sacraments of Initiation

This session will provide an understanding of the need within the church for a process of initiating new members, and the candidates will be provided with an experience of the church's initiation process, the session will provide an opportunity for candidates to deepen their understanding of the integrated nature of Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist.

Scripture: *Luke 4: 16-22*
 1 Thessalonians 5: 14-23
 Acts 4: 5-12

Reflection 6 Baptism: Born in the Holy Spirit

Candidates will be invited to see and to celebrate the relationship between Baptism and Confirmation.

Scripture: *1 Corinthians 12: 13*
 Romans 6: 3-11
 Acts 2: 37-38
 Genesis 2: 4-9, 15-17
 Genesis 3: 1-7

Reflection 7 The Eucharist: Nourished Through the Holy Spirit

Candidates will examine the key aspects of the Eucharist: as thanksgiving to God the Father for Creation, as a sacrificial memorial of Christ's Passover, and as the presence of Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Scripture: *Luke 22: 14-23*
 John 12: 20-26
 John 6: 1-13
 Luke 24: 13-35
 1 Corinthians 11: 23-26
 John 12: 24

Reflection 8 Confirmation: Sealed with the Holy Spirit

Candidates will be assisted in their understanding of the nature and activity of the Holy Spirit. They will explore in greater depth how the Spirit animates and guides the daily lives of individual Christians.

*Scripture: Sirach 39: 26
Romans 8: 14-17*

Reflection 9 Confirmation: Celebrating the Rite

Candidates will be presented with an overview of the rite itself and delve more deeply into the particular moments of the rite. It will also lay the groundwork for a fuller more active participation in the rite by the candidates.

*Scripture: Philippians 3: 12-14
Isaiah 11: 1-4a, 42: 1-3, 61: 1-3a
Ezekial 36: 24-28
Joel 2: 23a, 26-30
Psalms 96, 104, 117, 145
Acts 1: 3-8, 2:1-33, 8: 1-17, 10: 33-44, 19: 16-6a
Romans 8: 1-2, 5-8, 14-17
1 Corinthians 12: 4-13
Galatians 5: 16-25
Ephesians 4: 1-6, 6:10-17
Matthew 5: 1-12, 16: 24-27, 25: 14-30
Mark 1: 9-11
Luke 4: 16-22
John 14: 15-17, 23-26, 15: 18-27*

The Period of Mission

Following Confirmation, the newly confirmed are encouraged to view this Sacrament as a beginning rather than an end of religious study and spiritual growth. The mission period acts as a support to help introduce the newly confirmed into full participation and involvement in the parish faith community.

Mission Life After Confirmation: Moving On in the Spirit of Jesus

The newly confirmed discuss their experience of the Confirmation liturgy and identify issues of spirituality as a result of it. The newly confirmed are guided to understand some of the dynamics of the spiritual journey and the communal resources needed to sustain it.

*Scripture: 1 Timothy 4: 12-16
Matthew 28: 19*