

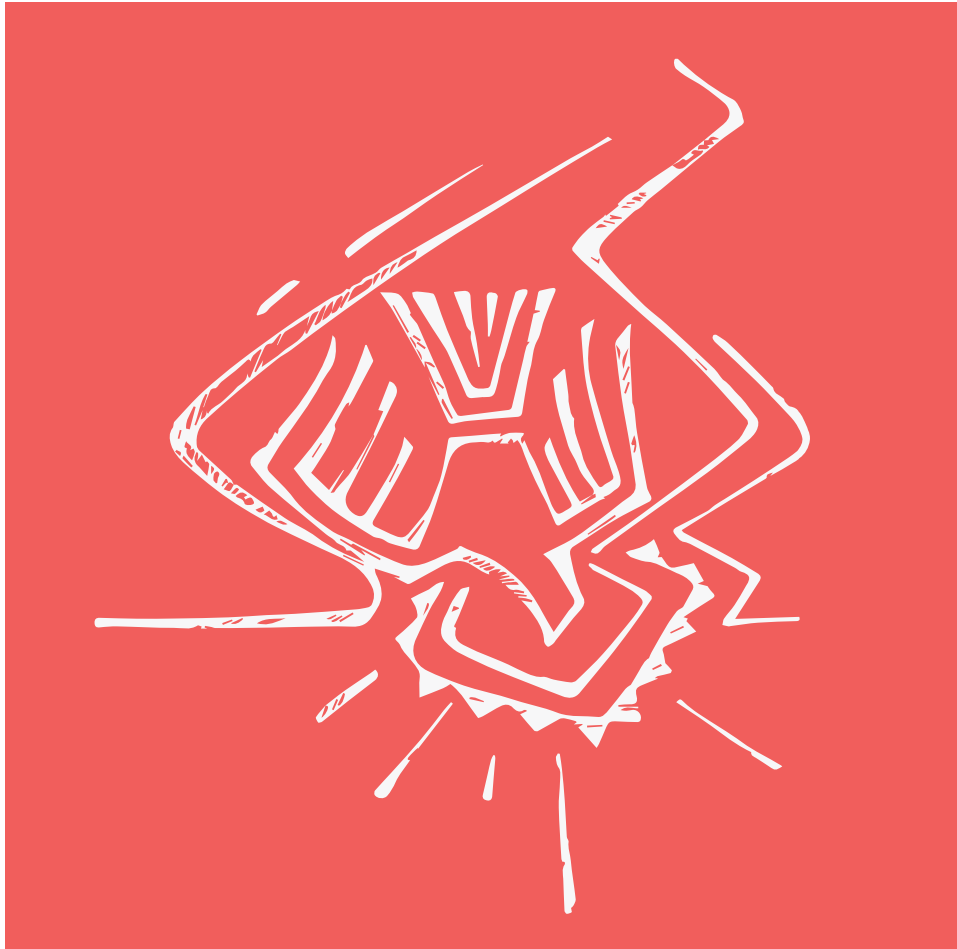


LEADER GUIDE

CONFIRMATION

SESSION 5

THE RITE



CONFIRMATION: THE RITE

USER AGREEMENT

YDisciple® grants permission to Diocesan and Parish subscribers to modify materials to fit their unique leadership requirements, physical environment needs, locale, and format preferences. However, no changes may be made to the content of the materials. Great effort has been made to ensure authentic transmission of Catholic Church teaching, including several layers of theological review. To honor these efforts, we respectfully ask that no modifications be made to the teaching content of the YDisciple Studies or the Formation Sessions.

These resources are intended to be downloaded and printed for use by the subscribing Dioceses or Parishes only, and may not be electronically transferred or duplicated to or by other non-subscribing members.

Any unauthorized reproduction of this material or incorporation into a new work is a direct violation of US copyright laws. YDisciple® and the YDisciple® Logo are trademarks of the Augustine Institute.

© 2015 Augustine Institute. All rights reserved. ydisciple.org

Nihil Obstat: CURRENTLY UNDER REVIEW.
Imprimatur: Most Rev. Samuel J. Aquila, Archbishop of Denver

With the exception of short excerpts used in articles and critical reviews, no part of this work may be reproduced, transmitted, or stored in any form whatsoever, printed or electronic, without the prior permission of the publisher.

Scripture verses contained herein are from the Catholic Edition of the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, copyright ©1965, 1966 by the Division of Christian Educators of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

English translation of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* for the United States of America, copyright ©1994, United States Catholic Conference, Inc.—Libreria Editrice Vaticana. English translation of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church: Modifications from the Editio Typica* copyright ©1997, United States Catholic Conference, Inc.—Libreria Editrice Vaticana.

Augustine Institute
6160 South Syracuse Way, Suite 310
Greenwood Village, CO 80111
Information: 303-937-4420
ydisciple.org
Formed.org

SESSION OVERVIEW

Catholics understand Liturgy to be the greatest form of prayer and worship that we can offer to God. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* states, “A sacramental celebration is woven from signs and symbols. In keeping with the divine pedagogy of salvation, their meaning is rooted in the work of creation and in human culture, specified by the events of the Old Covenant and fully revealed in the person and work of Christ” (CCC 1145). This means that every sign and symbol within the Liturgy is communicating a deep spiritual reality.

Catholics who don’t understand the meaning of the signs within a Liturgy will have difficulty entering into worship. As a result, a sacrament like Confirmation can seem like a “nice ceremony” rather than a powerful encounter with the Holy Spirit. In this session we will discuss the signs and symbols that are present in the Rite of Confirmation.

SESSION SNAPSHOT

Review the entire lesson plan in advance so you are prepared to lead and discuss comfortably. Gather necessary supplies and review video segments prior to your gathering. Use the time allotments in the session outline below as a guideline, as the length of time spent on each section will vary from group to group.

TIME	SECTION	SECTION OVERVIEW
20 minutes	CONNECT	Lead teens in an activity in using symbolism to describe their personalities; then open in prayer.
60 minutes	DISCUSS	Watch and discuss these video segments: Scene 1: Is the Rite Simply a Nice Ceremony? Scene 2: What is Liturgy? Scene 3: A Walkthrough of the Rite Scene 4: How to Be Receptive to the Holy Spirit
10 minutes	COMMIT	Review the key points; then commit to improve in one of the four practices that stoked the fire of the Holy Spirit in the early Church: study, fellowship, sacraments, or prayer. Close in prayer.

SUPPLIES NEEDED

- » Media device to show video segments
- » Bibles
- » Participant Sheets
- » Large writing pad and easel
- » Marker
- » Timer

PREPARE IN ADVANCE

- » Have snacks ready.
- » Create a welcoming environment.



LEADER TIPS

- » We often include possible responses and material from the *Catechism* after the discussion questions to help you facilitate the conversation. It is best to let group members respond first and share the concepts in parentheses only as needed.
- » This session discusses the signs within the Rite of Confirmation. We recommend learning more about this sacrament from the Lighthouse Catholic Media talk “Confirmation: The Sacrament of Evangelization and Martyrdom” by Dr. Brant Pitre.

lighthousecatholicmedia.org/store/title/confirmation-the-sacrament-of-evangelization-and-martyrdom



CONNECT



ACTIVITY

The Deeper Meaning of Me

SAY: We are going to be discussing the Rite of Confirmation and the deeper meaning of the signs and symbols in the sacramental celebration. Let’s start with an activity using symbolism to share about ourselves and understand each other more deeply. I’ll read pairs of things—think of them as signs that indicate a deeper personality or character trait. I want you to pick the one that describes or symbolizes you best, and explain why to the group.

Read a different pair of choices to each person, and keep this activity moving at a quick pace. Continue around the circle, giving everyone several turns as time allows.

1. Trapeze artist or circus clown
2. Sprinter or distance runner
3. Magnifying glass or telescope
4. 1st and 10 or 4th and goal
5. Candle or light bulb
6. Amusement park or library
7. Home phone or cell phone
8. New York City or Omaha
9. Bridge or tower
10. Oak tree or evergreen



INTRODUCTION

SAY: Today we’re going to wrap up our discussion on the Sacrament of Confirmation by discussing the Rite of Confirmation. When we don’t understand the meaning of the signs and symbols within a Liturgy, we have difficulty entering into worship. As a result, a sacrament like Confirmation can seem like a “nice ceremony” rather than a powerful encounter with the Holy Spirit. In this session, we’ll discuss the signs and symbols that are present in the Rite of Confirmation.



OPENING PRAYER

SAY: Let’s begin prayer with a passage from Scripture.



“Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent to them Peter and John, who came down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit; for it had not yet fallen on any of them, but they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit.”

—Acts 8:14–17

PRAY: Heavenly Father, we pray for the Holy Spirit to descend upon us, just as He did in the early Church. Light us aflame with Your love, and empower us to go and make disciples of Jesus Christ in the world. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.



DISCUSS

SAY: Let's watch the first scene of this session.



Watch the first video segment. The video will last about 4 minutes. At the end of the segment, discuss.

SAY: The *Brothers Karamazov*, by Fyodor Dostoyevsky, is considered to be one of the greatest philosophical novels of all time. Here is a quote from the book:

"You must know that there is nothing higher and stronger and more wholesome and good for life in the future than some good memory, especially a memory of childhood, of home. People talk to you a great deal about your education, but some good, sacred memory, preserved from childhood, is perhaps the best education."

» In what ways does this quote stress the importance of ceremonies in our lives?

(Ceremonies create memories and it is important for us to have good memories of important events in our lives. These memories can provide for us hope, joy, and sense of purpose throughout our lives. If there were no God, and life had no meaning, then ceremonies would be meaningless. But, in truth, there is a God who created us for a purpose and therefore life is meaningful at every moment. Ceremonies usually contain ritual to emphasize the importance of the event or rite of passage.)

» As important as ceremonies are, why is Confirmation more than "a nice ceremony"?

(Confirmation is a ceremony with God as the guest of honor. Moreover, God is not there as an observer but rather acts in the ceremony by giving His life to those receiving the sacrament. The Catechism states: "The sacraments are efficacious signs of grace, instituted by Christ and entrusted to the Church, by which divine life is dispensed to us. The visible rites by which the sacraments are celebrated signify and make present the graces proper to each sacrament" [1131].)

» Imagine you are talking to someone who left the Catholic Church for a mega-church. How would you respond to this comment: "In my church we don't have dead ritual. We have awesome music, inspiring video, and a great message from our pastor."

(The question to ask is "Why do we go to church?" Worship is not about what we get but what we give, and ritual guides our worship as a group. Catholics understand that true worship offers God adoration and sacrifice. The Catechism states: "To adore God is to praise and exalt him and to humble oneself, as Mary did in the Magnificat, confessing with gratitude that he has done great things and holy is his name" [2097]. It also says, "The only perfect sacrifice is the one that Christ offered on the cross as a total offering to the Father's love and for our salvation. By uniting ourselves with his sacrifice we can make our lives a sacrifice to God" [2100]. Adoration and sacrifice take place in every Mass.)

- » Everett stated, “If we don’t understand on the day of Confirmation what is happening in the Rite, we are selling ourselves short.” Why are we selling ourselves short?

(The Catechism quotes St. Augustine: “God created us without us; but he did not will to save us without us” [1847]. In other words, God desires our cooperation or participation with His grace. He will not force this on us just like He will not force heaven on us. It is difficult to cooperate with the grace being received at Confirmation if you do not understand what is taking place.)

SAY: Let’s continue with Scene 2.



Watch the second video segment. The video will last about 7 minutes. At the end of the segment, discuss.

SAY: St. Augustine called a sacrament “a visible sign of invisible grace.” As Catholics, signs and symbols help us explain and understand how God is acting in our lives. For example, the baptismal candle flame is a symbol of the life of the Blessed Trinity now present within us as a result of the sacrament. The Sacrament of Confirmation is a sign of the Holy Spirit, already present within us, being fanned into flame through an increase of gifts within us.

- » How would you explain this statement: “All symbols are signs, but not all signs are symbols.”

(This is an important distinction because sacraments are signs and not symbols. A symbol represents something else, and a sign indicates something else. The email symbol, for example, represents messages delivered through electronic means. The email symbol is also a sign, or indication, that we now live in an electronic age. The material signs of the sacraments affect our senses and direct our minds to the spiritual reality they signify. For example, the consecrated bread and wine are not merely symbols; they are material signs that indicate Jesus’ body, blood, soul, and divinity are truly present under the appearance of bread and wine.)

- » Not too long ago the words “spiritual” and “religious” were understood to be essentially the same thing. Today, however, the phrase “spiritual but not religious” is used by those who believe in God but reject organized religion. What would you say in a conversation with a friend who says he is “spiritual but not religious”?

(Religion is defined as a set of beliefs and practices followed by those dedicated to God. So the question to ask someone who is “spiritual but not religious” is if they think beliefs and practices are important to God. The Catechism states: “The duty of offering God genuine worship concerns man both individually and socially” [2105]. God wants us to be “spiritual” with others and therefore what we believe and how we live out those beliefs are very important. It is for this reason that Jesus instituted an organized religion, the Catholic Church.)

- » If a sacrament makes visible an invisible reality—meaning that there is something spiritually happening that we cannot see—why is it so important to receive sacraments as often as possible?

(One of the greatest misconceptions about Catholicism is that we earn our way to heaven by our good works. This is impossible. No person can earn heaven—if we could, then there would have been no need for Jesus’ death and resurrection. There is work that God must do on our behalf, and this is grace. Through the sacraments, we receive grace, and our cooperation with that grace allows God to transform our lives—to make us holy. We need to receive the sacraments often—namely Mass and Reconciliation—so that God can transform us.)

SAY: Let’s continue with Scene 3.



Watch the third video segment. The video will last about 4 minutes. At the end of the segment, discuss.

SAY: In this segment, Everett explains the empowerment of the Holy Spirit within the Rite of Confirmation.

There are six questions asked when renewing your baptismal promises, and after each question you respond, “I do.” When it comes to your Confirmation, you should believe so strongly in these promises that you would be willing to stake your life on them.

- 1) Do you reject Satan?
- 2) And all his works?
- 3) And all his empty promises?
- 4) Do you believe in God, the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth?
- 5) Do you believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary, was crucified, died, and was buried, rose from the dead, and is now seated at the right hand of the Father?
- 6) Do you 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?

» Let’s take a deeper look at the questions. How do we practically reject Satan, his works, and his empty promises in our daily lives?

(“Reject” is defined as: “To refuse to accept, submit to, believe, or make use of.” The Bible says: “Be sober, be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking some one to devour” [1 Peter 5:8]. Therefore, to reject Satan and his works and promises is to be alert and watchful so that when your enemy attacks you are quick to reject his lies. Lies like “following God’s will is too hard and no fun; God is angry with me; there is nothing special about me; I can’t make a difference in the world, etc.” should be rejected immediately. It would be a mistake to think “I am not a satanist” so of course I reject Satan and all his works and promises. We are in a great spiritual battle and we need to be willing to fight.)

- » Are there any faith issues or moral issues where you would have difficulty saying, “I believe this because I am a disciple of Jesus Christ!”?

(Another way to ask this question is, “Do you believe everything in the Catechism of the Catholic Church and are you willing to defend and spread those teachings?” As Catholics, we believe the Catechism of the Catholic Church is the deposit of faith that Jesus has given the Church.)

- » Why is it significant to have a bishop, or his appointed representative, lay hands on your head?

(A bishop is a successor to the apostles [CCC 1313]. The Apostles received the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Laying on of hands was always the sign of the passing on of power from one person to another; we see this sign regularly used in the Jewish tradition. Also, in the Acts of the Apostles, we see occasions when the Apostles laid hands on people and they received the Holy Spirit [see Acts 8:17]. When the bishop lays hands on your head, he is continuing a practice that goes back to the very beginning of the Church. Confirmation reminds us as Catholics that our faith is apostolic.)

- » Why is it significant that in Confirmation we are anointed with Chrism oil?

*“Christ” comes from the Greek word Christos meaning “anointed one.” Jesus says in Luke 4:18: “**The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor.**” Jesus is “the Christ” because He is the anointed one from God. We are called “Christians” because we are “anointed ones” in Jesus Christ. We were first anointed with Chrism oil at our baptism. Chrism oil is a mixture of olive oil and balsam fragrance. The fragrance reminds us that we are sanctified and called to be what St. Paul calls Christians in 2 Corinthians 2:15: the “**aroma of Christ**” in the world.)*

SAY: Let’s continue with Scene 4.



Watch the fourth video segment. The video will last about 4 minutes. At the end of the segment, discuss.

SAY: Members of the early Church stoked the fire of the Holy Spirit in their lives by doing four things: “**They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers**” (Acts 2:42).

- » Where are these four practices—study, fellowship, sacraments, and prayer—in the H.A.B.I.T.S. acronym that we use?
- » Which of the four practices do you think you are doing well, and which of the four would you like to improve upon?



COMMIT



ACTIVITY

TAKE-AWAY

SAY: I am going to go around the circle, starting with the person on my right, and I'd like each of us to share something we remember that this person said tonight.

Take a minute and go around the group, asking everyone to share briefly. Then continue.

Now I want to go around the circle again, this time starting with the person on my left, and I'd like each of us to share one take-away from tonight. In other words, share something that resonates in your heart as a truth to live by.

Give everyone time to share, and then continue.

SAY: When something resonates with our hearts, we should be mindful to take that to prayer, as that is generally how the Holy Spirit works. So I encourage you to take whatever touched your heart in this session into your prayer this week. In addition to prayer, how are your spiritual H.A.B.I.T.S. coming along?

Encourage your group members to share how they have grown spiritually since your last meeting by practicing spiritual H.A.B.I.T.S. Ask them if there is any way you can help them in their commitment to developing spiritual H.A.B.I.T.S. You can find the H.A.B.I.T.S. in the Leader Guide for Follow Me, Session 5: The Cost, as well as in Session 3 of this Confirmation series. After everyone has shared, follow up on last week's commitments before discussing the new commitment.

This week's commitment is to focus on one of the four practices that stoked the fire of the Holy Spirit in the early Church. Will you make an effort to improve your study, fellowship, sacraments, or prayer?



CLOSING PRAYER

SAY: Let's close in prayer.

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

Let us pray, O God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit did instruct the hearts of Your faithful; grant that in the same Spirit we may be truly wise and ever rejoice in His consolation. Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.