

Encounter with Christ Adolescent Confirmation

PARISH IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

Catechist Welcome

Dear Catechists,

The ministry of catechesis is at the heart of the Church's mission of evangelization, sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ with others. Thank you for responding to this call. Sharing the Good News of Jesus with young people is one of the most important ways we can help them become everything that God made them to be.

This new national program grew out of one that OSV published with Bishop Kevin Rhoades for the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, Indiana. We believe it will assist you in handing on the richness of the Order of Confirmation and helping your candidates understand the steps of the rite and what they mean to us as Catholics.

Good texts, as Bishop Rhoades has said, can be valuable tools to us as we teach the faith, but the most important tool you have as a catechist is your own faith and witness. The General Directory for Catechesis states, "No methodology, no matter how well tested, can dispense with the person of the catechist in every phase of the catechetical process. The charism given to him by the Spirit, a solid spirituality and transparent witness of life, constitutes the soul of every method. Only his own human and Christian qualities guarantee a good use of texts and other work instruments" (156).

These words remind us that we really do make a difference in the lives of the young people with whom we work. This also calls us to great responsibility, knowing that the next generation is looking to us for guidance, not only in word, but also in action.

The Sacrament of Confirmation completes the grace of Baptism for each of us. This program emphasizes that point and shares with everyone involved that through Confirmation, the baptized are "more perfectly bound to the Church and are enriched with a special strength of the Holy Spirit," (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1285). The Holy Spirit descended on Jesus at his baptism as a sign of who he is. Confirmation for us is the sacrament that enables us to spread and to live our faith as followers of Jesus Christ.

We pray that God bless you as you share the treasures of our Catholic Faith with your candidates.

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Encounter with Christ Adolescent Confirmation Program Parish
Implementation Guide
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Program Overview

The *Encounter with Christ Adolescent Confirmation Program* is developed specifically for those preparing for the reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation. The program includes a printed four-unit Candidate Book, complete lesson plans for both teachers and catechists available online, and multimedia resources also available online.

The program explores the significance of the symbols, rites, and prayers of the Sacrament of Confirmation. The Candidate Book presents the meaning and effects of the Sacrament in a developmentally appropriate manner that helps candidates prepare for and participate in the celebration. Activities and opportunities for reflection encourage candidates to more fully live their faith.

The program is designed to help candidates for Confirmation:

- Understand and articulate the fundamentals of Church teaching regarding the Sacrament of Confirmation
- Prepare for the celebration of the Rite of Confirmation
- Commit more deeply to their Catholic faith through this preparation process
- Open their hearts to the ongoing presence of the Holy Spirit
- Reflect upon God's call to the Christian life in their own everyday experiences

This program follows the same three-step process found in other OSV programs including our *Alive in Christ* grade-level religion curriculum: Invite, Discover, Live. For more on the catechetical process, see page 12.



Program Scope

The four units in the program focus on the following key themes.

Unit One: The Holy Spirit

In this unit, candidates reflect on the truth that a loving God created them and that he has a purpose and plan for their lives. Jesus calls us to follow him as disciples, and he gives us the gift of the Holy Spirit to strengthen and guide us on this path. Various symbols of the Holy Spirit are explored, along with their meanings, and the first step of the Rite of Confirmation, the *Presentation of the Candidates*, is discussed.

Unit Two: The Sacraments in the Life of the Church

This unit provides an overview of the Seven Sacraments, with particular focus on Baptism and its meaning in our lives. Sacraments are discussed in terms of their visible signs and their spiritual effects. This unit features an in depth discussion of grace and its necessity in the lives of disciples. Candidates are given an overview of the steps of the Rite of Confirmation, and the second step of the Rite of Confirmation, the *Renewal of Baptismal Promises*, is explored in detail.

Unit Three: The Order of Confirmation

This unit helps young people better understand Christ's Paschal Mystery and its connection to the Sacraments. Of particular focus is the Sacrament of Confirmation's connection to the other Sacraments of Initiation. The day of Pentecost is discussed, with connections drawn to Baptism and Confirmation. Youth explore the third step of the Rite of Confirmation, the *Laying on of Hands*. This unit also examines in detail the seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit.



Unit Four: The Spirit-Filled Life

This unit explores the effects of the Sacrament of Confirmation and invites candidates to reflect on what it means to be Christ's witnesses in the world. The fourth step of the Rite of Confirmation, the *Anointing with Chrism*, is discussed in detail, with particular attention to its being the essential sign of the Rite of Confirmation that seals with the gift of the Holy Spirit and marks candidates with a permanent sign of God's favor.

About Confirmation

Sacrament of Confirmation: An Introduction

The Seven Sacraments are special celebrations of the Church and privileged encounters with God. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 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. They bear fruit in those who receive them with the required dispositions” (CCC, 1131). In other words, sacramental rites have visible signs of the action of God, and they also make present what they signify. God chooses to work in our lives through the Sacraments.

Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist are the three Sacraments of Initiation. Through them, we become full members of the Church. In Baptism, we are given new life in Christ. This life and grace is strengthened in Confirmation and nourished by the Eucharist. Confirmation completes the grace of Baptism and seals us with the gift of the Holy Spirit. We receive the grace to become more like Christ and to live as his disciples.

Celebration of the Rite of Confirmation

In every Sacrament, there are things we can see (the “visible rites”) and actions of God that they signify and make present. There are four steps in the Rite of Confirmation, which is ideally celebrated within Mass to show the connection among the Sacraments of Initiation.

The first step, called the Presentation of the Candidates, points to the obligation of the candidates to come prepared to the Sacrament. In this step, candidates express their desire to respond to God, who has chosen them and calls each of them by name.

In the second step of the rite, the Renewal of Baptismal Promises, candidates express their commitment to live the Christian life, to keep the promises their parents made for them when they presented them for Baptism. Following the formula of the renewal of baptismal promises, they commit themselves to reject evil and to profess and live the Christian faith as members of the Catholic Church.

In the third step of the rite, the Laying on of Hands, the bishop and any concelebrating priests extend their hands as the bishop prays, recalling the candidates’ Baptism and asking for the seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is invoked to come down upon those being confirmed.



The final step of the rite is the Anointing with Chrism. This is the essential rite of the Sacrament by which Confirmation is conferred. Candidates are marked with an indelible (permanent) mark as a follower of Christ, by the laying on of hand and the words, “[Name], be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit” (CCC, 1300; see Rite of Confirmation, Introduction and 27).

Effects of the Sacrament

The effects of Confirmation are numerous. The Holy Spirit helps us witness to the Gospel, both in word and in action. We bond more closely to God the Father as his sons and daughters. Confirmation draws us more closely to Jesus, and it also perfects our bond with the Church—the Body of Christ. The effects connect us more closely with the mission of the Church—spreading and defending our faith.

Through the Sacrament of Confirmation, we are marked with an indelible mark—a permanent spiritual sign of God’s favor. We are sealed with the Gifts of the Holy Spirit: wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety (reverence) and fear of the Lord (wonder and awe).

Life in the Spirit

Receiving all three Sacraments of Initiation means we are called to lives of discipleship and of continuing conversion. If we stay humble of heart and are open to God’s grace, the Holy Spirit helps us to become more like Jesus—to be the people God made us to be. We are called to be witnesses of Christ to a world that desperately needs his love. We do this both through our words and our actions. The Gifts of the Holy Spirit help us to fulfill this mission.

Unit-Specific Catechist Background

Each unit’s lesson plan begins with a Reflection on the Sacrament and unit themes. It also includes Scripture Background on the unit’s main Scripture passage treated in the Candidate’s Book.

Prayer Support

An important part of this program is to request and arrange for the prayerful support of the parish community on behalf of all those preparing for the Sacrament of Confirmation. This may already take place or can be enhanced to coincide with this new program.

UNIT 1
Confirmation Preparation

The Holy Spirit

Reflection for Catechists

As Catholics, we believe in one God in Three Divine Persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Of the three, people may feel they know the least about the Third Divine Person. This is ironic, since it is the Holy Spirit who is perhaps closest to us. Saint Paul tells us that our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit (see 1 Corinthians 6:19). It is this Person of God who dwells inside us, guiding us to do God’s will and interceding for us to the Father (see Romans 8:26–27).

The Holy Spirit helps us hear and follow God’s call in our lives. God calls each of us by name (see Isaiah 43:1), just as Jesus called each of his Apostles. Listening to and following God’s call is a lifelong process. It sometimes means going against what others expect of us, or even what we had planned for ourselves. It is within our God-given nature to seek happiness, but we often seek it in the wrong places. The only way to achieve true happiness is to do that for which we were created.

We learn and understand God’s plan for our lives as we grow in our friendship with him. This usually begins in an initial encounter with God, a moment of conversion in which we recognize our need for him and decide to give our lives to him. It continues as we listen to his voice, through Scripture, Sacred Tradition, the counsel of trusted friends and family, and the events and opportunities of our lives.

- How do prayer, the Sacraments, and obedience to God’s will help you grow closer to Christ?
- How do you continue to listen for God’s voice, so you can discern his call in your life?

Scripture Background

This unit opens with a passage from Psalm 139. Here, the psalmist praises the Creator for his life and because God knows his “very self.” God is with us at all times, guiding us according to his plan.

The primary Scripture passage used for this unit is Jesus’ calling of the disciples. In this passage, we can readily see that Jesus chose ordinary people. It is striking that he does not seek out disciples among the religious leaders of the day, for example, the scholars and teachers of the Law. Instead, he chooses fishermen, taxidermers, and even the tax collector. This drives home the point that God can use anyone. He calls whomever he will, and gives them what they need in order to fulfill the call.

Also featured is the connection between Isaiah 11 and Matthew 3—the promise that the Spirit of God would rest upon one of Jesus’ descendants and the promise fulfilled at the baptism of the Lord, when the Holy Spirit descends upon Jesus.

HOW CANDIDATES UNDERSTAND THE LESSON

Middle school is a time of rapid growth—physically, intellectually, and emotionally. This growth prompts self-reflection and self-consciousness. It’s important for candidates this age to realize that, while we are all different, each one of us is wonderfully made, and we are all called by God to be a part of his work.

Discerning Our Call We often ask young people at this level what they would like to be, but we rarely ask where they feel God might be calling them. It’s important for us to realize that we can only be truly happy when we discern his call and pursue it.

Choices They Make Help the Confirmation candidates appreciate that God knows each of them by name and wants to share his plan with them. Encourage them to consider how the choices they make move them closer to, or farther away from, what God has planned. This sometimes calls for difficult and drastic choices, such as when the first disciples left their lives behind and followed Jesus. At other times, it is choosing between something good . . . and something better.

Encounter with Christ Adolescent Confirmation Program, Unit 1 Catechist Session Plan

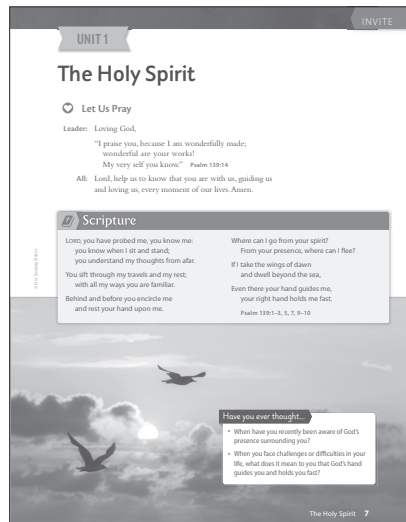
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Candidate Book Features

The book for youth contains four units, each 10 pages in length, and other important material to prepare for and reflect on the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Opening Material

The front of each Candidate Book offers spiritual guidance and encouragement in a welcome note from OSV. A prayer to the Holy Spirit and a reflection page for the candidate will help in living out the journey of discipleship.



Units

Each of the four units opens and closes with prayer. A scripture reflection process invites youth to discern God's voice and presence in their lives before beginning an exploration of unit themes. Activities and features help youth engage with the material, including unit reviews and study of a specific Saint whose life exemplifies the lesson.

Sacramental Resources at the Back of the Book

The Rite of Confirmation and celebrating the Sacrament are covered as well as information on the Rite of Reconciliation, an examination of conscience, information on Baptism and vocations, and a page on Catholic moral teaching. Catholic prayers and practices complete this resource section.

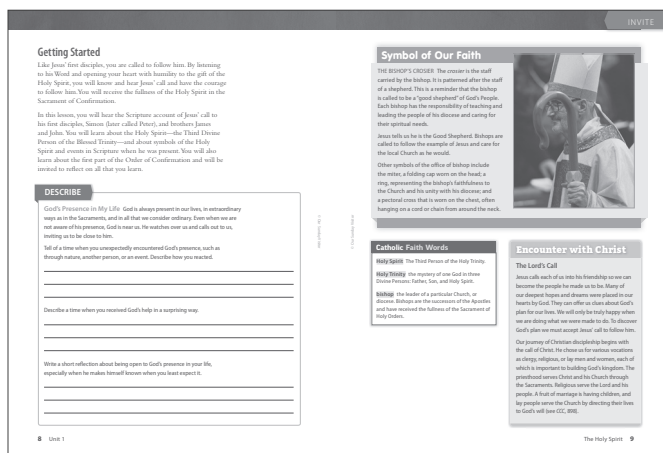


Unit Structure Each unit opens with prayer and Scripture as well as a feature titled, *Have you ever thought*, which helps the candidates connect God's Word with key themes of the unit.

The **Invite** section also gets youth started with an introduction and creative activity. ▶

Youth then transition unit themes with the following recurring features:

- Symbol of Our Faith
- Catholic Faith Words
- Encounter with Christ



In the **Discover** section, candidates will delve into the key teachings and spiritual practices related to the preparation for and celebration of Confirmation. The Go to the Source features send youth directly to the Bible for reading and reflection or discussion.

The Holy Spirit in the History of God's People

Second Scripture tells us that the Holy Spirit was present at Creation. The Book of Genesis describes the Holy Spirit as a "mighty wind," using the Hebrew word *ruach*, which means the "breath of God." The Book of Isaiah describes a coming king, a Messiah, or anointed one, whom the Holy Spirit would come down upon. But a shoot shall sprout from the stump of Jesse, and from his root a bud shall blossom. The spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, a spirit of wisdom and of understanding, a spirit of counsel and of strength, a spirit of knowledge and of fear of the Lord, and his delight shall be the fear of the Lord.

Isaiah 11:1-5a

We understand this passage to be referring to Jesus Christ. We also see the Holy Spirit working in the lives of Holy people. He is present in Mary, Jesus' Mother, preparing her to be the Mother of God (see CCC, 721-725).

The Holy Spirit inspired the sacred Word of God in the Bible. He guided through the prophet of the Old Testament, such as Elijah and Isaiah. They spoke the word of God to the people and proclaimed the coming of Jesus. John the Baptist prepared the way of the prophet by preaching to the people just before the beginning of Jesus' ministry, preparing them for his message (see CCC, 717-720).

Go to the Source
Read Matthew 3:13-17
Explore how what is described in this Gospel passage is connected to the passage from Isaiah above. Share your thoughts with a classmate.

Symbols of the Holy Spirit

The Catechism of the Catholic Church describes the symbols of the Holy Spirit (see CCC, 684-701):

Symbol	Meaning
Fire	At his baptism, the Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus in the form of a dove. This is why the dove often is a symbol of the Holy Spirit in Christian art.
Water	"Water symbolizes the action of the Holy Spirit in Baptism. It is a sign of new birth and the 'living water' we receive in Jesus Christ."
Anointing	Anointing with oil is a sign of the Holy Spirit. It symbolizes and brings God's grace for a special purpose. The Holy Spirit brings the power of God to follow the call.
Wind	Wind symbolizes the energy and power of the Holy Spirit.
Cloud	Bible passages depict God's glory in the form of a cloud of light—for example, on Mount Sinai, where Moses received the Ten Commandments. Clouds are also used to describe the Holy Spirit. When the heavens are torn away by the Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit is the power of God that brings about the transformation of the world. The Holy Spirit, in the form of a cloud, contributes those who are with him. As the Scriptures, Jesus is taken up in a cloud.
The seal	Anointing with the Holy Spirit imparts a "seal" or "indelible character" on those who receive him.
The hand	Healing takes place through the hands, but even more importantly, the Holy Spirit is given through the imposition of hands in the Sacraments.

The Spirit helps Us Hear God's Call

The Spirit is still active in the hearts of Christians today. He helps us to hear Jesus' call in our lives. Jesus calls us through Sacred Scripture, which is why it is so important to regularly read, study, and pray with it. We can make time each day to read Scripture and look for opportunities for Catholic Bible studies. Jesus also calls us through Church teaching. He may also call us through prayer and reflection, significant people, opportunities, talents, and experiences.

The Holy Spirit strengthens and supports our calling from Jesus by making us better able to understand and obey God's guidance. In order to respond to God's call, we must work guidance from the Holy Spirit through

Scripture and prayer, and through others and our experiences.

Confirmation completes the grace of Baptism. These graces give us a glimpse into one of the most mysterious truths of our faith—though the Sacraments are an inward into the very life of God, God our Father is our source of all blessing. The grace of the call that "contains all gifts, the Holy Spirit" (CCC, 1862). When we participate in these graces, we receive the call of all gifts. All of the Sacraments enable us to grow in the Holy Spirit (see CCC, 788). Baptism has made our bodies temples of the Holy Spirit. It is a sacrament.

When reading the Bible he says this about himself: How is Jesus calling you today?

Jesus Calls the First Disciples

The Gospel according to Luke tells us that there were crowds of people "pressing in" on Jesus while he was teaching. Many people deeply wanted to hear his message and to see him. We find that Jesus called people from the most ordinary walks of life to be his disciples (see below).

Today, Jesus invites us to answer his call by following the example and teaching. Jesus once called fishermen as they worked, and he continues to call each of us in our own individual lives to come and follow him.

Luke's Gospel tells the account of Jesus teaching a crowd while standing by a lake called Gennesaret. He was now alone alongside the lake with fishermen working nearby washing their nets.

The people were pushing closer to Jesus, so he drove into one of the boats that belonged to a man named Simon. He asks Simon to push out a little ways from the shore. Then Jesus sits down and continues teaching the crowd from the boat. When Jesus finishes teaching, something extraordinary occurs.

Imagine

Imagine you are one of the fishermen with Peter in this account. What would you think about Jesus saying that you ought to catch some fish, even though you had caught none at all?

How would you react when your nets came up overflowing with fish?

What would make you leave your boats and nets and follow Jesus?

Jesus' Call and the Holy Spirit

Jesus promises to send the Holy Spirit to help us answer his call. In John 14:16-17, he tells his followers that he will ask God the Father to send an Advocate—the Spirit of Truth. As you prepare for the Sacrament of Confirmation, you will learn more about what the Spirit of Truth is, and what you can expect when you receive him.

Our Trinitarian Faith

We believe in One God in three Divine Persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We call this mystery the **Holy Trinity**. This central truth is the foundation of our faith as Christians.

We are, perhaps, most familiar with the Second Person of the Trinity—Jesus Christ, God the Son. This is because God the Son became human and lived among us. Jesus is true God and true man. The Gospel gives us many different accounts about what Jesus said and did while he was on earth. In the Bible, we also read many passages about God the Father. Jesus talks about him often, and the Old Testament stories show him guiding us and working in the lives of various people.

But who is the Holy Spirit? Of the three Divine Persons in the Holy Trinity, many people feel like they know the least about the Holy Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit, however, who is sent "by the Father in the name of the Son, and by the Son in person" (CCC, 284).

Celebrating the Sacrament

The Sacrament of Confirmation. During Confirmation within Mass and just before the Holy Spirit, the candidates are asked (often by name) to stand in front of the bishop, who is the leader of the diocese and successor to the Apostle. This is a sign that God has called each of the candidates to the Sacrament and that they intend to follow his call.

Charts and graphic organizers will help candidates visualize material such as the Gifts and Fruits of the Holy Spirit. The Discover section also highlights a specific part or step of the Rite of Confirmation as the Celebrating the Sacrament feature.

The Grace to Guide Us

The Scripture account of Jesus' call of the first disciples with us that "they left everything and followed him" (Luke 9:11). Like the first disciples, our lives change as we grow closer to God and follow Jesus' example. You can be his follower in many ways in your daily life, especially through prayer and your vocation. The seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit that you will receive in the Sacrament of Confirmation will help you answer God's call to be a disciple. So how can you be a disciple of Jesus in everyday ways? You are probably doing this already. Here are some ideas.

Follow Christ

Discernment	Seek God's will to obtain true joy for your life. This will help with all the decisions—big and small ones—you make each day. Remember that your family, catechists, sponsors, and your pastor and the Church community can help guide you.
Imitate	Bring others to Christ through your words and actions.
Sacred Scriptures	Saint Jerome said, "Ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of Christ." Get to know Jesus by reading from the Bible and reflecting on God's Word. The Gospels are your primary source for the life and teachings of Jesus, and, like the Bible, the Word of God leads and guides our Christian life (see CCC, 141).
Commitment	In your relationships with him, you need to be "all in," giving the relationship the care and attention it needs to flourish.
Immerse	Sometimes being a good disciple is not easy, but we don't do it alone. Our Church family supports us. Ask Mary and the Saints to intercede, or speak to God in your heart.
Prayer	Make time to listen and talk with God to prepare every day. Ask Jesus to help you grow in holiness. Participate in Mass every Saturday evening or Sunday. Spend time in Adoration before the Blessed Sacrament.
Love	Be a good disciple, do everything with love—love for God, love for others, and love for yourself. This will build a relationship and honest integrity of life, and our most.
Charity	The Eucharist unites us with Christ and one another. The right path even in the face of challenges.
Security	If you are secure in your desire to be Jesus' follower, you are right path even in the face of challenges.
Holy Spirit	The Holy Spirit is your Advocate and Helper. Open your heart.
Intervening	Let the Holy Spirit dwell and be active in your heart.
Praise	Give praise and gratitude to God, whose love for you is the power of thanksgiving for the gift of life that makes of the Holy Spirit, so in the Spirit words in our lives, we praise to God, especially as we worship him in the Mass.

LIVE

People of Faith

Saint Clare of Assisi, 1194-1253

Saint Clare was born in Assisi, Italy. When she was 17 years old, she heard a sermon by Saint Francis, who also lived in Assisi. She was inspired by his words and felt God's call to be a religious sister. She founded the Poor Clares, a religious order of nuns who live by a rule of absolute poverty. Clare's sister, Saint Agnes, joined her. The sisters lived a life of poverty and modesty. Clare had a great devotion to the Eucharist, and she often joined with her nuns in prayer. Many miracles are attributed to her, including saving the city of Assisi from the army of Emperor Frederick II. Her feast day is August 11.

Taking the Message Home

Living as a Catholic begins with a loving relationship with God made possible through Jesus' example and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, who lives in us. As we grow in that relationship, we become more aware of our need to love each other as God loves us. That means a Catholic's faith must not be alone and active in the world. The Holy Spirit prepares us through the Sacrament of Confirmation for all that God is calling us to do.

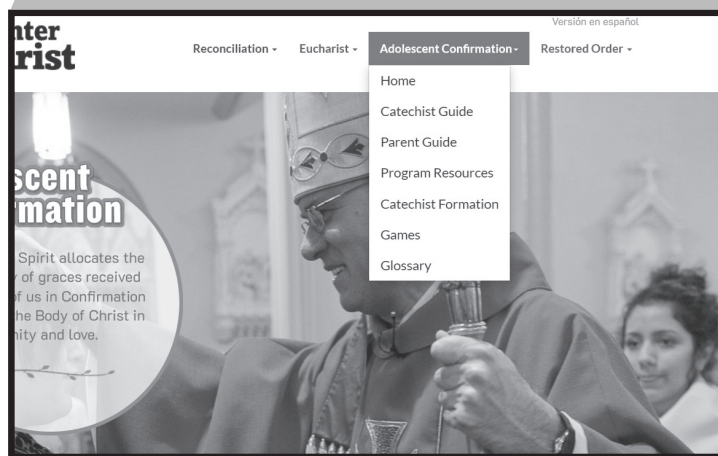
Look for opportunities this week to teach the Good News through your words and actions at school, in the home, in your parish, and on social media. A occasional life of prayer and engaging in the Sacraments will develop a longing to grow closer to Christ and help us persevere in obeying God's will.

UNIT SUMMARY

Here are the highlights of what you've learned in this unit:

- God made each one of us, and his love for us is infinite.
- Just as Jesus called his first disciples, he calls each of us to follow him in our vocations.
- Jesus promised his followers that he would send God the Father to send an Advocate—the Holy Spirit.
- The mystery of the Holy Trinity—one God in three Divine Persons—is the central truth of our faith.
- In baptized Christians, the Holy Spirit dwells in our hearts.
- Sacred Scripture tells us that the Holy Spirit, a "mighty wind," was present at Creation.

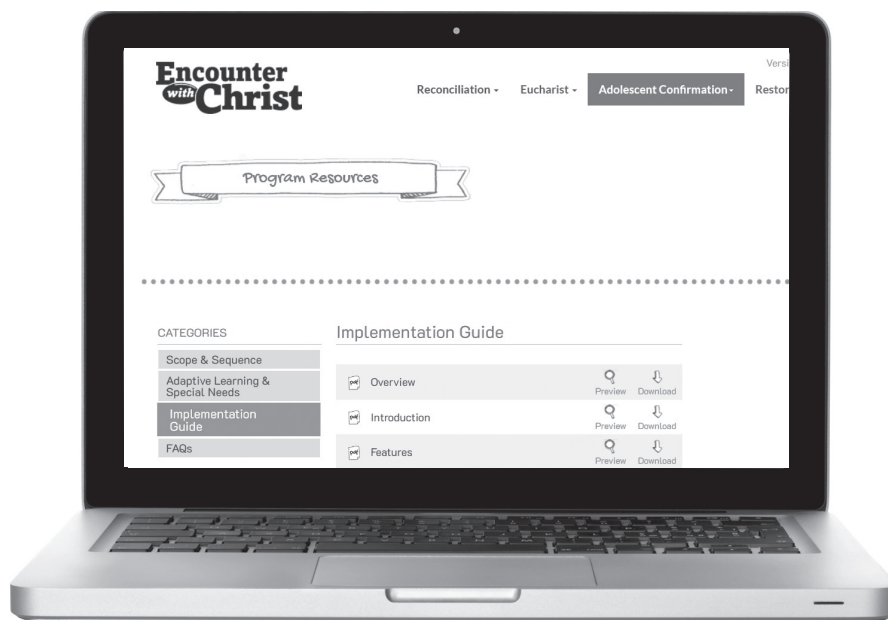
Confirmation Program Website



Home Page

The *Encounter with Christ Adolescent Confirmation Program* website features an easy-to-use navigation scheme, allowing users to navigate between the Catechist Guide, Parent Guide, Program Resources, Catechist Formation, Games and Glossary.

In the Program Resources section, the Implementation Guide is segmented into Overview, Introduction, Features, Website and Lesson Plan Process downloads.



Catechist Guide Page

Lesson Plans housed within the Catechist Guide Page include background and preparation as well as planning content and instruction. Lesson Plans can be previewed or downloaded.



Lesson Plan Process

The Catechetical Process

The Encounter with Christ Adolescent Confirmation Catechist Lesson Plans follow the same catechetical process (Invite, Discover, and Live) as other OSV catechetical materials, including *Alive in Christ* Grades 7 and 8. Each unit Lesson Plan for parish is intended for 75 minutes, with the flexibility for activities or projects to be done at home in between lessons.

The Invite Step (15 minutes) begins the lesson with prayer followed by God's invitation through Sacred Scripture. Candidates open their minds and hearts to what God is saying to them in Scripture and reflect on it. The unit's key concepts are presented along with an activity to access prior learning or tap into the candidate's faith and life experience. A Symbol of Faith, Encounter with Christ, and Catholic Faith Words are then presented and serve as a transition to the Discover step and unit objectives.

The Discover Step (45 minutes) promotes readiness for the Sacrament of Confirmation. This step helps form Catholic identity through the study of Scripture, knowledge of Church teaching, and an understanding of Catholic sacramental practices. It presents the doctrine of the lesson in developmentally appropriate language and images. Symbols and steps of the Rite of Confirmation are explored and explained. Charts, on-page questions, and activities give candidates the opportunity to process and reinforce what they have learned and apply it to their own lives and the experience of the Church.

The Live Step (15 minutes) helps the young people relate knowledge of the faith and the ways we worship, live, pray, and serve together as Catholics. Candidates are given the tools to connect their faith to everyday life and to deepen their relationship with God. They are presented with an overview of what was learned and of a Saint whose life exemplifies the lesson.

As you follow this catechetical process, you will in fact mirror the divine pedagogy by offering your candidates the opportunity to know God and his truth through Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition. You will inspire them to be open to the Holy Spirit so that they will respond in faith and love and accept the gift of new life in Christ!

As a catechist, during the **Invite** step you:

- Call the young people together and prepare them to hear the **Word of God**.
- Pray with the youth.
- Guide the candidates through the opening **Scripture passage and reflection**.
 - Proclaim God's Word.
 - After proclamation of the Scripture, allow time for sacred **silence**.
 - The young people should feel free to **share** what they experienced, what they felt God was saying to them, or what he wanted them to know in a special way today. Assure them that sharing is voluntary.
- Prompt continued thought about God's Word and move to unit objectives by using the "**Have you ever thought**" questions.

Preview unit **concepts** from the second and third Invite pages.

- Getting Started: Introduces the **main points** of the unit.
- Graphic Organizer: Provides an organizer that **relates** unit concepts and helps the candidates make connections through an activity or questions.
- Faith Symbols: Highlights a symbol of the **Catholic faith** to help young people prepare for the Sacrament of Confirmation.
- Encounter with Christ: Presents revealed teaching that focuses on Christ and how we are in relationship with him personally, as a Church, and in the world.

INVITE

Pages 7-9

Objectives

- Reflect on God's presence in our lives as expressed in the words of Psalm 139
- To introduce the key themes of the unit and to reflect on God's presence in the candidates' lives

Let Us Pray

Invite the youth to gather in the prayer space. Begin by praying the Sign of the Cross. Have a volunteer read the leader's part, then prompt the group to join in praying aloud the part marked "All." Afterward, direct the candidates to take their seats.

Lead into the session with the following or similar words:
 "Jesus called his first disciples after their return from a day of work as fishermen. He calls each of us, too, as we go about our daily lives, and he is always with us. Let's listen to what the psalmist says about God's relationship with us."

Scripture

Guide the candidates through a reflection on the verses of Psalm 139.

- You might wish to play instrumental music during the reflection.

Invite the young people to be still, close their eyes, and quiet themselves. Encourage them to humbly open their minds and hearts to what God is saying to them. Also let them know there will be time to silently reflect on the reading, then you'll have a couple of discussion questions for them.

- Proclaim the Scripture as the candidates listen. Allow for several minutes of silent reflection.
- Ask: What did you hear God say to you today?
- Call on volunteers to respond.
- Ask: What does this psalm say to you about God's presence in your life?
- Call on volunteers to respond.

Have you ever thought...

Share that God, as our loving Father, is always present in our lives. He never abandons us. He is patient and understanding even when we do not welcome or respond to his love.

- Read aloud both questions in this section and call on volunteers to respond.

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DISCOVER
Pages 10-11

Objectives

- Develop an understanding of Jesus' call of the first Apostles
- Reflect on this event from the perspective of the Apostles who were called by Jesus

Jesus Calls the First Disciples

Have the candidates silently read the two introductory paragraphs on page 10.

- Invite a volunteer to read aloud the Scripture from Luke Chapter 5:4-11.
- Lead a discussion of the Scripture, using the following questions:
 - What did Jesus tell Simon, James, and John would change in their lives? (He said they would be fishers of men.)
 - What did Jesus mean by this? (That their work would be to help others know about God)

ACTIVITY

Imagine

Invite the candidates to write their responses to the Imagine questions.

- Call on volunteers to share their responses.

Optional Activity

Extend the Imagine activity by having the young people imagine that Jesus is here today to choose disciples.

- Have the youth work in four groups to identify occupations or trades in our contemporary culture from which they would not expect Jesus to choose disciples.
- Where would the initial call take place for each occupation?
- What would concerns be for the people called?

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As a catechist, during the **Discover** step you:

- Teach the **objectives** of the lesson located at the beginning of each step in the catechist Lesson Plan downloaded from the website.
- Prepare the Scripture reading with the preceding introduction, and proclaim or have a candidate proclaim the **Word of God**.
- Direct the young people to the green **activity** that draws on their religious imagination to put themselves into the scenario just proclaimed.
- Next, work through a block of text that delves into Church **teaching** on the Sacraments.

- The second **Discover** spread includes text as well as a Go to the Source and Celebrating the Sacrament feature.
- Go to the Source sends the young people on their own to **Scripture** as they explore the Word of God and connect it to the unit objectives and/or life experiences.
- The **Celebrating the Sacrament** feature takes one of the parts of the Rite of Confirmation and explains it more deeply.
- This section also includes charts that will help young people visualize an aspect of **preparation** for Confirmation, such as renewal of baptismal promises or frequently asked questions about Confirmation and the effects of the Sacrament.

DISCOVER
Pages 12-13

Objectives

- Explore how the Holy Spirit was at work in the lives of holy people
- Explore the words of the prophets inspired by the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit in the History of God's People

Summarize the first two paragraphs on page 12 for the group.

Invite a volunteer to read aloud the Scripture passage from Isaiah 1:1-3a.

- Point out that this passage names Gifts of the Holy Spirit, which they will learn about in a later unit.
- Point out, too, that the Holy Spirit inspired the *inerrant* Word of God in the Bible. Be sure the candidates understand the meaning of *inerrant* when describing Sacred Scripture. The Catechism teaches that Scripture faithfully and without error teaches the truth that God wanted to share for our salvation.
- Ask: About whom is this passage speaking? (The passage is speaking about Jesus.)

Have the candidates read the remaining text to themselves.

- Ask: What are some times in Scripture when we see the Holy Spirit working in Mary's life? (The Holy Spirit prepared Mary for her role as the Mother of God; Mary conceived Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit; Mary was present with the Apostles at Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit descended upon them.)

Go to the Source

Organize the candidates in pairs or small groups.

- Distribute Bibles (one per pair or small group).
- Have the candidates read Matthew 3:13-17, about the baptism of Jesus. Then have the pairs or groups discuss how the passage is connected to the passage from Isaiah.
- Allow time for discussion, then invite a spokesperson from each group to share a key insight about the passage with the larger group.

Optional Activity

Consider this group activity to increase the candidates' understanding of the major Old Testament prophets. This activity will help strengthen the young people's familiarity with the books of the Bible.

- First organize the class into six groups. Then distribute Bibles, one per candidate.
- Assign each group one of the following prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Amos, Micah.
- Direct the groups to use their Bibles to learn about their assigned prophet and to work together to identify at least three important facts about him. Explain that they can use the introduction to their assigned book of the Bible for some important information, such as the period when the prophet wrote, key themes of his writing, and important events the prophet addressed.
- Call on a spokesperson from each group to share their findings.

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As a catechist, during the **Live** step you:

- Will have the candidates work on activities that will unpack the Sacrament and objectives taught. These will reflect the practice of our **Catholic faith**.
- Will have the young people moving the lessons from their head to their heart. Sections like *From Head to Heart* and *Listening with Our Hearts* ask the candidates to consider making these concepts part of their daily lives.

LIVE
Pages 14–16

Objectives

- To reflect on how Jesus calls each of us today
- To consider what discipleship means and how to grow as disciples
- Consider ways to live out what has been learned
- Explore the faith life of Saint Clare of Assisi

Connect: From Head to Heart
ACTIVITY

Read aloud the reflection questions. Invite the candidates to write their responses.

- Call on volunteers to share what they have written.

If time allows, direct the candidates to complete the drawing activity about the Holy Spirit.

Optional Activity
Expand the “Head to Heart” activity on page 14 using the Reflection below.

- Read aloud the introduction below that begins with “Jesus calls,” then ask volunteers to read aloud some or all of the Scripture passages. For each passage, ask the following or similar questions:
 - What are some times in your life when you can follow Jesus’ example?
 - What can make it challenging to follow Jesus’ example?
 - What was a time when you followed Jesus’ example as presented in this passage? How did that strengthen you as a disciple?

Reflection
Tell the candidates: Jesus calls us each day to live as his disciples. He teaches us how to live through his own example, handed down to us in the Gospels. Obedience to God’s will guides us to true freedom and happiness. Here are some passages that show the way to live, as taught and lived by Jesus himself.

Have the candidates work independently or in groups and read the following passages. Then have them summarize what is said in each passage.

- Taking time to pray: Mark 6:45–46
- Obedience to God’s will: Luke 22:41–42
- Caring for those in need: Matthew 9:27–31
- Forgiving enemies: Luke 23:33–34
- Resisting temptation: Matthew 4:1–11
- Speaking out against wrongdoing: Matthew 21:12–13

The Grace to Guide Us
Read aloud this section on page 15.

- **Say:** The first disciples left everything to follow Jesus. You don’t have to give up everything, but that doesn’t mean that discipleship is always easy. Yet the Holy Spirit will always give you the guidance you need, if you open your heart to his presence.

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Unit Prayer

Gather around a prayer table with a Bible, a candle, and a container of Holy Water or some other sacred place.

Catechist: Let us take a deep breath and become aware of the presence of God with us. Let’s begin with the Sign of the Cross.

All: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Catechist: We have been reminded of God’s great love in the creation of the world and in his calling to each of us by name. As we prepare to fully enter into the Church and our relationship with God, the Holy Spirit opens our hearts. He helps us to see what we need to grow closer to him. Please take out your slips of paper and read what you found most important from this first unit lesson. Remember what you wrote in prayers at home by yourself and with your family. Consider how your ideas can take root in your parish and community.

[Individually, each candidate reads what he or she wrote and why.]

Catechist: Loving Father, we thank you for opening our hearts and minds to what you are saying to us in our lesson. We pray that we will continue to be aware of what your Holy Spirit is prompting us to know, and how we are being called to live. Help us to follow the example you set for us through Jesus Christ your Son. Together, let us pray: **Glory Be to the Father.**

All: 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 with out end. Amen.

All: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

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- Will introduce the young people to a Person of Faith, a Saint whose life exemplifies the content of the unit.
- Will discuss with the candidates how they can take these lessons home where the Holy Spirit will help them encounter Christ. The Taking the Message Home section will challenge the candidates to put their faith into practice.
- Will prepare and hold a final prayer session emphasizing what the candidates learned from the unit and praying for the Holy Spirit’s help to put these things into practice.