

For Parents

Listen The Holy Spirit inspired the writer of Psalm 139 to ask, “Where can I go from your spirit? From your presence where can I flee?” (Psalms 139:7). The short answer is nowhere.

Know God made each of us and is always present, reaching out in love and mercy to invite each person to grow closer to him and to claim the holiness for which we are made.

One choice you have each day is how you will respond to Jesus’ call into friendship. This call comes through Sacred Scripture, Church teaching, prayer and reflection, significant people, opportunities, talents, and experiences.

The Holy Spirit makes us better able to understand and obey God’s guidance in our lives. In God, we are never alone in life’s joys and difficulties.

A reliable source for knowing more about the Holy Spirit is the *United States Catholic Catechism for Adults*, Chapter 9: Receive the Holy Spirit. Ask a trusted catechist or priest about additional recommendations for learning about the Holy Spirit.

Wonder

- How would you describe your faith?
- When have you been aware of God’s presence with you?
- What are your hopes for the candidate who is preparing to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation?

Choose When you chose to baptize your child, you asked that he or she might receive faith. By accompanying this candidate in preparing to receive Confirmation you are giving witness to a willingness to grow in love and skill in sharing the gift of faith. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you be an authentic example of what you hope for the candidate.

For Families

Pause We show love and care for someone by spending time together. Prepare to gather in one place. Have a candle and a copy of the Candidate Book.

Pray Parent lights the candle.

Parent: Let us pray as we make the Sign of the Cross.

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

Parent: Jesus promised to be with us always. In the Gospel of John, we hear him say, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the holy Spirit" (John 20:21-22). Jesus says this to us, too. We are grateful for these gifts, so we say:

All: Thanks be to God.

Practice We learn habits, both good and bad, as we live together as a family. Ask your candidate:

- What is one thing you have learned from me as your parent? What is one thing you have learned from a sibling? How do these help you show care and love for each other?
- Our lives change as we grow closer to God and follow Jesus through our spiritual family in the Church. The Holy Spirit helps us do this every day. What will we do this week to live as followers of Jesus?

Ask the candidate to find the "Follow Christ" chart on page 15 in the Candidate Book to share ideas if needed. Two especially important recommendations on this chart are praying and reading of Sacred Scripture. How might your family incorporate these two practices on a daily basis?

For Parents

Listen The Most Holy Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—is attentive to you. As you turn your attention to God, let this prayer from Sacred Scripture become your own: “My heart and flesh cry out for the living God” (Psalms 84: 3).

Know Grace is God’s free, loving gift of his own life. The Seven Sacraments are special sources of grace when they are properly celebrated and received. (For more about how the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist are properly celebrated and received, see *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1234-1235; 1297-1301; 1306-1314; 1348-1355; and 1384-1390.)

Sanctifying grace is God’s divine life within us that heals us from our sins and makes us his adopted sons and daughters. Baptism is a sign of sanctifying grace that changes a person permanently. Through completing initiation with Confirmation and receiving the Eucharist, Catholics show that they long to grow closer to Christ through prayer, through the Sacraments, and through obedience to his will. In the Sacraments we also receive actual grace, the help God gives us to live and behave as he calls us to do.

One source for knowing more about grace and the Sacraments is the *Catechism*, paragraphs 1076-1134. Ask a trusted catechist or priest about additional recommendations for learning about grace and the Sacraments.

Wonder A parent’s own relationship with the Church is an irreplaceable faith witness for the family. How does your life show your Christian faith and the importance of being a Catholic?

Following Jesus is an ongoing journey. Sometimes we don’t live as we know God hopes for us. Thankfully, God is merciful and ready to forgive, especially when we recognize how we have sinned. When was the last time you celebrated the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation? What helps you to (or hinders you from) accept the forgiveness of God and healing grace offered in this Sacrament?

Choose Making an Examination of Conscience shows humility in trying to be in right relationship with God, others, and oneself. Prayerfully reflecting on your thoughts, words, and deeds in comparison to Catholic moral teachings helps you identify where you cooperate with God’s grace, recognize sins, and choose what you want to change.

The Beatitudes and Ten Commandments are common frameworks for such reflection. Lists like the five baptismal promises also would be meaningful while preparing for Confirmation. An Examination of Conscience can be found on page 49 in the Candidate Book.

For Families

Pause Prepare to gather by finding mementos from sacramental celebrations like pictures, baptismal candles, and certificates, and then create a centerpiece where you will meet.

Pray

Leader: The Bible tells us those who dwell in God's house never cease to praise him (Psalm 84:5). We recognize that God is in our home today by saying Amen.

All: Amen.

Leader: God loves each of us, so we give praise by saying Alleluia.

All: Alleluia!

Practice Practicing Catholics "exercise" their spiritual, mental, and physical "muscles" to develop habits for living as God's adopted sons and daughters. Participating in the Sacraments is an important habit. The things we can see in a Sacrament—the "visible signs"—point to and make present God's actions. Use the mementos you gathered to spark stories of who was there, what happened that day, and how you feel about it now. Plan to go to Mass soon to give thanks for these graces.

All Catholics are obliged to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation (see CCC, 2192). Participate actively in the Mass by singing to God in praise, joining your voice with others in the prayer, and listening attentively to the Scripture readings and the prayers of the priest. Pay particular attention to how the actions, words, and signs present in the liturgy point to the Real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist.

For Parents

Listen Jesus said, “I came so that they might have life and have it more abundantly” (John 10:10). Trying to live like Christ is how we grow in holiness each day of our whole lives.

Know Signs of nature and human symbols used in liturgy show how God touches the depths of our lives, even giving glimpses of eternal life. They also express our actions in worshipping God. The things we can see and hear in a Sacrament – the “visible signs” – both point to and make present God’s actions. For example, through full initiation in Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist we are drawn closer to God and deeper into the life and mission of the Church.

The Order of Confirmation expresses that Confirmation perfects the grace of Baptism, sealed with the Holy Spirit that makes a permanent imprint on the soul. The increased gifts of the Spirit and continued guidance strengthens confirmed people to become more intimate with Jesus Christ and to share the Catholic faith with others through who they are, what they say, and how they live.

One source for knowing more about all three Sacraments of Initiation is the *Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church* #251-294. Ask a trusted catechist or priest about additional recommended resources for learning more about the Sacraments of Initiation.

Wonder The Christian moral life is bound up with faith and the Sacraments. Recall a recent experience of participating in a Sacrament. What did the objects, actions, and words communicate about God’s truth, beauty, and goodness?

The grace of the Eucharist is efficacious. We truly are united to Christ, strengthened in charity, and moved to serve those in need. How have you responded to these actions of God?

Choose Since we cannot see the Holy Spirit, we use symbols to communicate his action. Common symbols include the dove and fire. Confirmation also includes sacred gestures like the Sign of the Cross and anointing with Sacred Chrism (oil). Look for these signs when you go to Mass. Choose one as a focus while you pray that you and the candidate will bear witness to Christ.

For Families

Pause Write one of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit on each of seven slips of paper: wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, reverence (piety), and wonder and awe (fear of the Lord). Put the slips in a container.

Pray

Leader: Let us mark ourselves with the sign of our faith.

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

Leader: God, help us see and appreciate the spiritual gifts you want to give each of us. Let us always use our gifts for the good of others. Amen.

Practice The Gifts of the Holy Spirit are seven powerful graces that God gives us in Baptism and Confirmation to live as disciples of Christ. Say: "Each day this week we will draw one of the gifts from this container. We will use that gift to show that our family loves Jesus and wants to live like him."

For Parents

Listen The Holy Spirit inspired the writers of Sacred Scripture, the inerrant Word of God, throughout the centuries. We are reminded in the New Testament, “For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light, for light produces every kind of goodness and righteousness and truth” (Ephesians 5:8-9). Growing in holiness is a lifelong journey of conversion, of becoming more like Christ by living each day with love and shining his light into all the corners of the world.

Know God lovingly created human beings in his image and likeness; this means you and your child have inherent dignity, value, and a purpose in life. A Spirit-filled life is the purpose, or vocation, to which baptized Christians are called. A vocation is the way someone freely chooses to respond to God’s call to build up the Body of Christ through their life as a layperson, ordained clergy, or professed religious.

Your vocation as a spouse and/or parent includes nurturing a family in and for faith. This can be challenging in a contemporary world that values material things over spiritual goods, fails to respect the dignity of human life and God’s design for the family, and places a priority on individualism rather than the good of everyone (or “common good”). Natural ways of inviting children into discerning the vocations to which God might be calling them include living with and for one another in the home, especially through prayer and reflection about following Christ in a society that doesn’t always support the same values.

To know more about the ordinary call to holiness and facing today’s issues read the Apostolic Exhortation from Pope Francis, “On the Call to Holiness in Today’s World (*Gaudete et exultate*)”. Ask a trusted catechist or priest about additional recommended resources for learning more about the ordinary call to holiness.

Wonder Take stock of your current relationship with Jesus and the Church. What do you believe about Christ and the Church? When do you take time to listen to and speak with God in prayer? How do you seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit as you respond to the call to holiness?

Choose Certain ideologies and worldviews such as relativism and individualism are contrary to the faith. We must turn to God alone to know what is true, good, and beautiful. The authenticity of your Christian witness is your most valuable and important tool for teaching others. Choose how you will share Christ’s light with your family, friends, and the world.

For Families

Pause Prepare to come together as a family with the Confirmation candidate by gathering a Bible, a candle, a family picture, and images of Saints.

Pray Light the candle and read aloud Galatians 5:13-22.

Practice Each baptized person is given a candle as a sign that the light of Christ is in him or her. Saints provide us with examples to follow in living as sons and daughters of God. Their lives show us what it might look like to cooperate with Holy Spirit by using our gifts to shine the light of faith wherever we are.

One important place to share our gifts is in our parish. How might we give of our God-given time and talent to serve in the liturgy or in parish ministries? Your family is blessed to be part of the Communion of Saints. Choose a patron Saint for your household as a model for how you want to honor the dignity of every person and to use your gifts for the good of others.