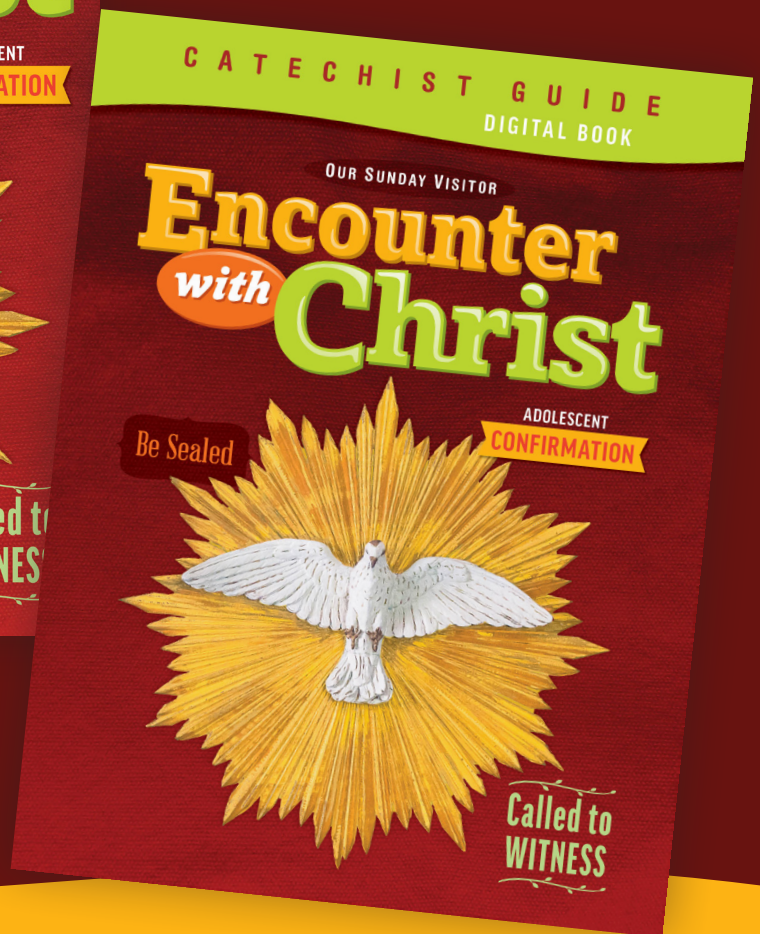
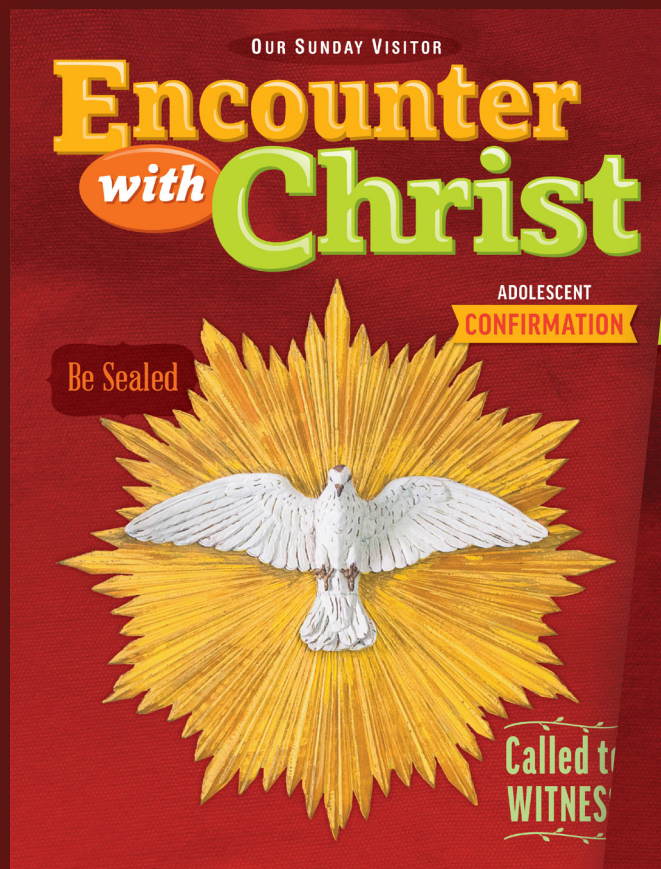




Encounter with Christ Adolescent Confirmation

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
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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.