

ADULT CONFIRMATION PREPARATION PROCESS

When the time for Pentecost was fulfilled, they were all in one place together. And suddenly there came from the sky a noise like a strong driving wind, and it filled the entire house in which they were. Then there appeared to them tongues as of fire, which parted and came to rest on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in different tongues, as the Spirit enabled them to proclaim. Acts 2:1-4

The effect of the Sacrament of Confirmation is the full outpouring of the Holy Spirit, as once granted to the apostles on the day of Pentecost. (CCC, #1302)

PHILOSOPHY

Adult Confirmation fosters faith development, is intimately connected to Baptism, completes Initiation and is carried out in partnership by individuals who represent different cultures. CCC. #1304 & RCIA, #366. The process of adult confirmation, a process connected to “new evangelization,” allows one’s own heart to be seized and saturated by the gospel responding to the call to life-long conversion to Christ by the gift of the Spirit. (Synod, p, 20)

GOALS

The Adult Confirmation Preparation Process strives to encourage active Catholic adults, during this time of development, to share their personal stories and interact with others as they are invited to more clearly identify and understand how God is working in their lives. Through this process they are presented with opportunities to come to a deeper realization of their faith and ways to live it out in the context of the parish community.

1. To bring about awareness that the Church and all its members is for mission. (Synod p. 15)
2. To deepen commitment to their Baptismal promises, Eucharistic participation, discipleship, on-going conversion, and service in the world
3. To expose participants to ministry, church organizations and possibilities for their active involvement in parish life and thereby live the mission of the Church and all its members. CCC #1285, 1309 and Synod, p. 15, #366 RCIA
4. To enhance the process, begun at Baptism, Adult Confirmation Preparation can offer to the bewildered and restless world of our time what is essential to be humble and joyful in their faith. (Our Hearts #59)
5. To provide a competent approach that is sensitive to the diverse cultures present in a particular parish and since the Archdiocese of Los Angeles finds an ethnic, cultural, linguistic and racial diversity amid its Catholic population catechesis needs to be adapted to those being catechized. ORE Philosophy, 2005; #191, GDC
6. To involve the whole community in the Adult Confirmation process.

With sensitivity to the various needs and resources of parishes throughout the Archdiocese, these guidelines provide a basic framework for the Adult Confirmation Preparation Process. Each parish is encouraged to implement these guidelines at the parish level or in collaboration with their Deanery/Region.

PROCESS

1. Candidates for the Sacrament of Confirmation Requirements and Responsibilities in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles
 - a) Candidates are adults who participate in Sunday Liturgy and the sacraments. Candidates should be 21 years of age (and older). High School age candidates should be part of their local parish Confirmation process. However, candidates who are high school graduates but not yet 21, may be part of the adult Confirmation process for sound pastoral reasons and upon recommendation by their parish priest. Requests for this should be made in writing to the Regional Bishop.
 - b) Candidates are baptized and have received First Eucharist/First Communion.
Note: Candidates who were baptized in Latin America should make sure that they were not confirmed at the time of baptism.
 - c) Candidates are required to show proof of Baptism by submitting a recent certified copy of their baptismal certificate along with their registration form. If for some serious reason a baptismal certificate is not available, e.g., the church was destroyed, a sworn statement from a witness to the Baptism can be provided. This statement should be signed by the pastor.
Suggestion: Request that candidates bring the certificate to the interview. It often takes time to locate a certificate or to have one sent from the Church of Baptism.
 - d) Candidates are responsible for selecting a qualified sponsor.
 - e) Candidates are required to attend sessions conducted by qualified catechists to prepare them for the Sacrament.
 - f) Candidates are responsible for choosing a Confirmation name.

2. Guidelines for the selection of a sponsor and a Confirmation name.
 - a) Candidates are responsible for selecting a qualified sponsor and, if requested by the catechetical team, making sure that the sponsor participates in the preparation process (if they do not know someone who qualifies then the parish can assist the candidate in finding a parish sponsor).
 - b) When choosing a Confirmation name the candidates are encouraged to use their Baptismal name or they may choose a saint's name. "The use of the baptismal name on the occasion of Confirmation better expresses the relationship between Baptism and Confirmation. If a special Confirmation name is taken, it must be the name of a recognized saint (such as St. John, St. Martha, St. Teresa, Blessed Junipero Serra) or an acceptable recognized Christian name (such as Faith, Charity, Prudence. Only full names are to be used, e.g., "Joseph, Robert, Barbara, Gabriela;" not shortened names such as "Joey, Bobby, Barbs, Gabby." (Confirmation Guidelines, 2001)
 - c) Only one sponsor is necessary for Confirmation. Sponsor does not have to be same gender as Confirmation candidate.
 - d) Should be one of the Baptismal godparents, if possible.
 - e) May not be the father or mother of the person being confirmed (see canon 874, 1)
 - f) Must be at least 16 years old and already confirmed.
 - g) Be an active, practicing Catholic (i.e. attending Sunday Mass and receiving the sacraments on a regular basis)

Parish Responsibilities

Adult Confirmation candidates are confirmed at the scheduled Parish Confirmation Celebration. Ref. Memorandum dated 9/25/2000, Cardinal Roger Mahony, Archbishop of Los Angeles. For exceptions to this directive, please check with your Regional Office of the Bishop.

- Pastor or his designee should interview all candidates prior to Confirmation preparation sessions in order to determine potential Adult Confirmation candidates. (*Sample "Interview Form" provided in Parish Packet*).
- Provide Adult Confirmation Instruction. These sessions can be in the parish, at parish clusters and, in some instances, arranged by the Regional Religious Education Coordinator.
- Provide "Confirmation Name" card for each candidate
- Note: Cards can be prepared on postcard stock from computer database. If no computer is available, cards can be purchased through religious goods supply stores, i.e. Cotter's.
- Provide a Confirmation Certificate for each person confirmed. Note: can be computerized.
- Record the Sacrament of Confirmation at the church of Confirmation.
- Send "Confirmation Name" cards to Church of Baptism for each Confirmandi.
- Suggestion: Include a copy of the Certificate of Baptism along with the "Confirmation Name" card to assist the Church of Baptism in locating the right person and recording the correct information.

Confirmation Follow-Up

- It is recommended that a parish staff member meet with Confirmation candidates after reception of the Sacrament to provide an opportunity for the candidate to reflect on the formation process and celebration of the sacrament of confirmation as well as discern their ongoing formation and participation in the parish community.

Adult Confirmation Suggested Topics

The Adult Confirmation Sessions should present a comprehensive and systematic formation in the faith so that the candidate can enter deeply into the mystery of Christ. (NDC, Chapter 36, p. 119) The sessions should be modeled on adult education principles for example:

- respect the experiences of adults and make use of their personal experiences, skills and talents
- recognize the specific conditions of lay Catholics and consistently call them to holiness and to 'seek[ing] the Kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and ordering them according to the plan of God.
- encourage full and active participation of all involved.
- use a variety of catechetical forms: systematic and occasional, individual and community, organized and spontaneous (NDC # 48 A, p.191-192)

The vision of Whole Community Catechesis should be a thread connecting all sessions by:

- creating a welcoming environment and comfortable surroundings
- incorporating prayer based on Sunday readings and using a reflection question (see resource page) using the assembly approach to sharing
- conducting at least one retreat/evening of prayer for participants

The following topics are suggested/recommended for the Adult Confirmation sessions. Each session should be approximately two to two and one-half (2-2 1/2) hours in length.

Images of God

(CCC # 203 – 205; 218 – 221; 238 –239)

Scripture/Old Testament/Revelation

(CCC 51-67; 516)

Jesus the Christ

Scripture/New Testament/Trinity

(CCC 241- 246)

Church

The People of God

Church as Sacrament

Sacraments

Sacramentality

*Sacraments of Initiation/Symbols/Rites **

Morality

Conscience Formation

Christian Decision Making

Sin/Reconciliation

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Liturgy and Mission

*Christian Vocation/Gifts of the Spirit **

On-going Spiritual Growth

Liturgy

Evening of Prayer/Retreat *

* National Directory for Catechesis, Chap. 36, A-2; CCC # 1285

These sessions are the minimum requirement. Each formation center/parish should develop session plans and add topics as necessary to meet the needs of those attending.

Cultural diversity, ethnicity, gender, race, language needs and catechesis to those with special needs should be considered for every session. Sample lesson plans are available from the Regional Offices.

Presenter's Qualifications

- Presenters should have an updated competency in theology as well as in Adult Education/Formation processes and participate in ongoing Adult Religious Education opportunities.

- Who should present?
Clergy
Religious
Master Catechists
Adult Educators
RCIA Personnel
- Team Approach: It is highly recommended that a team planning and facilitating approach be used in all the sessions. Utilize contemporary materials and resources, along with audio visuals that will enhance and support the lessons being presented.

Resources for Catechists

Church Documents:

- USCCB, National Directory for Catechesis, USCCB, Washington DC, 2005
- USCC, General Directory for Catechesis. USCC, Washington DC, 1997
- USCC, Catechism of the Catholic Church, USCC, Washington DC, 1994/1997
- Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publications data, The Catechetical Documents. Liturgy Training Publications, Chicago, IL, 1996.

Noll, Raymond, Sacraments: A New Understanding for a New Generation Mystic, CT: Twenty-third Publications, 1999.

Bokenkotter, Thomas, Essential Catholicism. Image Books, Doubleday, Garden City, NY, 1985.

Clark, Edward WM., Five Great Catholic Ideas. The Crossroad Publishing Company, New York, 1998.

Cooke, Bernard, Sacraments and Sacramentality. Twenty-Third Publications, Mystic, CT, 1983.

Downey, Michael, Clothed in Christ: The Sacraments and Christian Living. New York: Crossroad, 1987.

Guzie, Tad, The Book of Sacramental Basics. Paulist Press, NY/Ramsey, 1981.

Marinelli, Anthony J., The Word Made Flesh: An Overview of the Catholic Faith. Paulist Press, New York/Mahwah, 1993.

Martos, Joseph, Doors to the Sacred: A Historical Introduction to the Sacraments in the Catholic Church, Revised and Updated. Liguori, Missouri: Liguori Publications, 2001.

Osborne, Kenan B., The Christian Sacraments of Initiation. Paulist Press, NY/Mahwah, 1987.

Pennock, Michael Francis, This Is Our Faith. Ave Maria Press, Notre Dame, IN, 1998.

Sloyan, Gerard S., Catholic Morality Revised, Twenty-Third Publications, Mystic, CT, 1990.

Stasiak, Kurt O.S.B., Sacramental Theology: Means of Grace, Ways of Life Chicago, IL: Loyola Press, 2001.

Zanzig, Thomas, Jesus Is Lord! A Basic Christology for Adults. Saint Mary's Press, Christian Brothers Publications, Winona, MN., 1982.
Revised September, 2005