

What is the sacrament of Confirmation?

Confirmation is the sacrament that perfects Baptismal grace and gives us the Holy Spirit in order to root us more deeply in the life of God, to incorporate us more firmly into Christ, to strengthen our bond with the Church, to associate us more closely with the Church's mission and help us bear witness to the Christian faith in words accompanied by deeds.

Confirmation, like Baptism, imprints a spiritual mark or indelible character on the Christian's soul; for this reason a person can receive this sacrament only once in his/her life.

What does this sacrament give?

Confirmation is the special outpouring of the Holy Spirit as once granted to the Apostles on the day of Pentecost. From this fact, Confirmation brings an increase and deepening of baptismal grace:

- it roots us more deeply in our relationship with God as it makes us call God, "Abba, Father!";
- it unites us more firmly to Jesus Christ;
- it increases the gifts of the Holy Spirit in us (*wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety and fear of the Lord*);
- it renders our bond with the Church more perfect;
- it gives us a special strength of the Holy Spirit to spread and defend our Christian faith by word and action as true witnesses of Christ, to confess the name of Christ boldly, and never to be ashamed of the Cross.

How is this Sacrament celebrated?

The sacrament of Confirmation is celebrated through the anointing with chrism (*oil consecrated by the bishop during Chrism Mass, usually on Holy Thursday*) on the forehead, which is done by the laying on of the hand, and through the words: "Be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit."

The sign of peace that concludes the rite of the sacrament signifies and demonstrates communion with the bishop and with all the faithful.

Who can be the minister of this sacrament?

The ordinary minister of Confirmation is a bishop. Also a priest - provided with a faculty – can celebrate this sacrament validly.

Who can be the sponsor?

To be permitted to take on the function of a sponsor, a person must:

- 1/ be designated by the one to be confirmed and have the qualifications and intention of fulfilling this function;
- 2/ have completed the sixteenth year of age;
- 3/ be a Catholic who has been confirmed and has already received the sacrament of Holy Communion and who leads a life of faith in keeping with the function to be taken on;
- 4/ not be bound by any canonical penalty legitimately imposed or declared;
- 5/ not be the father or mother of the one to be confirmed.

The Catholic Church encourages choosing as a sponsor one of the baptismal godparents of the person confirmed.

Frequently Asked Questions:

1. I am an adult and have never received the Sacrament of Confirmation? What should I do?
Please contact your parish priest to be enrolled in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults that will lead you through a process of preparation for the sacrament of Confirmation. Usually, this program begins in the Fall and ends in Easter season.
2. My sponsor's parish priest refused to provide a sponsor certificate? What happened and what to do in this situation?
It wasn't because of the priest's ill will or his bad mood on that day. Most probably, your sponsor did not fulfill all requirements mentioned above and you'll need to choose someone else qualified for this function.