

CONFIRMATION

LOVE
LISTENING
SINGING
EXPLAINING

Circle gifts you recognize in yourself.
Ask two people in your group what each thinks is your greatest gift.

CHEERING ON
CHEERING UP
KINDNESS
PATIENCE
DARING
MAKING MUSIC
PLANNING
VISITING
FRIENDLINESS
INSIGHT
UNDERSTANDING
CREATIVITY
ENERGY
STRENGTH
ENDURANCE
SPEED
IMAGINATION
VISION
SENSITIVITY
SELF-CONTROL
DISCIPLINE
WORK ETHIC
HOPE
CONFIDENCE
DEPENDABILITY
CARING
HEALING
CHARM
SPEAKING
GOOD LOOKS
CRITICAL THINKING
LEADERSHIP
FOLLOWERSHIP
COMMUNITY BUILDING
FOLLOW THROUGH
ANGER
DISSATISFACTION
GRATITUDE
FAITH



If I speak in the tongues of mortals or angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have prophetic powers and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, if I have faith so as to move mountains but do not have love, I am nothing.

Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

1 Corinthians 13.1-2, 7

There are varieties of gifts but the same Spirit; varieties of services, but the same Lord; varieties of activities, but it is the same God who inspires them all in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.

1 Corinthians 12.4-7



What Gifts Do I Bring to the Community?



◆ How is the Spirit prompting you to use your gifts for the common good?

◆ What makes love the greatest of the Spirit's gifts?



We Are Sealed in the Spirit...

Confirmation is a sacrament of initiation, one of three sacraments through which people enter the Christian

community. New Christians enter the Church through baptism, receive the Spirit in confirmation, and join the community at eucharist.

Most new Christians were adults in the early centuries of the Church. To receive baptism adults bathed in pools of water. They plunged down into the water, signifying Jesus' death, and rose from the water to share Jesus' risen life. The new Christians then put on white robes and received an anointing with the Spirit—the sacrament of confirmation. Baptism and confirmation formed a double sacrament in one celebration.

In the early Church those newly baptized in water and sealed in the Spirit then joined the community around the table of the Lord to celebrate and share the eucharist, the third sacrament of initiation. These three sacraments initiate new Christians into the life of the

community that lives in the Spirit and shares the Body of Christ in order to become the Body of Christ in the world.

Over the centuries as Christianity grew, bishops could no longer baptize every new Christian. They continued confirming Christians to connect members of small Christian communities with the larger communities of which they were the shepherds. Baptism and confirmation became separate sacraments.

Today because the Church baptizes most new members as infants, many young Catholics receive the sacraments of initiation in a different order than Christians in the



early church did, usually making first communion before they are confirmed.

However, the Church still connects these three sacraments of initiation. Confirmation usually takes place during a celebration of the Eucharist. The bishop asks those to be confirmed to answer in their own voices the questions their parents answered for them at baptism.

Do you believe in God the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth?

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary, was crucified, died, and was buried, rose from the dead, and is now seated at the right hand of the Father?

Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who came upon the apostles at Pentecost and today is given to you sacramentally in confirmation?

Do you believe in the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting?

Confirmation preparation initiates teens into the full life of the Christian community. This is why confirmation programs invite teens to join the choir, lector, serve as eucharistic ministers, act with groups that work for justice, teach the Word to young children, or use their gifts to serve people in need in the community.

by Laying on Hands

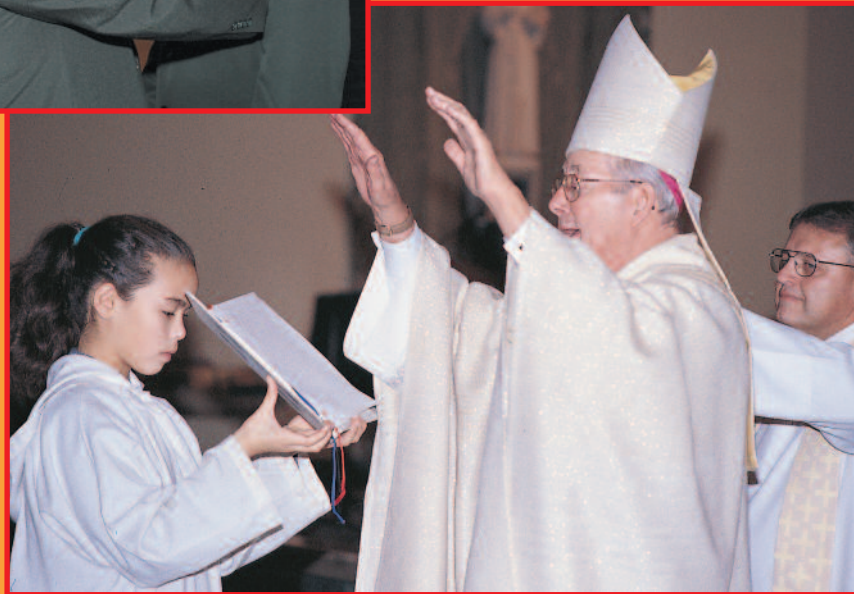
Two gestures signify the gift of the Spirit which the bishop hands on in the sacrament of confirmation. The first

gesture is the laying on of hands. This gesture is somewhat like parents putting an arm around or on teens' shoulders to express confidence in their

son or daughter or to give them strength.

In celebrating the sacrament today, the bishop extends his arms over all who will be confirmed and prays:

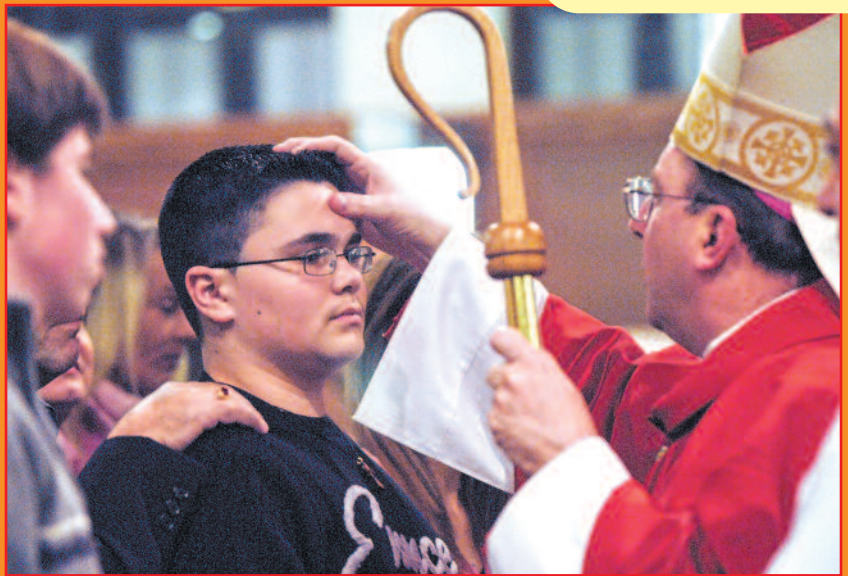
All-powerful God,
Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
by water and the Holy Spirit
you freed your sons and
daughters from sin
and gave them new life.
Send your Holy Spirit upon them
to be their Helper and Guide.
Give them
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of right judgment and courage,
the spirit of knowledge and reverence.
Fill them with
the spirit of wonder and awe
in your presence.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen.



and Anointing with Chrism

After praying the gifts of the Spirit upon the teens to be confirmed, the bishop anoints each person with the sign of the cross on the forehead, using a perfumed oil called *chrism*. He calls each person by name and says, “_____, be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit.” The person being confirmed responds, “Amen.”

Sponsors accompany candidates for confirmation. They stand together before the bishop. Sponsors put their right hands on the shoulders of the candidates.



The bishop uses chrism to anoint us with the seal of the Spirit. Along with fire and wind, oil is a traditional sign of the Spirit's presence. King David's anointing with oil filled him with the Spirit. The oil the Church uses for anointing in confirmation is olive oil with the fragrance of sweet-smelling balsam added.

The sacramental sign makes visible and present a spiritual reality—the presence of the Spirit. Oil is free flowing like the Spirit. Rubbed in the skin, oil heals and soothes.

Early Christians use the olive tree, the olive, and olive oil as symbols of the three persons of the Trinity. They likened olive trees, which live for centuries, to God the Creator from whom all things come. They compared the olives, the fruit of the tree, to Jesus, God's Son. The useful, soothing, free-flowing oil pressed from within the fruit of the tree symbolized the Spirit, the love between Father and Son and among Christians.

The Spirit's Seal of Approval Is the Cross



At confirmation we are sealed in the love of the Father, Son, and Spirit. A seal indicates quality and belonging. Teens wear many seals on their bodies—*Gap*, *Nike*. High schools and colleges put their seals on diplomas. To receive the label, organic foods

have to meet special standards. Many companies consider their logos a seal of quality. In the ancient world slaves and soldiers were marked with a brand to show to whom they belonged.

This seal of the Spirit marks the Christian as a full and genuine member of the community. The seal shows we belong to the community. Each of us individually and all of us together as a community share the gift of the one Spirit.

How Ready for Confirmation Am I?



◆ What is your commitment to your parish community?

◆ How will you use your gifts for the common good?
