

The Sacrament of Confirmation

Chapter 34 Summary

Chapter Learning Objectives

- The participants will reflect on the Church's use of Sacred Chrism as the anointing oil of the Holy Spirit.
- The participants will examine how Confirmation is intimately linked to Baptism and the Eucharist as one of three Sacraments of Christian Initiation.
- The participants will explore the essential parts of the Rite of Confirmation.

Content Summary

1. In the Sacrament of Confirmation, a baptized person is anointed with Sacred Chrism and is strengthened with the Holy Spirit.
2. Confirmation adds to the gift of new life received in Baptism by deepening and sealing the Gift of the Holy Spirit.
3. The Sacred Chrism symbolizes the power of the Holy Spirit.
4. Confirmation ties us more closely to the Church, and through this Sacrament we are strengthened to carry on the Church's mission.
5. Confirmation is the second Sacrament of Christian Initiation.
6. The timing of the celebration of Confirmation differs in the Western and Eastern Churches. In the Western Church, Confirmation is separated from Baptism by many years. In the Eastern Churches, all three Sacraments of Christian Initiation—Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist—are celebrated in the same liturgy, even if the candidate is an infant.
7. Those who are confirmed at or above the age of seven (the age of reason) receive all three Sacraments of Christian Initiation at the same liturgy, usually at the Easter Vigil.
8. Candidates for Confirmation in the Roman Catholic Church must have reached the age of reason, must have confessed all serious, or mortal, sins in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and must have freely asked to receive the Sacrament. Candidates must also be ready to live their lives as disciples of Christ.
9. The essential parts of the Sacrament of Confirmation are the anointing of the forehead with Sacred Chrism (in the East, other body parts are also anointed) along with the laying on of hands and the following words: "Be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit" (*Rite of Confirmation, 27*).
10. The celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation also includes the renewal of baptismal promises, the laying on of hands by the bishop (as he extends his hands over you, he prays that the Holy Spirit will come upon you), and the anointing with Sacred Chrism by the bishop.

(The quotation on this handout is from the English translation of *Rite of Confirmation* [Second Edition] © 1975, International Commission on English in the Liturgy Corporation [ICEL], number 27, as found in *The Rites of the Catholic Church*, volume one, prepared by the ICEL, a Joint Commission of Catholic Bishops' Conferences [Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1990]. Copyright © 1990 by the Order of St. Benedict, Collegeville, MN. Used with permission of the ICEL. Published with the approval of the Committee on Divine Worship, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.)

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