

Lesson 25 – Confirmation

Grades 6-8

Lesson Preparation:

Read Lesson 25 in the Baltimore Catechism.

Opening Prayer:

Scripture: “[Stephen], filled with the Holy Spirit, looked up intently to heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God, and he said, ‘Behold, I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God.’ ...They threw him out of the city, and began to stone him...As they were stoning Stephen, he called out, ‘Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.’” Acts 7:55-59

Leader: Lord, open our minds and come into our hearts, so that we may truly understand the sacrament of confirmation, and receive the strength it offers us. Amen.

Together: Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created, and You shall renew the face of the earth. O God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit, did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit, we may be truly wise and ever rejoice in His consolations, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Opening:

This lesson is about the sacrament of Confirmation. To help students get a sense of the power of the sacrament at the start of the lesson, begin with the following story about a third century soldier named Marinus:

In the year 264, a soldier in the Roman army named Marinus, was turned in for being a Christian, which was punishable by death at the time. When it was discovered that Marinus was a Catholic, he was offered a promotion in the army if he would deny his faith, or death if he remained faithful to Christ. Marinus was given three hours to decide. He was understandably scared and called for his bishop. The bishop administered the sacrament of confirmation to Marinus and then offered him a sword and a book of the Gospels and told him to choose one. Marinus, with strength from the Holy Spirit, chose the Gospels. He received a martyr's death, and also a martyr's reward.

Let students know that the sacrament of confirmation doesn't magically take away fear, but it does give us strength. The grace we receive in this sacrament gives us the weapons we need to fight for God in the battle of good versus evil, and to persevere in faith.

Watch the Lesson 25 Video on Catholic Brain

Comprehension Questions: *Note: These questions are asked after the video, just to check student comprehension. They are not discussion questions, but be sure students understand the answers to these questions before moving on*

1) What is confirmation?

The sacrament of the Holy Spirit in which we receive the grace to be faithful soldiers for Christ.

2) Who is the usual minister of confirmation?

The bishop is the usual minister, but a priest can administer the sacrament with the permission of his bishop.

3) What oil is used in the sacrament of confirmation?

Sacred chrism

4) Why can we receive this sacrament only once?

Like baptism, it leaves a permanent mark on our soul.

5) Review with the students the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit (lesson 10) which are strengthened in us in the sacrament of confirmation – wisdom, knowledge, understanding, counsel, fortitude, piety, fear of the Lord.

Discussion Questions: *Note: These questions are for student discussion. The students should consider these questions and comment on them. There are some key points included in this lesson, after each question, that you can use to help guide their discussion toward truth. It's important that the students think about and discuss these things, but that they don't leave the discussion with false impressions about what is true.*

1) Why might confirmation be called a sacrament of evangelization and martyrdom?

We are fighting a spiritual battle, and confirmation gives us the grace to fight faithfully for God. This means fighting for souls, which includes evangelization. It also means the ability to suffer for our faith, which is a form of martyrdom.

2) Some people consider confirmation a type of graduation, since it usually comes at the end of a period of religious instruction. Why is it more of an enlistment than a graduation?

Confirmation is an enlistment in God's army. Through it we receive the weapons we need to fight evil, remain faithful even under persecution, and win souls for God.

Go Deeper:

Using Catholic Brain, look up a few saints and read about their lives. Choose at least one martyr. Let the students suggest their favorite saints. As you read about these saints, discuss how the Holy Spirit was at work in their lives.

Activity:

Get creative – imagine you are a missionary, bringing the Faith to a foreign land. Think about what kind of challenges you would face, what dangers would confront you, what excitement and joys you would experience. You can be a missionary in modern times or any period in the past. Then, write a letter home to a loved one describing your experience and your goals for your work in your mission land.

Closing Prayer:

Leader: Lord, we are always confronted with the battle between good and evil. We choose to fight for You, Lord, for your Truth, and for souls. Thank you for the sacrament of confirmation, so we will always be prepared for battle. Amen.

Together: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.