

Confirmation Supplemental Lesson

The Sacrament of Confirmation

LESSON FOCUS

At the Last Supper, Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit to the Apostles to strengthen their faith and help them in the work of building the Church. The Holy Spirit came on Pentecost, ten days after Jesus' Ascension. All Christians receive the Holy Spirit at Baptism. In the Sacrament of Confirmation, his power in our lives is strengthened. This Sacrament deepens and increases the sanctifying grace in our souls, equipping us with the special strength and gifts of the Holy Spirit that enable us to live our Christian faith better, in word and deed.

AIMS

- Students will learn that through an outpouring of the Holy Spirit, Confirmation strengthens them so that they may live out their faith as their initiation into God's family is completed.
- Students will know the outline for the rite of Confirmation.

CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH REFERENCES

- Confirmation: 1285–321
- Effects of Confirmation: 1302–5, 1316–17
- Pentecost: 731–32
- Signs and Rite of Confirmation: 1293–301, 1320–21
- Symbols of the Holy Spirit: 694–701

Begin the Lesson

Preparation (5–10 minutes)

Use one or more of the following resources for prayer and student preparation for the lesson.

SCRIPTURE:

“Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent to them Peter and John, who came down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit; for the Spirit had not yet fallen on any of them, but they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit” (Acts 8:14–17).

When Peter and John laid hands on the people they received the Holy Spirit. The laying on of hands is a **sign of Confirmation**. The bishop will lay his hands on you and say, “Be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit.” We received the gifts of the Holy Spirit at Baptism, and they are strengthened at Confirmation.

SACRED ART:

“St. Paul’s Basilica,” photograph

The Basilica of St. Paul in Rome reminds us how Jesus promised that the power of the Holy Spirit will work through the Church: “But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you” (John 14:26). From the moment the Holy Spirit descended upon the Apostles, his power moved through the Church. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, Saint Paul became a great evangelizer.

PRAYER WITH CHILDREN: Apostles’ Creed, Student Text, p. 181

Proclamation (1 minute)

(Proclaim slowly, then repeat.)

The Sacrament of Confirmation strengthens God’s grace within us to assist us in living our Christian faith and being witnesses of Christ.

MATERIALS

- Bible
- Chalkboard or dry erase board
- Student notebooks and pencils; students are encouraged to take notes.
- Optional: Items needed to make collages of the Holy Spirit (see Focus 1 Optional Activities)
- Appendix B-27
- **Y** YOUCAT
- **Y** YOUCAT Confirmation
- Diocese of Lincoln resources on www.faithandlifeseries.com

WORDS TO KNOW

Paraclete: a title for the Holy Spirit. It means someone who pleads before a judge on behalf of someone else. Jesus himself used this title in speaking about the Holy Spirit. Saint Paul the Apostle said that the Spirit would plead for us before God, and help us to pray.

witness: someone who can give testimony about someone else. In Christian vocabulary, a witness is someone who gives testimony about Jesus to others. We witness to Jesus by good example, holy lives, or even martyrdom.

sign of Confirmation: the Bishop (or in some cases a priest) imposes his hand on the head of a person and anoints him with chrism while saying, “Be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit.” The message is that of spiritual strength and power in the Holy Spirit.

patron saints: the saints after whom we are named at Baptism and at Confirmation. These saints pray for us in a special way and help us to reach heaven. We should learn about our patron saints and try to love God as they did.

Lesson Explanation (40–50 minutes)

Explain focus points in your own words or use the discussion points and questions.

Focus 1: The Father and the Son sent the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. The Holy Spirit sanctifies us; he is our counselor and comforter. The Holy Spirit gives us inner strength and keeps our friendship with Jesus active and alive.

- **What do you know about the Holy Spirit?** (*Answers will vary.*)
- Think about the power of the Holy Spirit: On the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit descended upon the disciples, and because they were so filled with the power of the Holy Spirit, the Church grew to three thousand people in one day. It doesn’t stop there. The Church grew to the four corners of the earth and now is the oldest institution in the world—all of this from twelve fishermen who were filled with God’s Spirit.
 - **Do you realize what kind of power the Holy Spirit has? Let’s name some of the powerful things that the Holy Spirit has done in the Bible.** (*Answers will vary. For example, the Holy Spirit filled the Apostles with the power of God after Jesus ascended into heaven; he comes to us through the sacraments; miracles; healings; etc.*)
 - Sometimes we take the power of God for granted. Think about
 - The power of the Holy Spirit in the following: Creation.
 - The writing of the Bible.
 - The birth of the Savior, born of a Virgin.
 - When Jesus changed the bread and wine into his Body and Blood at the Last Supper.
 - When the Holy Spirit descended upon the Apostles.
 - How through the power of the Holy Spirit we receive the grace of the seven Sacraments.
 - The removal of Original Sin from a child being baptized.
 - In Confirmation we receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit.
 - Jesus’ authority is passed on through Holy Orders;... and there are many, many more examples.
- **What do we know about the Holy Spirit?** (*Make a list on the board with the following.*)
 - The Holy Spirit is the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity.
 - The Holy Spirit is the love between the Father and the Son (God is pure Spirit; the Holy Spirit is the fruit of the love of the Father and Son). As stated in the Creed, the Holy Spirit “proceeds from the Father and the Son.”
 - The Father and the Son sent the Holy Spirit. He proceeds from the Father and Son.

- He spoke through the prophets.
- He is equal with the Father and Son.
- He is good, all loving, all present, all merciful, all powerful.
- He is gentle; he will never force himself on us.
- He sanctifies us, comforts, and protects us (and the Church).
- ***Do you pray to the Holy Spirit? (Answers will vary.)***
 - ***Why should we pray to the Holy Spirit? (Answers will vary; lead students to understand the following.)***
 - Because we have been baptized, the Holy Spirit is powerful in our personal lives. He teaches us, he guides us, he comforts us, he shows us when we sin, and he makes us holy.
 - ***Can you name a time that the Holy Spirit worked in your life or did one of those things for you? (Allow students to give examples or witnesses; you too may want to give a witness.)***
 - The Holy Spirit is our comforter, who gives us inner strength and helps keep our friendship with Jesus active and alive. We should ask him to comfort us and give us strength in our faith.
 - The Holy Spirit helped the disciples to remember all that Jesus had taught them. He will help us too to remember all that we have learned about him, especially if we ask, which we should do when we are telling others about our faith.
 - The Holy Spirit gives us his gifts to help us live our Faith and share it with others: wisdom, understanding, knowledge, fear of the Lord, counsel, fortitude, and piety. (**Note:** the gifts of the Holy Spirit will be covered in the next chapter.)
 - ***Have you ever shared your faith with others? (Answers will vary.)***
 - ***If so, did you ask the Holy Spirit for his guidance? (Answers will vary. We should always ask the Holy Spirit for his guidance.)***
- Through the Sacrament of Confirmation, the Holy Spirit and his gifts will be strengthened in you.
- ***What is one thing you can do to open your heart more fully to the grace of the Holy Spirit every day? (Answers will vary; for example, pray to the Holy Spirit, read Scripture, study, and learn the Faith.)***
 - ***When we invite guests to our home, what do we do? (We clean, prepare food, and make sure things are good for our guests.)***
 - Through Baptism we are temples of the Holy Spirit; we should prepare for him to dwell in us so that he can make a difference in our lives.
 - The Apostles spent nine days with Mary, in prayer, asking for the gift of the Holy Spirit and preparing for him.

The Holy Spirit

Titles

- Paraclete
- Advocate
- Counselor
- Spirit of Truth
- Spirit of Adoption
- Spirit of Christ
- Spirit of the Lord
- Spirit of God
- Spirit of Glory

Symbols

- Dove
- Fire
- Light
- Clouds
- Hand of God
- Powerful wind
- Water

Novena Prayers

A novena is a nine-day prayer usually made to a saint or as part of a special devotion. Often they are prayed for a special intention. Some common novenas are:

- Divine Mercy Novena: from Saint Faustina
- Saint Jude Novena: patron of hopeless causes
- Little Flower Novena: to Saint Thérèse of Lisieux
- Novena to the Sacred Heart
- Saint Benedict Novena
- Novena for Priests
- Saint Joseph Novena

- *How can we prepare for Confirmation and live as temples of the Holy Spirit?* (We too can spend time in prayer, asking for the gift of the Holy Spirit. We can also attend Mass, pray to our patron saint, and serve the community.)
- One name for the Holy Spirit is **Paraclete**. “Paraclete” is from the Greek word *parakletos*, which means “someone who helps and guides others.”
 - *Has the Holy Spirit ever helped you or guided you?* (Answers will vary.)
 - *What are some other names you have heard for the Holy Spirit?* (See sidebar.)
 - **Review** the titles and symbols of the Holy Spirit using the sidebar.
 - *Which one speaks to you the most? Why?* (Answers will vary. See sidebar.)

Conclusion: The Father and Son sent the Holy Spirit to be our counselor and comforter. The Holy Spirit gives gifts that we can share with others.

FOCUS | OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

- Have the students make collages of the Holy Spirit using the titles and symbols of the Holy Spirit.
- Divide the students into groups, and have them look up the Scripture passages below where the Holy Spirit is revealed:

Genesis 2:7; Isaiah 61:1; Matthew 3:16; Mark 1:10; Luke 3:22; John 1:32–34; 14:25–31; 16:12–15; 20:22–23.
- Explain that the Apostles gathered with Mary in an upper room in Jerusalem (see Acts 2:1–4) and prayed for nine days for the coming of the Holy Spirit. On the tenth day, Jesus’ promise to send the Holy Spirit was fulfilled. We use this as a model for novenas (a nine-day prayer). Have students begin a novena, using one from the sidebar or selecting one from a Catholic devotional.
- Choose one or more of the following for discussion:
 - **Y** YOUCAT 38: *Who is the Holy Spirit?*
 - **Y** YOUCAT 113: *What does it mean to say I believe in the Holy Spirit?*
 - **Y** YOUCAT 115: *Under what names and signs does the Holy Spirit appear?*
 - **Y** YOUCAT 117: *How could the Holy Spirit work in, with, and through Mary?*
 - **Y** YOUCAT 118: *What happened at Pentecost?*
 - **Y** YOUCAT 119: *What does the Holy Spirit do in the Church?*
 - **Y** YOUCAT Confirmation 7.4: *The Holy Spirit and your heart—Pentecost for you and me as well.*

Focus 2: Confirmation. The Sacrament of Confirmation strengthens God's power within us to assist us in living our Catholic Faith. We become witnesses for Christ. The matter is the anointing with the oil of chrism and the laying on of hands. The form is "Be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit." The effects of Confirmation are an indelible mark on our souls, sanctifying grace, and the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

- *What do we mean by the word "initiation"? (The act of beginning something.)*
- *What are the three Sacraments of Initiation into the Church? (Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist.)*
 - The Sacrament of Confirmation completes our initiation into the Church.
 - Each of us has already received the gifts of the Holy Spirit at Baptism, but these gifts need to be strengthened in us. The Sacrament of Confirmation seals us with the gifts of the Holy Spirit.
- It is important to understand that Confirmation is the BEGINNING of our life in the Church.
 - *Have students explain in their own words how Confirmation is our initiation into the Church and why this is the beginning of their new life in Christ. (Answers will vary. Lead students to understand that our journey of faith is a lifelong process. Confirmation is just the beginning of our journey.)*
 - *Is there anyone in your life who has a deep relationship with Christ? (Answers will vary.)*
 - *What do they do to continually grow in their faith? How do they stand out as good Catholics? (Answers will vary.)*
 - Confirmation is not about choosing to be Catholic, because you already are Catholic. It is about strengthening and completing the grace you were given at Baptism.
- *For those of you who have attended a Confirmation, who administers the Sacrament? (The bishop.) Who is our bishop? (Answers will vary.)*
- Sometimes the bishop might not be available to preside at a Confirmation. In this case, he can give a priest permission to celebrate Confirmation.
- Matter, form, and effects of Confirmation:
 - The matter of Confirmation is the anointing with chrism and the laying on of hands.
 - The form is "Be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit."
 - **Demonstrate** Confirmation to the students by having a few volunteers come up to be the confirmandi, and you can play the part of the priest.
 - The effects of Confirmation are:
 - You will receive an indelible mark upon your soul.
 - You will receive an increase in sanctifying grace.
 - You will be bound more perfectly to the Church.

- You will be strengthened to spread and defend the faith and receive an outpouring of the gifts of the Holy Spirit
- You will be strengthened in the gifts of the Holy Spirit.
- Confirmation increases the power of the Holy Spirit within us. With Confirmation comes responsibility—responsibility to serve God faithfully and to be open to God’s will.
 - Keep in mind what the Apostles accomplished after Pentecost Sunday. Because they were filled with the Holy Spirit, they became **witnesses** and stood up for Jesus.
 - *Can you think of a time that you did not stand up for your faith? Name someone whom you would like to witness to. (Answers will vary.)*
 - Many people fall away from their faith or have no faith at all. **What can you do to bring them the Good News of Jesus Christ?** (Answers will vary; for example, pray for them, tell them about Jesus and what he did for them, tell them about the Sacraments and the Church, etc. But most importantly be a good witness to your faith.)
 - God moves in our lives; sometimes we may not see it. We may even think that we accomplish things totally on our own accord.
 - **Name a time you should have given more credit to the work of the Holy Spirit in your life.** (Answers will vary.)
 - Jesus Christ redeemed us, and now we have hope for eternal life. However, the Holy Spirit is the one who will sanctify us or help us to be holy and virtuous. This is part of our journey of faith.
 - For example, we may have a tendency to be impatient or disrespectful. We should ask the Holy Spirit to fill us with his Spirit so that through the grace received, we will be able to change our ways. Remember, we always must make a choice to cooperate with God’s grace.
 - **Can you think of an area in your life where you need to be transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit?** (Allow students to answer if they would like; otherwise, give students time to think about calling on the power of the Holy Spirit.)
 - God calls each of us to follow his will. Sometimes we are more inclined to follow our own will.
 - **Can you think of a decision you made where you did/ did not follow God’s will?** (Answers will vary.)
 - **How do you think the Sacrament of Confirmation will change you?** (Answers will vary.)
- God always works in our lives but not necessarily when or how we would like him to do so. Sometimes we have to be patient. If we have the will to do as we ought, we should ask the Holy Spirit to help us. We must trust that he will stay with us and help us no matter what.
 - **Can you think of a time you became discouraged in your faith?** (Answers will vary.)

- *What should we do if God does not act in our lives when we want and how we want? (Pray, receive the Sacraments, ask for an increase in the gifts of the Holy Spirit, always trust, and never give up.)*

Conclusion: Through Confirmation, the power of the Holy Spirit is strengthened in our lives. We must choose to cooperate with the graces we receive. The matter of Confirmation is the anointing with chrism and the laying on of hands. The form is “Be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

FOCUS 2 OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

- Review the seal, or permanent mark, of the Sacrament of Baptism and the Sacrament of Confirmation: In Baptism, we are spiritually marked as belonging to Christ, and the character imparted to our souls remains there forever. In Confirmation, we are made witnesses and soldiers for Christ. In a way, we can say that God sees the seal of all the baptized and says: “He’s mine” and “She’s mine.” To spread the Good News and sustain the Church, God can look upon the confirmed and say, “I’ll send him.” With Confirmation comes responsibility—the responsibility to serve God faithfully and to be open to his will.
 - *Explain how you see Confirmation as a new responsibility. How will you live out your responsibility to serve God faithfully and be open to his will? (Answers will vary.)*
- Have students read the Examination of Conscience on Student Text, p. 185. Have students list the ways they would like to have the Holy Spirit work in their lives.
- Choose one or more of the following for discussion:
 - **Y** YOUCAT 120: *What does the Holy Spirit do in my life?*
 - **Y** YOUCAT 203: *What is Confirmation?*
 - **Y** YOUCAT 204: *What does Sacred Scripture say about Confirmation?*
 - **Y** YOUCAT 206: *Who can be confirmed and what is required of a candidate for Confirmation?*
 - Diocese of Lincoln, PowerPoint “The Sacrament of Confirmation” in the Grade 7, chapter 19 resources at www.faithandlifeseries.com

Focus 3: The Rite. Confirmation is celebrated within Mass, during which time a renewal of baptismal promises is made. The bishop is the ordinary minister at the Confirmation liturgy.

- The Sacrament of Confirmation completes the initiation of a baptized Catholic. To be confirmed, one must have already been baptized. We renew our baptismal promises at Confirmation.

- **Renew** the baptismal promises with the students. Have students respond with “I do” for each question. Explain to students that they already made these promises when they were baptized; however, they will renew these promises in Confirmation.
 - *Do you renounce Satan? And all his works?*
 - *And all his empty show?*
 - *Do you renounce sin, so as to live in the freedom of the children of God?*
 - *Do you renounce the lure of evil, so that sin may have no mastery over you?*
 - *Do you renounce Satan, the author and prince of sin?*
 - *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, suffered death and was buried, rose again from the dead, and is seated at the right hand of the Father?*
 - *Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting?*
- **Review** the rite of Confirmation. Write the outline on the board (see bold words below), and explain each part. Confirmation takes place during the Mass.
 - **Liturgy of the Word** with reading of the Gospel. These are taken from the Mass of the Holy Spirit.
 - **Presentation** of the candidates. The pastor declares their readiness for the Sacrament and presents them to the bishop.
 - **Homily.** The bishop usually gives a homily on the importance of Confirmation.
 - **Promise to renounce sin and Satan.** This is usually done in a question-and-answer format.
 - **Profession of faith.** This is usually done in a question-and-answer format.
 - **Imposition of hands.**
 - **Anointing and signing with the Cross.** This is done individually. The bishop anoints the confirmandi with sacred chrism when the confirmandi and their sponsors come forward for the Sacrament. The sponsors have their right hands on the right shoulders of those to be confirmed. The anointing and laying on of hands are the matter of the Sacrament.
 - **Anointing.** “Name, be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit.” (Usually a patron saint name is taken at Confirmation. This is the form of the Sacrament.)
 - **Continuation of Mass** and special blessing of the newly confirmed.

Bishop's Invocation of the Holy Spirit

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.

—*Ordo Confirmationis*

- Each candidate for Confirmation will select a sponsor.
 - The sponsor's role is to walk the journey of faith with you. The sponsor is a guide, a spiritual advisor, and a friend. Many times, the sponsor is a godparent, but he does not need to be.
 - The sponsor is someone who faithfully lives the Faith and can help you do the same. The sponsor must be a confirmed Catholic.
- **Have any of you thought about who you might select as a sponsor? Why?** (*Answers will vary.*)
 - **Share** who you picked as a sponsor and why. You might want to discuss the qualifications of a sponsor according to the diocese.

Conclusion: The Sacrament of Confirmation completes the initiation of a baptized Catholic. We renew our baptismal promise at the Mass. The bishop is the ordinary minister of Confirmation.

FOCUS 3 OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

- Have students research and select a patron saint for their Confirmation name. This can be presented or turned in at the next class. The report should be a page long and discuss how he is a model of faith.
- The students should rehearse the responses for Confirmation: Be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit; R/ *Amen*. Peace be with you; R/ *And with your spirit*.
- Read sidebar "Bishop's Invocation of the Holy Spirit."
- Choose one or more of the following for discussion:
 - **Y** YOUCAT 205: *What happens in Confirmation?*
 - **Y** YOUCAT Confirmation—Chapter 12: *The Rite and what happens in Confirmation*.
- Diocese of Lincoln video "Why is Confirmation Important?"
- Appendix B-27: *The Role of the Sponsor and Patron Saint Resources*.
- For more information on the role of the sponsor, see Appendix B-27.

FOCUS 4 OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

- Have students write a prayer to their patron saints, asking for their intercession and aid to be mature Catholics.
- Have students write some discussion questions about the Faith that they would like to ask their sponsors.
- For more information on choosing a patron saint, see Appendix B-27.

Focus 4: Maturity. As confirmed Catholics, we have a responsibility to live the gospel, to serve God, and to live a moral and sacramental life. Our **patron saints** can assist us in this mission. We are called to be disciples of Christ.

- Confirmation marks the *beginning* of your Christian adulthood. You will grow in maturity your whole lives, but the Sacrament recognizes you as being responsible for your growth in the faith. **Draw the chart below:**

Natural Life	Supernatural Life
Birth	Baptism
Maturity	Confirmation

- Our goal on this earth is to be disciples of Christ ... to follow in his ways, to do his will, to witness to others, and to serve the Lord in all that we do.
 - *What does it mean to you to be a disciple or follower of Christ?* (Answers will vary. Encourage students to give specifics.)
- Once you are confirmed, you will have more responsibility to keep your obligations as a Catholic.
 - *What do you think they might be?* (Attend Mass every Sunday and on Holy Days of Obligation, live a sacramental life and stay in the state of grace, continue to learn about the Faith, discern and do God's will, be a Christian example to the world, become active in your parish community, and serve others in need.)
- To be ready for Confirmation, we need to be prepared.
 - *What will you do to prepare for the Sacrament of Confirmation?* (Spend time in prayer, go to adoration, attend Mass, go to confession, complete service projects, journal, talk to my sponsor about the Faith.) Discuss each of these thoroughly.

Conclusion: Once you are confirmed, you will have the responsibility to live the gospel more fully, serve God, and live a sacramental life. Praying to our patron saints can help us.

Review Lesson (3 minutes)

- The Holy Spirit sanctifies us; he makes us holy by giving us inner strength to keep our relationship with Jesus active and alive. He is our counselor and comforter.
- The Sacrament of Confirmation strengthens God's power within us to assist us in being disciples of Christ.
- The effects of Confirmation are an indelible mark on our souls, sanctifying grace, and the gifts of the Holy Spirit.
- Confirmation is celebrated within Mass, during which time a renewal of baptismal promises is made. The bishop is the ordinary minister at the Confirmation liturgy.
- As confirmed Catholics, we have a responsibility to live the gospel, to serve God, and to live a moral and sacramental life.

Application (10–20 minutes)

Choose one or more of the following for discussion.

- Have the students write eyewitness accounts of Pentecost. These accounts may be in the form of a letter or a newspaper article.
- Tell students that in Baptism we receive an indelible mark that makes us children of God. ***How does Confirmation strengthen our relationship with God?*** (By being fully bonded to the Church, we become witnesses to Christ. Confirmation will strengthen God's power within us.) ***Give a specific example of how you will be a witness to Christ with your friends or family. Do you need the grace of Confirmation to help you?*** (Answers will vary. Yes, grace is needed.)
- Tell students that the Sacrament of Confirmation calls on all Catholics to spread the faith to others. ***Name someone you know who is a witness to the faith that you could talk to about the Faith or invite to your youth group or church.*** (Answers will vary.)
- Dramatize a Confirmation. Appoint a bishop, his assistants, and the confirmandi.

Celebration (5–10 minutes)

Choose one or more of the following.

- Song: "Come Down, O Love Divine," *Adoremus Hymnal*, #440. Go to www.ignatius.com/promotions/adoremus-hymnal/downloadable-mp3s.htm.
- Concluding Prayer: Thank the Holy Spirit for his gifts.
- Petitions: Students will offer prayers of thanksgiving.

CHAPTER 19

The Sacrament of Confirmation

Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent to them Peter and John, who came down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit; for the Spirit had not yet fallen on any of them, but they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit.

Acts 8:14–17

During the Last Supper the Apostles knew that Jesus was saying farewell to them. He was talking about going to someplace where they could not yet follow (Jn 13:36). Jesus knew that this saddened them, but he promised to send Someone who would give them comfort and strengthen their faith:

And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor, to be with you for ever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him; you know him, for he dwells with you, and will be in you (Jn 14:16–17).

The word *Paraclete* means counselor, someone who helps and guides others, an advocate. The “Spirit of Truth,” who is the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity, was to come to the followers of Jesus as a counselor to give inner strength and help their friendship with Jesus to

remain alive and active. He would give them all the spiritual help they needed in order to spread the Faith among others.

The Promise Fulfilled

After Jesus returned to the Father, the Apostles and other disciples of Jesus spent nine days with Mary, the Mother of Jesus, in prayer, asking God to send the gift of the Holy Spirit. On Pentecost Sunday the promise was fulfilled as Saint Luke tells us:

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly a sound came from heaven like the rush of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues as of fire, distributed and resting on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other

101

tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance (Acts 2:1–4).

The symbols of wind and fire reveal the powers which the Spirit gives us. Wind is an invisible but very real force: it can even lift houses and cars off the ground! Fire is something that cleanses things; for example, sometimes fire is used to clear a piece of land of shrubs and other rubbish so that new trees can be planted. So the Spirit is like an invisible

But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.

(John 14:26)



102

power within us that cleanses our hearts of sin and selfish desires. In other words, he makes us strong and mature Christians.

We Receive the Fullness of the Spirit

While it is Baptism that first gives us the Holy Spirit, *Confirmation* increases his power within us. This Sacrament strengthens the new life we have received as infants. It helps us to witness or stand up for Jesus among our friends and classmates.

The New Testament does not tell us just when our Lord gave this Sacrament to the Church, but the day of Pentecost is usually seen as the first “Confirmation,” and throughout the Acts of the Apostles we see many instances of the Apostles confirming new believers. When the followers of Jesus baptized people, they would send for one of the Apostles to come and give Confirmation to the new Christians. Usually the bishop is the minister of this Sacrament, although he may delegate this faculty to priests.

The **sign of Confirmation** is the laying on of the hand and the anointing with sacred chrism. The laying on of hands shows us that a spiritual gift is being handed on to the Christian; the chrism reminds us of our share in Jesus’ triple office and connects this Sacrament with Baptism. The words which the bishop says (“... be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit”) tell us what gift is being handed on.

The Effects of Confirmation

Like Baptism, Confirmation gives us a seal, or spiritual mark, that shows we are Christians. It deepens the life of sanctifying grace and increases it within us. While at Baptism we were spiritual infants, now we are made spiritual adults who are given the responsibility of spreading the Faith to others. This is the special meaning and commitment of Confirmation.

In order to spread the Faith the Spirit gives us special gifts that we will learn about in the next chapter. Like the twelve Apostles we can be truly transformed into courageous followers of the Lord, who are willing even to lay down our lives for the love of God and the truths of the Faith.

The Rite of Confirmation

This beautiful Sacrament usually takes place during a special “Mass of the Holy Spirit” that is celebrated by a bishop. It is like other Masses except that the prayers and readings are all about the role of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Catholic Christian. The administration of the Sacrament of Confirmation takes place after the homily.

First, since Confirmation is a strengthening of Baptism, the bishop leads everyone in the renewal of the baptismal vows. Once again we reject sin and Satan; we profess the Creed and profess our loyalty to Jesus. Then the bishop stretches out his hands over the group to be confirmed while praying:

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* (Rite of Confirmation).

After this comes the actual administration of the Sacrament through the anointing with sacred chrism and the laying on of hands. Each candidate, together with his sponsor, comes before the bishop. The bishop dips his right

thumb into the chrism and places his hand on the head of the person being confirmed, making the Sign of the Cross with the chrism on the forehead of the candidate, while saying:

(Confirmation name), be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit.

The newly confirmed answers, “Amen.” The bishop then says, “Peace be with you,” and the newly confirmed answers, “And with your spirit.” Through this sacred rite the person has been sealed with the Spirit and has received the outpouring of his powerful gifts, which he received at Baptism. (Of course, to receive this gift most fruitfully, we must come to our Confirmation in the state of grace and with a spirit of faith in God.) The Mass then continues as usual, and at the end a special blessing is given to the newly confirmed Catholics.

Living as Mature Christians

The closing prayer for the Mass of the Holy Spirit reveals how we are to live as mature followers of Jesus:

God our Father, complete the work you have begun and keep the gifts of your Holy Spirit active in the hearts of your people. Make them ready to *live his gospel* and eager to *do his will*. May they *never be ashamed to proclaim to all the world Christ crucified*, living and reigning for ever and ever. *Amen* (Rite of Confirmation).

This is a very big mission for the new adult Christians! But the Holy Spirit helps us to carry it out. We can see how the Holy Spirit strengthens Christians by considering the lives of the saints. They show us that everyone, no matter what age or situation in life, can live the gospel, do God’s will, and proclaim Jesus to others. This is the main reason why we receive

103

baptismal, and sometimes confirmation, names. We are placed under the spiritual protection of one of God’s saints to whom we pray and who prays for us and inspires us by the example of his or her life. This holy person becomes our **patron saint**.

Words to Know:

Paraclete witness
sign of Confirmation patron saints

Q. 148 What is the Sacrament of Confirmation?

The Sacrament of Confirmation makes us more perfect Christians and soldiers of Christ by means of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and the strengthening of his gifts which we first received at Baptism (CCC 1285, 1316).

Q. 149 What is the matter of Confirmation?

The matter of Confirmation is the laying on of the hand and anointing with sacred chrism (CCC 1293, 1300).

Q. 150 What is the form of Confirmation?

The form of Confirmation is the following words: “Be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit” (CCC 1300).

Q. 151 Who is the minister of Confirmation?

The ordinary minister of Confirmation is a bishop, although a priest may receive the special faculty to administer the Sacrament of Confirmation (CCC 1313).

Q. 152 How does the bishop administer Confirmation?

The bishop administers Confirmation to the one being confirmed by anointing him with chrism 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” (CCC 1300).

Q. 153 How does Confirmation make us more perfect Christians?

Confirmation makes us more perfect Christians and witnesses of Jesus Christ by giving us an abundance of the Holy Spirit, his grace and his gifts, which confirm and strengthen us in faith and in the other virtues (CCC 1303).

104

Q. 154 *What does the anointing on the forehead in the form of a cross signify?*

The anointing on the forehead in the form of a cross signifies that the confirmed person, as a brave witness of Jesus Christ, should not be ashamed of the Cross nor fear enemies of the Faith (CCC 1295–96).

Q. 155 *Who are the sponsors in Confirmation?*

The sponsors should be good Christians in order to give good example and spiritual assistance to those who are confirmed (CCC 1311).

Q. 156 *What are the duties of one who is confirmed?*

One who is confirmed has the duties of witnessing to and defending the Faith, and continuing to live his baptismal promises (CCC 900, 1303).



105

Confirmation Supplemental Lesson

The Gifts of the Holy Spirit

LESSON FOCUS

At our Confirmation, we receive an outpouring of the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit. These gifts help us to live a life that is pleasing to God and give us joy. To use these gifts to their fullest, we must practice virtue and ask the Holy Spirit to help us use his gifts when we need them. The more we do this, the more the twelve fruits of the Holy Spirit will be evident in our life. The fruits are the effects of the seven gifts.

AIMS

- Students will learn that they must be rooted in Christ in order to have a fruitful, spiritual life.
- Students will learn how the gifts of the Holy Spirit help them live as Christians and to mature in their faith, so that they might be temples of God and bear fruit.

CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH REFERENCES

- Confirmation: 1285–321
- Gift of the Holy Spirit in Confirmation: 1299
- Gifts and Fruits of the Holy Spirit: 768, 798–801, 1830–32, 1845
- Holy Spirit and the Gift of God: 733–36
- Names of the Holy Spirit: 691–93

Begin the Lesson

Preparation (5–10 minutes)

Use one or more of the following resources for prayer and student preparation for the lesson.

SCRIPTURE:

“You will know them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thorns, or figs from thistles?” (Matthew 7:16).

Jesus is telling us that we will know a disciple of Christ because he will bear good fruit such as the twelve fruits of the Holy Spirit. We will know our spiritual life is healthy if we see these fruits in our relationships with God and others.

SACRED ART:

The Annunciation (detail), Juan de Flandes

In the detail of this painting of the Annunciation we can see the dove, a symbol of the Holy Spirit. It was by the power of the Holy Spirit that Mary became the Mother of Jesus. This shows us that the power of the Holy Spirit has no limits. The Holy Spirit can move our hearts, change our minds, change our ways, convince us of our sins, comfort us when we are down, guide us when we are in trouble, or just be with us when we are lonely. Let’s take a moment now to call on the power of the Holy Spirit in our life today.

PRAYER WITH CHILDREN: Apostles’ Creed, Student Text, p. 181

Proclamation (1 minute)

(Proclaim slowly, then repeat.)

The gifts of the Holy Spirit help us to recognize and respond to God’s will.

Lesson Explanation (40–50 minutes)

Explain focus points in your own words or use the discussion points and questions.

MATERIALS

- Bible
- Chalkboard or dry erase board
- Student notebooks and pencils; students are encouraged to take notes.
- Chart paper (see Application)
- Post-It notes (see Application)
- **Y** *YOUCAT*
- **Y** *YOUCAT* Confirmation
- Diocese of Lincoln resources on www.faithandliveseries.com
- Grade 7 Appendix B-35, "Gifts and Fruits of the Holy Spirit" at www.faithandliveseries.com

WORDS TO KNOW

indwelling: the truth that the Blessed Trinity lives in our souls by sanctifying grace. This makes our bodies temples of God.

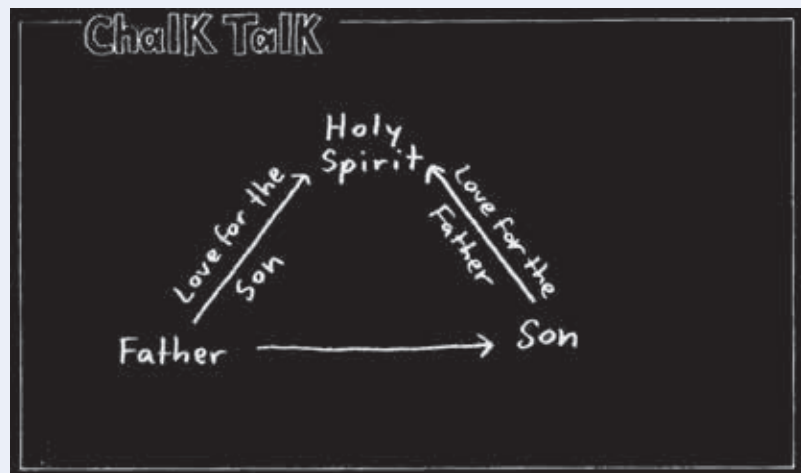
seven gifts of the Holy Spirit: these are seven supernatural powers we receive at Baptism and which are strengthened at Confirmation. They are wisdom, understanding, knowledge, counsel, fortitude, piety, and fear of the Lord.

twelve fruits of the Holy Spirit: these are the signs of a healthy Christian life. They are charity, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, generosity, gentleness, faithfulness, modesty, self-control, and chastity.

Focus 1: Indwelling of God. The mystery of God within us is called the **indwelling** of the Blessed Trinity. If we are in the state of grace, God dwells within us.

- *What is the Blessed Trinity? (God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.)*
- The Blessed Trinity is a relationship of Persons, three Persons in one God.
 - Within this relationship of Persons, we can understand the meaning of love.
- **Draw the Chalk Talk** and use the explanation below to explain that the Holy Spirit is the love between the Father and the Son.
 - The Father gives his love to the Son; the Son responds to the love of the Father (ultimately through his total self-giving act of obedience on the Cross); the love of the Father and the love of the Son is the Holy Spirit.

CHALK TALK: THE HOLY SPIRIT, THE LOVE BETWEEN THE FATHER AND THE SON



- We receive the indwelling of God at our Baptism, and this indwelling is strengthened at Confirmation. This makes our bodies temples of the Holy Spirit.
- *What does it mean to be a temple of God? (We have the spirit of God dwelling within us.)*
- *Because we are temples of the Holy Spirit, do you think that we will be able to love as God loves? What does this mean? (Answers will vary; explain using points below along with Chalk Talk above.)*
 - If we love as God loves, we will respond to the love of the Trinity just as Christ responded to the love of the Father, with self-giving love. We should respond to God and to others by giving of ourselves as Christ did.
 - *How did Jesus give himself completely to the Father? (By his death on the Cross.)*

Divine Praises

Blessed be God.
Blessed be his Holy Name.
Blessed be Jesus Christ, true God
and true man.
Blessed be the name of Jesus.
Blessed be his most sacred Heart.
Blessed be his most Precious Blood.
Blessed be Jesus in the most holy
Sacrament of the Altar.
Blessed be the Holy Spirit, the
Paraclete.
Blessed be the great Mother of God,
Mary most holy.
Blessed be her holy and Immaculate
Conception.
Blessed be her glorious Assumption.
Blessed be the name of Mary, Virgin
and Mother.
Blessed be Saint Joseph, her most
chaste spouse.
Blessed be God in his angels and in
his saints.

FOCUS | OPTIONAL ACTIVITY

- Have the students write a prayer of praise to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, giving thanks for the Blessed Trinity's actions in their lives.
- Choose one or more of the following for discussion:
 - **Y** YOUCAT Confirmation 7.5: *Why nothing seems to satisfy my heart.*
 - **Y** YOUCAT Confirmation 7.6: *Make me beautiful within.*
 - **Y** YOUCAT 496: *Why do we need the Holy Spirit when we pray?*
 - **Y** YOUCAT 120: *What does the Holy Spirit do in my life?*
 - **Y** YOUCAT Confirmation, 9.2: *If you want to understand the mystery of the Church.*

- We can describe Jesus' death on the Cross as an act of total self-giving love. We are not called to die on a cross, but we are expected to sacrifice for God and others.
- **Name some examples of self-giving love for God and others.** (*Answers will vary. Encourage students to give specific examples of giving ourselves to God and making sacrifices for others.*)
- When we give ourselves to God in acts of self-giving love, we are imitating the love of the Trinity. This love always bears fruit.
- The fruit of the love of the Father and the Son is the Holy Spirit. The fruit of our love for God is the good that comes from Christlike acts of self-giving love. For example, if we show our love for God by helping those in need, the fruit of that love would be the joy that we bring to those people.
- **If the Blessed Trinity is a communion of Persons who represent total self-giving love, how should we want to love?** (*As God loves, with total self-giving love.*)
- **What does it mean to love with total self-giving love?** (*To love God and one another not only when it is easy, but when we sacrifice something of ourselves.*)
- **Give an example.** (*Answers will vary. For example, a student who is very shy breaks his leg and needs help getting around; we are called to help this student even if he is not our best friend.*)
- **Contemplate imitating the love of the Trinity:** Close your eyes and receive the love of the Father. Respond to his love by offering yourself in prayer. Think about how you will go out and give this love to others.
- At the Last Supper, Jesus said, "If a man loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him" (John 14:23).
- At Baptism God (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) comes to live within us.
 - **Take a few moments to quiet** students to contemplate that because they are baptized, they are filled with the Blessed Trinity.
 - **How should we respond to this gift of the Trinity?** (*First, we should respond in love. One way to respond in love is to pray.*)
- Pray the Divine Praises (see sidebar).

Conclusion: We receive the indwelling of the Blessed Trinity at our Baptism. We are called to respond to God's love by giving him praise.

Focus 2: Gifts of the Spirit. The gifts of the Holy Spirit help us to recognize and respond to God's will.

- The **seven gifts of the Holy Spirit** are
 - Wisdom
 - Understanding
 - Counsel
 - Knowledge
 - Piety
 - Fortitude
 - Fear of the Lord
- At Baptism, the Holy Spirit bestows upon us seven gifts. At Confirmation, these gifts are stirred up and fully activated.
- The seven gifts of the Holy Spirit are the work of the divine. They help us to respond to God's voice in our hearts. They help us to live according to God's plan. (Write "know God's will and do God's will" on the board in two columns.)
 - The gifts that help us *know* God's will are wisdom, knowledge, understanding, and counsel. (List these in columns.)
 - The gifts that help us *do* God's will are piety, fortitude, and fear of the Lord. (List these in columns.)
 - It is important to understand that the gifts of the Holy Spirit are supernatural gifts. For example, if you have knowledge that one plus one equals two, that is not a supernatural gift. The supernatural gift of knowledge would be if God gave you knowledge to understand one of the mysteries of God. Another example would be wisdom. You may be wise if you do not put your hand on a burning stove, but supernatural wisdom would be having the wisdom to set our hearts on heaven instead of the things of this world.
 - *Are you familiar with any of these gifts? Which ones?* (Answers will vary.)
 - *With which gifts are you not familiar?* (Answers will vary.)
- Let's take a look at the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit. The first four help us know God's will for our lives and the last three help us live it. (Use the sidebar on p. 339 as you explain. Make sure that students differentiate between natural and supernatural.)
- The following are the gifts that help us *know and discern* God's will. (See Grade 7 Appendix B-35, "Gifts of the Holy Spirit" at www.faithandlifeseries.com.)
 - **Wisdom:** to see as God sees, to see what is truly valuable in life, to judge according to God's standards.
 - *Can you give an example of a time when you used wisdom?* (Answers will vary.)
 - *Who are some people you know that have the gift of wisdom?* (Answers will vary.)
 - **Understanding:** insights to the mysteries of the faith; helps us explain the faith to other people.
 - *Who are some people in your life who have the gift of understanding?* (Answers will vary.)
 - *What are some truths of the Faith you would like to understand better?* (Answers will vary.)

- **Knowledge:** to see everything in relation to God and eternity; knowing the spiritual value and use of created things. Knowledge helps show the worth and value of earthly things so that materials hold very minimal value. The gift of knowledge helps us use earthly goods in a holy way.
 - *What material things do you feel you need to give up to make room for God in your life? (Answers will vary.)*
 - *How can earthly goods help us in our journey for holiness and heaven? (Answers will vary.)*
- **Counsel:** to make correct decisions about God's will for our lives; seeing what is best for others in relationship to God.
 - *How do you make decisions? On what criteria do you base your decisions? (Answers will vary. Remind students that we should base our decisions on being a disciple of Christ and following God's will.)*
 - *Do you allow God to play a part in your decisions? (Answers will vary. Remind students that through prayer and reading Scripture, etc., we open the door to God's will.)*
- The following are the gifts that help us follow God's will:
 - **Fortitude:** the strength to be faithful to Christ when it is difficult; strength for God.

Gifts of the Holy Spirit

GIFT	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE
WISDOM	Seeing what is truly valuable in life and judging according to God's standards	Missing a favorite TV show because you desire to contemplate or speak with God in prayer
UNDERSTANDING	Insight into the Faith	Understanding mysteries to a degree, in contrast to people who, in lacking this gift, do not understand them at all
KNOWLEDGE	Spiritual know-how—knowing the spiritual value and use of created things	Knowing when a certain thing can lead us closer to God (e.g., enjoying his gifts at the proper time), or when it could lead us away from him (e.g., eating too much is gluttony)
COUNSEL	Seeing what is best for us in relationship to God's will	Discerning God's will in a given situation
FORTITUDE	Strength in difficulty to be faithful to Christ	Courage to give up wealth, friends, and family for Christ, even to the point of suffering martyrdom
PIETY	Affection for God as our Father who loves us and who is worthy of worship	Saint Thérèse often spoke of her heavenly Father and placed great trust in his mercy
FEAR OF THE LORD	Seeing the evil of sin and having a healthy respect for almighty God	A movement within us, which stops us from sinning out of healthy fear of offending God

FOCUS 2 OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

- Fully discuss each of the gifts of the Holy Spirit.
- Have the students write a prayer to the Holy Spirit, asking for each gift to be strengthened in their souls.
- Discuss how the students' patron saints specifically responded to and lived out one or more of the gifts of the Holy Spirit.
- Discuss **Y** YOUCAT 310: *What are the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit?*
- Diocese of Lincoln Power-Point, "Gifts of the Holy Spirit"

- *Give an example of a time in your life when you overcame a difficult situation or temptation with God's help. (Answers will vary.)*
- *Who in your life exhibits the gift of fortitude? (Answers will vary.)*
- **Piety:** to worship God and love him as our Father; affection for God as our Father who loves us and who is worthy of worship. This gift helps us fulfill the commandments: love God above all else and love your neighbor as yourself.
 - *Which do you have a harder time following: Loving God above all else or loving your neighbor as yourself? (Answers will vary.)*
 - *What are some ways to live out the gift of piety? (Answers will vary.)*
- **Fear of the Lord.** to see the evil of sin and the goodness of God; fearing the judgment of God; having a healthy respect for almighty God.
 - *Do you fear God out of wrath and punishment or out of love and respect? (Answers will vary.)*
 - *Who is someone you know who you would say has the gift of fear of the Lord? (Answers will vary.)*

Conclusion: The seven gifts of the Holy Spirit are wisdom, understanding, knowledge, counsel, fortitude, piety, and fear of the Lord. The seven gifts are the work of God and help us to respond to God's voice in our hearts.

Focus 3: Living the Gifts. We must pray to use the gifts of the Holy Spirit well and respond to the prompting of the Holy Spirit. The gifts are like virtues; we must exercise them.

- When a gift is given to us, we can accept it or decline it. We can open it right away or wait until later. We may open it right away, but not use it until later.
 - *Have you ever received a gift that you didn't use right away? Why? (Answers will vary.)*
- The gifts of the Holy Spirit really are gifts. They are freely given to us in Baptism and Confirmation.
 - These gifts are not some sort of magic. They don't suddenly make us perfect Christians. We must exercise these gifts by using them in different situations. We need to pray to the Holy Spirit to strengthen these gifts in us and to teach us how to use these gifts.
 - *What spiritual exercises can we do to help us in using the gifts of the Holy Spirit properly? (Spend time in prayer, practice using them, and know them well so we can ask for them.)*

Conclusion: We need to pray to the Holy Spirit to help us use the gifts properly. We must exercise the gifts in different situations.

Saint Teresa of Avila

Saint Teresa of Avila joined the Carmelite Order in 1535. Carmelites are dedicated to prayer and communion with God. However, the convent that Teresa had joined, like many Carmelite convents in Spain, had abandoned their mission. Instead of dedicating themselves to prayer, nuns in Teresa's convent spent time visiting both in the convent and out in the town. Teresa tried to dedicate herself to prayer for the first several years of convent life, but struggled greatly. Finally she got so caught up in all the visitors and the social life of the convent that she stopped praying entirely. However, God called her back and she responded, dedicating herself to prayer once more. Thereafter, Jesus blessed her with many visions and other spiritual graces. As Teresa prayed, she was caught up in the love of God and sometimes even began to levitate off the floor. At the age of forty-three, Saint Teresa set out to found a new convent, one that would return to the Rule of the Carmelites and dedicate itself to prayer. She received much persecution, even from members of her own Order, but she persevered, convinced that God was with her. Her nuns followed a strict rule, but it was all done out of love for God. Her reformed Order is now known as the "Discalced" (without shoes) Carmelites. Saint Teresa died in 1582, was canonized in 1622, and was named a Doctor of the Church in 1970.

FOCUS 3 OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

- The students may look at newspaper stories and discuss what gifts of the Holy Spirit have been or should have been used by the people in the stories.
- Read about Saint Teresa of Avila (see sidebar).
 - **What challenges did she face?** (*She was in the Carmelite Order, which was dedicated to prayer. The only problem was her Order went away from that mission and its members began visiting in both the convent and the town. She herself stopped praying. But Jesus blessed her, and she began praying again. She founded a new convent and faced great persecution from the members of her Order. She knew God was with her, and she was able to form a new Order called the "Discalced" [without shoes] Carmelites.*)
 - **What gifts of the Holy Spirit did she demonstrate most powerfully?** (*She demonstrated the gifts of wisdom, understanding, and fortitude most powerfully.*)
- Fully discuss how to use each of the gifts of the Holy Spirit.
- Choose one or more of the following for discussion:
 - **Y** YOUCAT 496: *Why do we need the Holy Spirit when we pray?*
 - **Y** YOUCAT Confirmation 8.3: *School of Prayer*
 - **Y** YOUCAT Confirmation 9.3: *You are the Body of Christ.*
 - **Y** YOUCAT Confirmation 9.4: *You are a temple of the Holy Spirit.*
 - **Y** YOUCAT Confirmation 9.5: *You are the People of God.*
 - **Y** YOUCAT Confirmation 9.6: *A little bit of organization.*

Focus 4: Fruits of the Holy Spirit. If we grow in prayer and in the use of the seven gifts, we will see certain positive effects in our lives. These effects are called the **twelve fruits of the Holy Spirit**. The twelve fruits are charity, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, generosity, gentleness, faithfulness, modesty, self-control, and chastity.

- There is an old saying: "You will know a tree by its fruit."
 - **What do you think that means?** (*It means the fruit that is growing on the tree determines the kind of tree it is. For example, we know an apple tree because there are apples growing on it.*)
 - **What kinds of fruit would a good tree or a good Christian bear?** (*Answers will vary.*)
- When Christians grow in prayer and in use of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, the good **fruits** of the Holy Spirit will be visible in us. **Copy on the Board:**

Gifts of the Holy Spirit —————> Fruits of the Holy Spirit

Fruits of the Holy Spirit

FRUIT	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE
CHARITY	Constant, generous self-forgetfulness and concern for God and others	Rarely thinking about oneself because of great concern for God and others
JOY	Cheerfulness in the Lord and in his gifts to us	Always making others happy by one's own cheerfulness
PEACE	Reflection of trust in God	Rarely worrying, always trusting in the Lord
PATIENCE	Bearing the difficulties of life with resignation to God's will	Never expressing irritation or despair in trying and difficult times
KINDNESS	Being tenderhearted and sensitive to the needs of others, moving us to action	Being thoughtful about "little things"; always being there when there is need
GOODNESS	Love that flows out to others	Being someone who can be depended upon to do the right thing
GENEROSITY	Sharing with others	Helping a friend
GENTLENESS	Being ever gentle with others	Being aware of the feelings of others
FAITHFULNESS	Being dependable	Never speaking behind someone's back
MODESTY	Holy reverence toward others and oneself	Holding oneself with dignity, not trying to show off
SELF-CONTROL	Proper balance in our desire for pleasure	Not overeating
CHASTITY	Self-control about sexual desires	Being faithful to one's husband/wife, saying no to impure movies, suggestions, etc.

FOCUS 4 OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

- Have the students write a prayer to the Holy Spirit, asking for the fruits to be developed in their lives.
- Have the students write down ways they see each of the fruits of the Holy Spirit in their own lives, and ways they can grow in each of the fruits.
- Choose one or more of the following for discussion:
 - **Y** *YOUCAT 311: What are the fruits of the Holy Spirit?*
 - **Y** *YOUCAT Confirmation, 7.7: The fruits of the Holy Spirit.*

- **Using the chart** below, go through the fruits of the Holy Spirit. (See Grade 7 Appendix B-35, "Fruits of the Holy Spirit" at www.faithandliveseries.com.) *Have the students come up with their own examples of each of the fruits. (Answers will vary.)*
- Remember, if you respond to the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, you will see certain effects in your lives—the fruits of the Holy Spirit.
 - *Which of the fruits do you see in your life? Which don't you see or need to work on? (Answers will vary.)*
 - *Once you are confirmed, what do you think is the key to having the gifts of the Holy Spirit work in your life and actually seeing the fruits of the Holy Spirit evident in your life? (Continually pray to the Holy Spirit for an increase in the gifts, especially ones in which we are in need; practice the fruits of the Holy Spirit; go to confession when we see that we are lacking; continually receive the Eucharist.)*

Conclusion: As we grow in the gifts of the Holy Spirit, we will see certain effects in our lives, the fruits of the Holy Spirit. The twelve fruits are charity, joy, peace, kindness, goodness, generosity, gentleness, faithfulness, modesty, self-control, and chastity.

Review Lesson (3 minutes)

- The mystery of God within us is called the indwelling of the Blessed Trinity. If we are in the state of grace, God will dwell within us.
- The gifts of the Holy Spirit help us both recognize and respond to God's will.
- The seven gifts of the Holy Spirit are wisdom, understanding, counsel, knowledge, piety, fortitude, and fear of the Lord.
- We must pray to use the gifts of the Holy Spirit well and respond to the prompting of the Holy Spirit. The gifts are like virtues; we must exercise them.
- If we grow in prayer and in the use of the seven gifts, we will see certain positive effects in our lives. These effects are called the twelve fruits of the Holy Spirit.
- The twelve fruits are charity, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, generosity, gentleness, faithfulness, modesty, self-control, and chastity.

Application (10–20 minutes)

Choose one or more of the following for discussion.

- Ask the students to consider how open they are to the indwelling of God. Discuss ways to listen to God and to discern his voice in their hearts.
- Write the seven gifts on the board or on chart paper. Give each student seven Post-It notes. Direct students to write an example of each gift. Have the students put the appropriate Post-It on the gift. Select students to read the responses for each gift, and discuss.
- Have the students find examples of the gifts of the Holy Spirit in the lives of the saints.
- Divide the students into pairs or groups. Assign each group a gift or fruit of the Holy Spirit. Have the students give a presentation on the gift or fruit, giving the definition, an example of when we would need to use it, and how we can strengthen it.
- Have students read through the list of the gifts of the Holy Spirit and decide on which one they feel they are lacking. Have students pray to the Holy Spirit for an increase in that gift. Help students to understand that through their Confirmation they will be strengthened in all of the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Celebration (5–10 minutes)

Choose one or more of the following.

- Song: “Come Down, O Love Divine,” *Adoremus Hymnal*, #440. Go to www.ignatius.com/promotions/adoremus-hymnal/downloadable-mp3s.htm.
- Concluding Prayer: Say a prayer of petition to the Holy Spirit asking for a strengthening of all the gifts of the Holy Spirit.
- Petitions: Students will offer prayers of thanksgiving.

Grade 7 Student Text reproductions available as a downloadable pdf at www.faithandlifeseries.com.

CHAPTER 20

The Gifts of the Holy Spirit

You will know them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thorns, or figs from thistles?

Matthew 7:16

At the Last Supper Jesus spoke about a very special gift that he was going to give his followers: “If a man loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him” (Jn 14:23).

Jesus tells us that God will actually come to live within those who love him and obey his commands! And where the Father and Son are, of course, the Spirit will be there also. This gift of God-within-us is called the **indwelling** of the Blessed Trinity. As long as we are in the state of sanctifying grace, God will live in our souls. Saint Paul wrote about this in his first letter to the Corinthians: “Do you not know that you are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit dwells in you? If any one destroys God’s temple, God will destroy him. For God’s temple is holy, and that temple you are” (1 Cor 3:16–17).

The mystery of God-within-us is often mentioned in the New Testament by Saint Paul. He reminds us that this presence makes us more than God’s creatures—it makes us his children: “And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, ‘Abba! Father!’” (Gal 4:6).

The Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Along with this holy presence of God, the Spirit brings *seven gifts* to our souls at Baptism. We receive an outpouring of these **seven gifts of the Holy Spirit** at Confirmation. They are the same spiritual powers that were poured out upon Jesus as he began his mission of preaching the Good News of salvation. The prophet Isaiah foretold these gifts eight hundred years before Jesus was born:

And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. And his delight shall be in the fear of the LORD (Is 11:2–3).

Let us look carefully at each of these important gifts, to learn what they are meant to do for our lives:

WISDOM: Helps us to see that the world is only a temporary place for us, that heaven is our true home. It helps us to set our hearts on heaven and to order our lives according to



God’s will. It helps us to see things as God sees them.

UNDERSTANDING: Gives us an insight into the mysteries of faith and helps us to explain the Faith to others.

KNOWLEDGE: Helps us to see everything in life in relation to God and eternity, to know him, the world he created, and his plan for men.

COUNSEL: Helps us to make correct decisions about God’s will for our lives.

FORTITUDE: Gives us the strength to be faithful to Christ even when it is difficult to do so.

PIETY: Inspires us to worship God and to love him as our Father and to love our neighbor as ourself.

FEAR OF THE LORD: Shows us the evil of sin and helps us to desire to live in God’s grace. It is also called “wonder and awe” in God’s presence because it reminds us that he is great and all powerful.

Many people wonder if they really have these gifts; they don’t seem to be present in their lives. Perhaps these Christians have looked upon the gifts as some kind of magic—they expect them to “pop up” when needed. But this

is not how the gifts work in us. Like faith, hope, and charity, we have to exercise our spiritual muscles in order to use these wonderful gifts. We must pray to the Holy Spirit asking him to show us how to use them. Try to memorize these gifts and then ask God to help you use them when a need arises. For example, if you are strongly tempted to go to a party where drugs or alcohol will be used, ask for the gift of fortitude to help you overcome the temptation. The Holy Spirit *will* answer your prayer and show you what to do.

The Fruits of the Holy Spirit

As we grow in prayer and in the use of these seven gifts, we will see certain effects taking place in our lives. These are called the **twelve fruits of the Holy Spirit**. When we see a tree that is blossoming and producing delicious fruit, we know that it is a healthy plant. It is the same with the Christian life. We will know that our spiritual life is healthy if we see these fruits in our relationships with God and others.

The twelve fruits of the Spirit are:

1. CHARITY: Love for God and for others.
2. JOY: Happiness in living the Christian life.
3. PEACE: Inner calmness, even in difficulties.
4. PATIENCE: Bearing the difficulties of life with resignation to God's will.
5. KINDNESS: Sympathy and concern for the needs of others that move us to help them.
6. GOODNESS: Giving good example in all that we do.
7. GENEROSITY: Willingness to share our time and possessions with those in need.
8. GENTLENESS: Being gentle in our words and deeds toward others.
9. FAITHFULNESS: Loyalty to God and the people we are committed to, such as one's parents, spouse, and good friends.

10. MODESTY: Respecting ourselves and others in conversations, dress, etc.

11. SELF-CONTROL: Proper balance in our desire for pleasure.

12. CHASTITY: Proper attitude toward others and control over our sexual desires.

Jesus told us that we will produce these fruits of the Spirit only if we are united with him through prayer and the Sacraments. He compared himself to a vine which carries sap to its branches; the "sap" is a symbol for his grace and power: "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in me, and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing" (Jn 15:5).

Words to Know:

indwelling seven gifts of the Holy Spirit
twelve fruits of the Holy Spirit

Q. 137 *What are the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit?*

The seven gifts of the Holy Spirit are wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord (CCC 1831).

Q. 138 *What are the twelve fruits of the Holy Spirit?*

The twelve fruits of the Holy Spirit are charity, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, generosity, gentleness, faithfulness, modesty, self-control, and chastity (CCC 1832).