



PREPARATION FOR CONFIRMATION

“Bishops are ‘beyond all others the ones primarily responsible for catechesis, the catechists par excellence.’ As chief catechist in the diocese, the bishop is responsible for the total catechetical mission of the local church. Catechesis is one of the fundamental tasks of the bishop’s ministry” (National Directory for Catechesis #54).

It is with this mandate that I put forth the following questions and answers to assist the faithful in preparation for the reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation. It is my firm desire that all Catholics know and live the Catholic Faith to the fullest. The content below is divided into three main focus areas: Faith, Worship and Witness. I have also included reflection questions for the candidates to consider.

Please note that the * after the question indicates this question is for reflection, not memorization.

Confirmation Questions and Answers

Faith – God is revealed to us through Sacred Scripture and the teachings of the Catholic Church

1. Define the mystery of the Trinity. (Catechism of the Catholic Church) (CCC 253-255)

The Blessed Trinity is the central mystery of our Catholic faith. There are three Divine Persons in one God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

When you bless yourself, how can you be more aware that you are invoking the Trinity?

2. Where can we find the teachings of the Catholic Church? (CCC 95)

The teachings of the Catholic Church can be found in Scripture, Tradition (precepts of the faith continuously transmitted from the Apostolic Church to the present day) and the Magisterium (teaching authority of the Church).

Knowledge of the teachings of the Catholic Church is essential for one being confirmed in

the faith. What are you doing to gain greater knowledge of your faith?

3. What is Scripture and how do we as Catholics understand it? (CCC 101-141)

Scripture is the inspired word of God as found in the Bible in human words.

How often do you read Sacred Scripture and what is your favorite book of the Bible?

4. What are the four Marks of the Church? Briefly explain. (CCC 813-870)

The four marks of the Church are **One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic**.

- The Church is **one** because of her source, foundation, and bonds of unity in Christ.
- The Church is **holy** because she is united with Christ, Who through the Church sanctifies all people making possible holiness in life.
- The Church is **catholic** in that the Church is universal (all people in all times and all places)
- The Church is **apostolic** because she can trace her teaching and authority back to the Apostles and thus to Christ.

How have you experienced that the Church is “one” when you have worshipped in different parishes?

5. When did Jesus’ disciples first experience the gift of the Holy Spirit? How does Sacred Scripture describe the event? (CCC 731-732)

The Holy Spirit came upon the disciples on the feast of Pentecost, fifty days after Easter. “When the time for Pentecost was fulfilled, they were all in one place together. And suddenly there came from the sky a noise like a strong driving wind, and it filled the entire house in which they were. Then there appeared to them tongues as of fire, which parted and came to rest on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in different tongues, as the Spirit enabled them to proclaim” (Acts 2: 1-4).

What are the signs that tell you that the Spirit is alive in your life?

6. Name the Ten Commandments. (CCC 2083-2557)

1. I am the Lord your God: you shall not have strange gods before me.
2. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.
3. Remember to keep holy the Lord’s Day.
4. Honor your father and mother.
5. You shall not kill.
6. You shall not commit adultery.

7. You shall not steal.
8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
9. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.
10. You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.

How do you honor the third Commandment?

11. What are the three central teachings of our Church concerning the Blessed Virgin Mary? (CCC 490-493, 966)

The three central teachings of our Church concerning the Blessed Virgin Mary are:

- The **Immaculate Conception** (Mary was conceived without original sin)
- **Perpetual Virginity** (Mary was and remained a virgin—before, during and after the birth of Jesus)
- **The Assumption** (Mary was assumed body and soul into heaven)

What is it about Mary that inspires you and makes you want to imitate her?

**Worship – We encounter God through prayer and
the Sacraments both as the Body of Christ and
as individuals who have been baptized into life in Christ**

1. What is a Sacrament? (CCC 1113-1131)

A Sacrament is an outward (visible) sign instituted by Christ to give grace.

Which Sacraments have you already received?

2. Name the seven Sacraments. Name the Sacraments of Initiation, the Sacraments of Healing, and the Sacraments of Service. (CCC 1210-1211)

The seven Sacraments are Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Eucharist, Penance, Anointing of the Sick, Holy Orders, and Matrimony.

The Sacraments of Initiation are Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Eucharist.

The Sacraments of Healing are Penance and Anointing of the Sick.

The Sacraments of Service are Holy Orders and Matrimony.

How can you show a greater appreciation for the gift of the Sacraments?

3. How is Christian initiation brought about through the Sacraments? (CCC 1212)

Christian initiation is accomplished by means of the Sacraments which establish the foundation of the Christian life. The faithful born anew by Baptism are strengthened by Confirmation and nourished by the Holy Eucharist.

What does “being initiated” mean? How does initiation apply to your faith life?

4. How does the Bishop confirm? (CCC 1299)

The Bishop extends his hands over the person to be confirmed and calls upon the Holy Spirit. He then confers the Sacrament by laying hands upon the head of each candidate, anointing the forehead with the sacred chrism, and saying:

“(Name)...be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit. Candidate responds “Amen”

Bishop says, “Peace be with you.” Candidate responds, “And also with you.”

Think about the Christian name you will choose for Confirmation? What are the qualities of that saint that you wish to imitate?

5. What is sacred chrism and why is it used? (CCC 1293-1296)

Sacred chrism is oil mixed with fragrance and consecrated by the Bishop; it is used for anointing in the Rite of Confirmation. Anointing, in Biblical and other ancient

symbolism, is rich in meaning: oil is a sign of abundance and joy; it cleanses, limbers and heals, since it is soothing to bruises and wounds. Oil makes radiant with beauty, health and strength.

Choose one of the above benefits of oil. How does this connect to your life at this particular moment?

6. Why does the Bishop anoint in the form of the cross? (CCC 1303)

The Bishop anoints the forehead in the form of a cross to remind us that we belong to Christ and that we must defend our faith with gratitude for Christ's redeeming death on the cross.

What difference in your life does it make that you belong to Christ?

7. What is the Paschal Mystery? (CCC 1067, 654)

The Paschal Mystery is Christ's work of redemption accomplished principally by his Passion, death, Resurrection, and glorious Ascension. The Paschal Mystery has two aspects: by his death, Christ liberates us from sin and by his Resurrection he opens for us the way to new life.

How are you strengthened and comforted by the Paschal Mystery?

8. How is Christ present in the Eucharistic species? (CCC1374, 1375)

Jesus Christ is present in the Eucharistic species in a unique and incomparable way. He is present in a true, real and substantial way in His body and blood, together with His soul and divinity.

What does the gift of the Eucharist mean to you?

9. What is Prayer? (CCC 2558-2565)

Prayer is turning the heart toward God. When a person prays, he enters into a living relationship with God.

At what times during the day do you pray?

10. What are the various ways to pray? (CCC 2699-2721)

The various ways to pray are vocal prayer, meditation, and contemplative prayer. All three ways of prayer presuppose recollecting one's mind and heart.

What is your favorite way to pray and why?

11. Name the Joyful, Sorrowful, Glorious and Luminous mysteries of the rosary. Briefly explain them.

Joyful Mysteries: The Annunciation, The Visitation, The Nativity, The Presentation in the Temple, The Finding of the Child Jesus after Three Days in the Temple

Sorrowful Mysteries: The Agony in the Garden, The Scourging at the Pillar, The Crowning with Thorns, The Carrying of the Cross, The Crucifixion and Death

Glorious Mysteries: The Resurrection, The Ascension, The Descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, The Assumption of Mary, The Crowning of the Blessed Mother as Queen of Heaven and Earth

Luminous Mysteries: The Baptism at the Jordan, The Miracle at Cana, The Proclamation of the Kingdom, The Transfiguration, The Institution of the Eucharist

Which mysteries of the rosary would you most like to pray? Why?

Witness – We live in the world as disciples of Christ who are called to share the Good News through service and evangelization.

1. Name the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit. Describe briefly. (CCC1831)

The seven gifts of the Holy Spirit are Wisdom, Understanding, Knowledge, Counsel, Fortitude, Piety, and fear of the Lord.

Wisdom helps us to know God's will for our lives.

Understanding enables us to appropriate the faith to make it our own.

Knowledge allows us to come to know God better, that we may have a personal relationship with Him.

Fortitude helps us to be courageous in the defense of our faith.

Counsel aids us in making right judgments.

Piety assists us in being more prayerful, reverent, and holy.

Fear of the Lord is a holy and healthy awe and reverence for God, the creator of heaven and earth.

What gift of the Holy Spirit do you most greatly need at this time? Why?

2. Name the twelve fruits of the Holy Spirit. (CCC1832) *

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

Which fruit of the Spirit do you most admire in someone in your family?

3. What is conscience? How do we develop a well-informed conscience? (CCC 1776-1780, 1783-1788, 1795-1797, 1799-1800)

Conscience is our God-given capacity to understand the law of God written on the heart of every human being. In building our relationship with God, we form our conscience in harmony with the teachings of Christ through the Church and through fervent prayer. An upright and true moral conscience is formed by education and by assimilating the Word of God and the teaching of the Church. It is supported by the gifts of the Holy Spirit and helped by the advice of wise people.

What am I doing to form my conscience?

4. What is the Sermon on the Mount? Where is it found in Sacred Scripture? What are the Beatitudes? (CCC 1716-1719) *

The Sermon on the Mount (Matthew, Chapters 5-7) is the first public sermon given by Jesus Christ. It begins with the Beatitudes but contains many other exhortations on the life lived according to the will of God. The teachings of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount are the way to true happiness. By describing Jesus' own charity, they also show us how God expects us to live.

The Eight Beatitudes are

1. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
2. Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted.
3. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the land.
4. Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied.
5. Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.
6. Blessed are the clean of heart, for they will see God.
7. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.
8. Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Which beatitude do you find the easiest to practice? Why?

5. What is mortal sin? (CCC 1855, 1857) What is venial sin? (CCC 1862) *

A mortal sin is a grave infraction of the law of God that destroys charity in the heart and constitutes a turning away from God. For a sin to be mortal, three conditions must be present: grave matter, full knowledge, and full consent of the will.

Venial sin offends and wounds but does not destroy. It weakens charity; it manifests a disordered affection for created good; it impedes the soul's progress in the exercise of the virtues and the practice of the moral good; it merits temporal punishment.

In living a Christian life, what worldly voices seek to disguise sin?

6. What are the seven corporal works of mercy? (CCC 2447)

The Corporal Works of Mercy are acts of love that help us to care for the physical and material needs of others. They are

1. Feed the hungry
2. Give drink to the thirsty
3. Clothe the naked
4. Shelter the homeless
5. Visit the imprisoned
6. Visit the sick
7. Bury the dead

Name a corporal work of mercy that you are currently practicing.

7. What are the seven spiritual works of mercy? (CCC 2447) *

The Spiritual Works of Mercy are acts of love that help us to care for the needs of people's hearts, minds and souls:

1. Admonish the sinner.
2. Instruct the ignorant.
3. Counsel the doubtful
4. Comfort the sorrowful
5. Bear wrongs patiently
6. Forgive all injuries
7. Pray for the living and the dead.

Name a spiritual work of mercy that you have seen a friend or teacher practicing.

8 Define the meaning of virtue and list the four cardinal virtues and the three theological virtues? (CCC 1804-1805, 1812-1829)

Virtue is the power from God to accomplish some kind of moral good. The four cardinal virtues are prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance. The three theological virtues are faith, hope, and charity (love).

Why is it important to practice the cardinal and theological virtues in your life?

9 What are the seven themes of Catholic Social Teaching? *

The seven themes of Catholic Social Teaching are

- 1 Right to life and dignity of the human person
- 2 Call to family, community and participation
- 3 Rights and responsibilities
- 4 Option for the poor and vulnerable
- 5 The dignity of work and the rights of workers
- 6 Solidarity – we are one human family
- 7 Care of God's Creation

In this time in which we are living, which theme do you find the most important and want to find more information? This information can lead to practice.