

LITTLE FLOWER PARISH 2027
CONFIRMATION PREPARATION
OUR FAITH FOUNDATIONS



The Holy Spirit window in St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, made in the 17th century

Student Name: _____



Ancient Prayer to the Holy Spirit

*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.*

Let us pray.

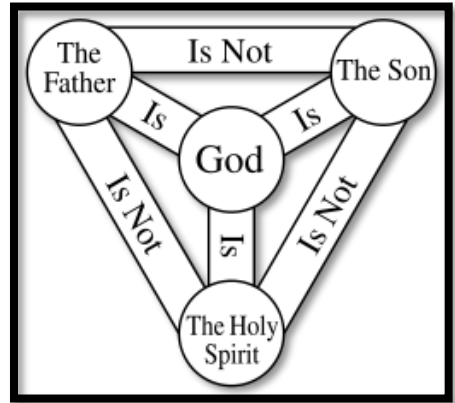
*O God, who have taught the hearts of the faithful
by the light of the Holy Spirit,
grant that in the same Spirit we may be truly wise
and ever rejoice in his consolation.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Section 1

Fundamental Teachings: Who is God and His Church?

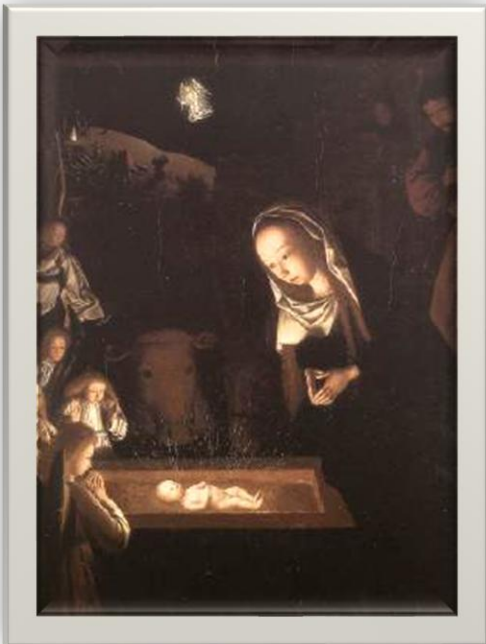
God is a **Trinity** of Persons – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit existing in an eternal communion of love.

“Jesus said, ‘The Father who dwells in me is doing his works. Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me... The Advocate, the holy Spirit that the Father will send in my name—he will teach you everything and remind you of all that I told you.’” (Jn 14: 10-11, 26)



Incarnation

The Son of God took on a human nature – a human body and human soul. God became man – this mystery is called the **Incarnation** (“**enfleshment**”). God accomplished this through the Holy Spirit working with the freedom of Mary, when she said “yes” to God’s intention to be conceived within her womb.



A 17th century depiction of the birth of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, in Bethlehem, in a stable.

Redemption

God came to earth, taking on our humanity, to save us from sin (which, as a deliberate choice for evil, causes separation from God, the Source of our Life and Joy).



God is our Savior, and He accomplishes our salvation through His Son's death on the cross. Jesus, the Son of God, took on himself the consequences of human sin and brought us back to God through this act of self-sacrificing love.

A 15th century depiction of the Crucifixion of Jesus.

The work of redemption was completed by Jesus' **Resurrection**. Death could not hold God; he rose on the 3rd day! He brings new, eternal life to all who believe in Him. Christians celebrate this joyful event on Easter Sunday every year, and also on every Sunday.



A 16th century depiction of the Resurrection of Jesus.

The Church

God wants the salvation he accomplished to be available to people of all times and places. Therefore, while He, the Son of God, was still present bodily on earth, He founded his Church as a way of being present to His people through the ages. Today, the Church He established is found in its completeness in the Catholic Church, led by the Pope, the successor of St. Peter.

Four Marks (Characteristics) of the Church

ONE- The Church is One in faith. All Catholics adhere to the same teachings and are united under one head, the Pope. Together, we recognize the authority of the Pope as the Pastor of the universal Church.

HOLY- The Church's Founder, Jesus Christ is holy. The aim of the Church's teachings and sacraments is the holiness – closeness to God - of her members.

CATHOLIC – The Church is catholic (meaning universal) because the Church includes all ages, races, nationalities, and every time period.

APOSTOLIC- The Church's teachings and governance can be traced back to the apostles, the 12 men chosen by Jesus himself, in an unbroken line of succession. Bishops, leaders of the Church in their own local places, are the successors to the apostles, and are united under the authority of the Pope, the Bishop of Rome.



The inside of St. John Lateran in Rome, the cathedral of the Pope, the Bishop of Rome.

Mary

Mary said “yes” to God’s plan that she become the Mother of Jesus, and thus the Mother of God Himself. She is the perfect disciple – that is, the perfect follower of Jesus, her Son (CCC 495;963).

Mary is entirely human, but God preserved her from all sin. **The Immaculate Conception** refers to this mystery. From the moment of her conception in the womb of St. Anne, her mother, she was without sin (CCC 508).



A 19th century depiction of the Annunciation, when the Angel Gabriel came to Mary with God's message, that she would be the Mother of God's Son.

Mary did not suffer the separation of her body and soul at death; instead, she was taken by God directly into Heaven, body and soul. This mystery is called the **Assumption** (CCC 966).

Mary also has **Perpetual (forever) Virginity** (CCC 496-507), because she gave herself, body and soul, to God alone. She has a close spiritual union with her husband, St. Joseph.

Through her total love for God, Mary became the Mother of all. She nurtures God’s life and grace within us, her spiritual children.

Section 2: The Holy Spirit and the Sacrament of Confirmation

Who is the Holy Spirit?

The Holy Spirit is God, the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit), who dwells in us through sanctifying grace (God's free gift of Himself).

The usual symbol of the Holy Spirit is the **dove** descending, with the three-rayed nimbus (*circle surrounding the head or body signifying holiness – from the Latin word for cloud*), which indicates divinity.



Tongues of fire also indicate the presence of the Holy Spirit. At Pentecost (Acts 2:3), the gift of the Holy Spirit was given to the disciples of Jesus who were gathered after His Ascension into Heaven. Fire indicates divinity in other events of salvation history: God appeared to Moses in the burning bush (Exodus 3:2) and again in fire and smoke on Mt. Sinai (Exodus 19:18).

Wind is an ancient symbol of the presence and power of God in the Old Testament. Wind accompanied the tongues of fire at Pentecost. Jesus teaches, “The wind blows where it wills, and you can hear the sound it makes, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes; so it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.” (Jn 3: 8)

We refer to the Holy Spirit by these names:

Counselor/Advocate/Comforter: “Counselor” is the term used for the Holy Spirit by Jesus in the Gospel of John (John 14:16, 16:17) meaning one called to stand by another’s side in adversity.

Paraclete: English form of the Greek title Parakletos (or Counselor).



What are the gifts of the Holy Spirit?

(from Isaiah 11:2-4)

Acronym for remembering: **WCKPUFF**

The gifts of the Holy Spirit are powers given to us at Baptism and strengthened at Confirmation. They help us persevere in our friendship with God and guide us in our decisions and conduct so that we become more like Jesus. The seven gifts are:

In the 13th century, St. Francis answered the call of the Holy Spirit within him by giving his cloak to someone in need.

W isdom	The gift that enables us to love the things of God and to see things from His point of view
C ounsel	The gift that leads us to seek advice about living a Christian life and enables us to give such advice
K nowledge	The gift that enables us to know the true value of things and judge correctly about them
P iet̄y	The gift that enables us to love and worship God and respect his people and all that he has created
U nderstanding	The gift that enables us to have insights into our faith, into see the meaning of what God has told us about Himself and his creation
F ortitude	The gift that gives us strength to do difficult deeds for the love of Christ
F ear of the Lord	The gift that enables us to recognize the majesty of God and marvel at his love for us

What are the fruits of the Holy Spirit?

The fruits of the Holy Spirit show the effects of God's presence in us. In Paul's letter to the Galatians 5: 22- 23 he lists these fruits:

Love	selfless service to others in word and action; wanting the good for the other
Joy	deep and constant gladness in the Lord
Peace	serenity in the Lord that dispels anxiety
Patience	willingness to endure life's sufferings, difficulties, and routine
Generosity	willingness to give to others even at a cost to yourself
Kindness	generous acts of service performed with compassion
Faithfulness	keeping your promises; being dependable and trustworthy
Gentleness	loving attitude that leads you to be peaceful and gracious, resisting anger
Self-Control	disciplining your physical and emotional desires by being modest and respectful of others

In the Catholic tradition, the Church has added:

Goodness	Nourishing others with charity for the sake of their well-being
Modesty	helping to guard your own bodies and the bodies of others as temples of the Holy Spirit
Chastity	safeguarding the use of your sexual powers in accord with your state of life

What is Confirmation?

Confirmation is the sacrament of initiation that completes Baptism. Through this Sacrament, the gifts of the Holy Spirit are increased to provide the strength to live out God's call to serve the Church in various ways, especially through faithful witness.

1. What is the meaning of the word "Confirmation"?

Confirmation means "strengthening." The work begun by our Baptism is strengthened and completed by Confirmation.

2. What are the actions of the bishop, the minister of the Sacrament, during the conferral of the Sacrament? This is called the **essential rite**.

- laying on of hands over the candidates
- anointing with holy oil in the sign of the cross on the forehead of each candidate, while saying, "*Name, be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit.*"

3. What is the oil called and why is the Sacrament conferred through an anointing?

- The oil is called **Holy Chrism**. It is a mixture of olive oil and perfume called balsam; it is blessed by the bishop during Holy Week.
- In the Old Testament, oil was used in the consecration of a king. It signified that the anointed one was "set apart, marked or sealed" for God, which Christians are when we are baptized, confirmed, or receive holy orders. In the New Testament, it is used to strengthen and heal the body.



- The signing with chrism is an outward sign of the interior strengthening, setting apart, and sealing of the Christian for God. The action of the Holy Spirit begins in a special way to work in the lives of the confirmed. Oil is used for the anointing because it adheres to the skin and is not easily removed.
- In ancient times, especially in the Eastern churches, a lamp was kept burning before the Holy Chrism at all times to signify its sacredness. Confirmation is called Chrismation, the sealing with chrism, in the Eastern churches.



The holy oils, of which chrism is one type, are often reserved in beautiful flasks in churches.

Section 2 Questions:

1. In your own words, what is Confirmation?
2. Why do you think it is important to have the gifts of the Holy Spirit strengthened in us?
3. What difference do you think Confirmation will make in your life?
4. What Saint name did you choose for your Confirmation name and why?
5. What is something about your Confirmation Saint that impresses you, or a quality they have that you would like to imitate in your own life?
6. How do you understand your relationship with the Bishop in the Sacrament of Confirmation?
7. Which fruit of the Holy Spirit do you already practice? How do you practice it?
8. Which fruit of the Holy Spirit would you like to grow in? How will you grow in it?

Section 3

How We Worship: The Sacraments, the Mass, and the Liturgical Year

1. The Sacraments

A Sacrament is (1) an outward sign, (2) of inward grace, (3) instituted by Christ for our sanctification [to help us grow in holiness and ultimately be united with God in Heaven].

Every sacrament is conferred through **matter (the outward sign)** and **form (sacred words)**. Every sacrament has a saving effect on the one receiving it. There are 7 Sacraments that give us grace to grow spiritually as we grow naturally. Each stage or situation of life has its own sacrament. They are divided into 3 types.

Sacraments of Initiation

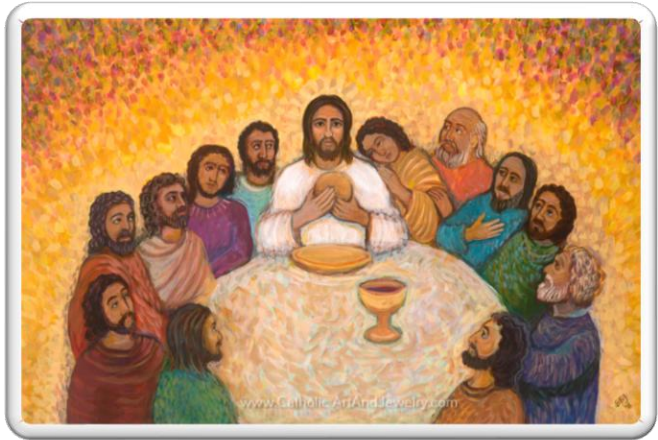


A 17th century depiction of the Baptism of Jesus, with the Holy Spirit descending on Him in the form of a dove.

Baptism: The matter is **water** poured over the person's head. The form is: **"Name, I baptize you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."** The person is cleansed of original sin and becomes a member of the Body of Christ, a beloved son or daughter of God.

Confirmation: The matter is **anointing with Holy Chrism on the forehead, which is done by the laying on of the hands of the bishop**, and the form is: **"Be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit."** The Christian is strengthened in baptismal grace and empowered to witness to the faith.

Eucharist: The matter is **wheaten bread and grape wine**. The form is **Christ's words said at the Last Supper**: "This is My Body; this is My Blood." ("Eucharist" comes from the Greek word meaning "thanksgiving." We are thankful for the gift of Jesus' own body and blood, which saves us.)



The one who receives the Body and Blood of Christ is united with Christ and filled with sanctifying grace.

Sacraments of Healing

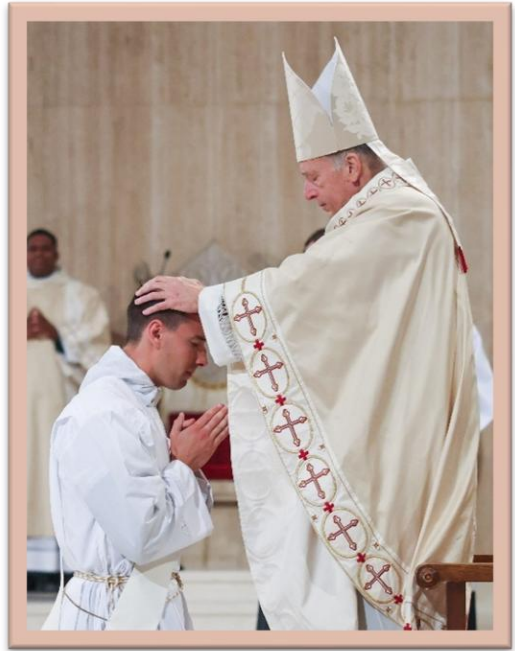
Reconciliation (Penance): The matter is the **confession of sin and the request for pardon**. The form, prayed by the priest, is: "**I absolve you from your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.**" The penitent (the one confessing) is cleansed of all sin and put back into right relationship with God and neighbor. He/she has a fresh start!

Anointing of the Sick: The matter is the **anointing of the forehead and hands with the Oil of the Sick**. The form is **the prayer pronounced for the pardon of sins**. The sick person is strengthened spiritually and sometimes healed physically.

Sacraments of Vocation & Service

Holy orders: The matter is **the bishop's imposition of the hands** on the man being ordained to the priesthood. The form is **the ordination prayer**, which invokes the Holy Spirit. The man is made like Christ and able to give sacramental grace to God's people.

Matrimony (Marriage): The matter is when **the man and woman embody their marriage vows in an expression of consent in the marital act**. The form is **the exchange of vows**. The love of the man and woman becomes a special image of God's love and they are commissioned to bring new life for the world and the Church.



Little Flower's parochial vicar, Fr. Danny, being ordained by Cardinal McElroy

The Mass: Source & Summit of the Christian Life

In the Mass, we celebrate the mystery of Jesus' sacrifice of love on the cross and the sacred meal, the Last Supper, in which we receive his Body and Blood. **Mass is the central act of worship of our faith.**



Order of the Mass:

Introductory Rites

Entrance – Greeting – Penitential Act – Gloria – Collect

Liturgy of the Word

1st Reading - Responsorial Psalm - 2nd Reading – Gospel – Homily
Profession of Faith – Universal Prayer (Intentions)

Liturgy of the Eucharist

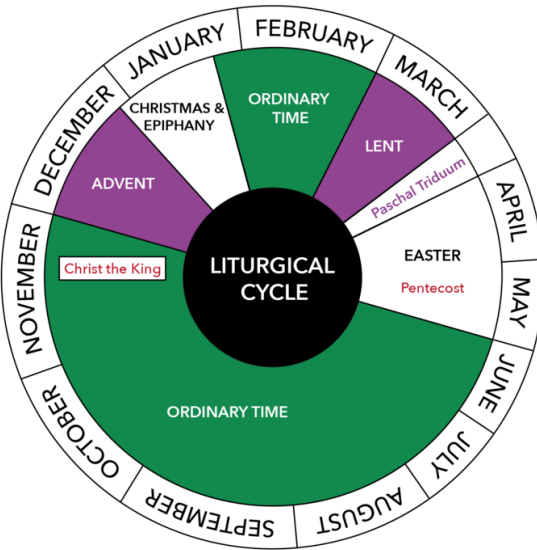
Presentation of Gifts & Preparation of the Altar – Prayer over the offerings
Eucharistic Prayer (Preface, Consecration, Mystery of Faith, Doxology) -
Our Father, Sign of Peace, Lamb of God, Communion, Prayer after
Communion

Concluding Rites

Greeting and Blessing – Dismissal

2. The Liturgical Year

Just like our natural lives, which proceed in cycles (we are constantly starting, growing, finishing, and starting again), so does our prayer life as we worship God and draw closer to Him, year after year. The beginning of the liturgical year is the First Sunday of Advent, which falls at the end of November or the beginning of December.



Holy Days of Obligation are days when the Church requires us to participate in Mass. If we don't, our souls get starved from lack of spiritual food. It is a **serious (mortal) sin** to skip Mass on these days (unless for a serious reason, like sickness) because we refuse God's gift of Himself by our indifference.

Every Sunday is a holy day of obligation.

Section 3 Questions

What is a Sacrament?

Name the 7 Sacraments in this order: Sacraments of Initiation, Sacraments of Healing, Sacraments of Vocation.

Why is attending and participating in Mass important to you?

Why do you think we celebrate the same feasts over and over again, every year?

Section 4 **Morality: How Christians Are Called to Act**

1. The Ten Commandments of God: Bedrock of the Christian Moral Life

The Ten Commandments are basic instructions for being a good human being. They are written on the human heart. This law corresponds to how God made us.

For each commandment with a line underneath, re-phrase it in your own words, without changing the meaning.

1 I am the Lord your God. You shall not have other gods besides me.

2 You shall not take the name of the Lord, your God, in vain.

3 Remember to keep holy the Sabbath day.

4 Honor your father and your 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.

2. The Beatitudes: The Christian Way of Happiness Given by Jesus Christ

With the Beatitudes, Jesus teaches us that we will be happy with a deep, abiding joy even as we suffer in this world. The Beatitudes point us towards what is lasting – ultimately, they are about heavenly joy.

1. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
2. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.
3. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.
4. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.
5. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.
6. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.
7. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons of God.
8. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when men revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven. (CCC 1716)



3. Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy

In these lists, the tradition of the Church expresses the nature of Christian action as shown by Jesus. The Christian cares for those in need by putting his/her own energy and love in play.

Jesus is with us in our attempts to live like Him, just as He was with the disciples on the road to Emmaus. They were grieving His death after the crucifixion, without knowing He had risen and was walking with them!

CORPORAL WORKS OF MERCY

Feed the hungry.
Give drink to the thirsty.
Clothe the naked.
Visit the sick.
Shelter the homeless.
Visit the imprisoned.
Bury the dead.

SPIRITUAL WORKS OF MERCY

Admonish the sinner
Instruct the ignorant.
Counsel the doubtful.
Comfort the sorrowful.
Bear wrongs patiently.
Forgive all injuries.
Pray for the living and the dead.

4. Virtue

Catholic tradition recognizes that acting like Jesus does not happen overnight. We must grow into Christ's attitude by developing virtue.

Virtue [from *virtus* - courage, excellence] is a habitual and firm disposition to do the good (CCC1803); a good habit that makes it possible to act in a way that is pleasing to God.

Theological virtues – faith, hope, and love - orient us directly towards God. They were infused in us at baptism and they are renewed in us by the Eucharist. We don't have to work for them, but we have to safeguard them by avoiding sin.

Other virtues, like justice, prudence, and humility, support the flourishing of faith, hope, and love. They are also elevated by them.

5. Precepts of the Church

Duties of a confirmed Catholic: *The Precepts of the Church describe the minimum effort we must make in prayer and in living the moral life. All Catholics are called to go beyond the minimum in growing in love of God and love of neighbor.*

1. Attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation, and rest on these days.
2. Participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation at least once a year.
3. Receive the Sacrament of the Eucharist at least once during the Easter Season.
4. Provide for the needs of the Church with your time, talent, and treasure.
5. Do penance & observe the days of fast and abstinence given by the Church.

DAYS OF FAST – Adults 18-59	DAYS OF ABSTINENCE – 14+
one full meal not equaling two smaller ones; no eating in between meals	no meat at any meal
Ash Wednesday / Good Friday	Ash Wednesday & All Fridays in Lent



Section 4 Questions:

1. Which corporal or spiritual work of mercy do you think relates closely to your Community Service Project? Why?
2. Which of the virtues would you like to increase in your life? Why?
3. As a Confirmed member of the Church, how will you live out the precepts of the Church?
4. How can you grow in your faith during these last weeks of preparation before Confirmation? How can you grow in your faith within the next year?
5. In 10 years, how do you hope your faith life is better or different?

Community Service Reflection:

1. Describe the experience of your Community Service Project. What did you do, who did you meet, and what did you learn?
2. How did giving of your time and effort impact others and how did it impact you? Explain.
3. At any point in your service, did you experience God's presence? Explain.
4. How do you intend to continue to serve others after Confirmation? Explain.
5. How has your family shown support and encouragement with your Community Service Project?