

The Confirmation Preparation Process

St. Francis de Sales Church
Vernon, NJ



Holy Spirit Prayer

Most Holy Spirit, these young men and women have a mission,
the special work that our Savior left for each of them,
the purpose of which they were born.
But they need Your help, Your presence in their lives, to succeed.

Share Your **Wisdom**,
that they will see the solution to problems
and use their energy to solve instead of complaining.
Fill them with **Understanding** of God's Word
and how it applies to their lives
and untangle the confusion of the decisions that they face everyday.
Teach them how to have good and **Right Judgment**,
show them the way to Christian living
and make them strong against the temptations that surround us all.
Grant them **Courage**,
especially when their efforts seem to fail and they feel like giving up.
Give them a thirst for **Knowledge**,
to see the truth about themselves, their family and friends,
our world and loving God.
Give them a spirit of **Reverence**,
that they will build rather than tear down,
reconcile more than polarize,
and think of others before themselves.
And fill them with **Wonder and Awe**
when they are in Your holy presence. Help them praise Your greatness and
unlimited love, through their thoughts, words, actions and life.

Amen!



The Sacrament of Confirmation

Confirmation is a sacrament in which those who have been baptized receive the fullness of the Holy Spirit, whom the Lord sent upon His Apostles at Pentecost. It is a sacrament that celebrates God's special strengths and gifts in those who have been baptized.

In 1972, the Church published *The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults* or "R.C.I.A." The R.C.I.A. stresses the connections between the three sacraments of Christian initiation -Baptism, Holy Eucharist, and Confirmation.

In Baptism, a person becomes a Christian and receives grace and life from the Holy Spirit. In Confirmation, the Baptismal vows are renewed and the sealing of the Spirit serves as a preparation for a mature Christian life.

In Eucharist, the great sign of Christian unity, the faithful are nourished and strengthened. They are transformed into a more loving and united community of believers. Through these sacramental rites, the faithful are officially acknowledged as Christians. They are commissioned to carry out the mission of Christ and His Church.

In Confirmation, the soul of a baptized Christian is imprinted with a permanent seal that can be received only once and marks this individual forever as a Christian. The gift of the Holy Spirit is the strength from which this individual puts the grace of his Baptism.



*All who are led by the Spirit are
children of God! Romans 8:14*

THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS

Parents:

- are the primary educators of their children
- are responsible for initiating their child into the sacramental life
- serve as models for their children by being committed Catholic Christians
- attend mass weekly with their family
- nurture their child in faith
- should encourage their teen to reflect on and thoughtfully consider the decision to receive the sacrament of Confirmation
- assist their teen with the immediate preparation for the sacrament of Confirmation through prayer, study, regular attendance on Sunday night's and Christian service through approved service.
- should help their child in understanding that the Confirmation service is the beginning of a life committed to Christian service.
- are expected to stress the initiation aspect of the sacrament by encouraging their children to

continue learning more about their faith throughout their lives

CHRISTIAN COMMITMENT TO SERVICE

The Church is a *servant* community and all those accepting full membership in the Church are also accepting the responsibility to serve one another. Confirmation candidates are required to complete a minimum of forty hours of service during the preparation process. Some service opportunities will be provided by the program, but the candidate may select service of their choice subject to approval. Good service projects interact with people in need or in community with others. Service is complete when a "Confirmation Project Completion Form" is handed in with proper signatures.

*Jesus came not to be served, but to serve!
Matthew 20:28*

CONFIRMATION NAMES

The tradition of taking a saint's name has its origin in the early Christian Church. To signify their new life in Christ, the pagans would change their name to that of an early Church leader. Using the baptismal name for Confirmation is preferred because it highlights the relationship between the sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation.

If the candidate chooses to take a new name for Confirmation, it should be a Christian name selected in honor of a Saint or the name of someone the candidate holds in high esteem. This saint or person should be of great importance and example to the candidate. Candidates should choose a patron whose Christian life or virtues can be imitated; thereby, serving as patrons and models in their life journey.

THE RITE OF CONFIRMATION

The sacrament of Confirmation:

- is celebrated during Mass
- begins after the Liturgy of the Word
- is presided over by the local bishop or a designated auxiliary or pastor

There are four parts to the Rite:

- renewal of baptismal vows
- laying on of hands
- anointing with oil
- sign of peace



CANDIDATES PREPARING FOR CONFIRMATION

Candidates:

- must freely choose to be confirmed and make their desire known.
- must be in a state of grace.
- must have adequate knowledge of the Catholic faith.
- must attend Mass weekly including any scheduled Mass within the program. **Attendance at weekly Mass is not an option, it is expected.**
- should receive the sacraments of Reconciliation and Eucharist regularly.
- are responsible for attending all scheduled classes, faith-sharing sessions and any required Antioch meetings. **What is Antioch?** Antioch is an ongoing youth to youth ministry. It is a spiritual program that includes talks, a weekend retreat experience and a 4 ½ hour “Evening of Reflection”. This experience gives high school youth a sense of being called, of belonging, of being church. It offers them an opportunity to listen, discuss and better understand what it means to be a Catholic today.
- must sign up for or submit requests for service and complete a minimum of forty hours of service during the Confirmation Preparation Process. A Confirmation Service Completion Form must be submitted to the Religious Education Office at the completion of all service. All paperwork must have the necessary approvals and signatures. You cannot get credit for a project more than once in the same year (an updated list of potential service is on the web site)
- must in January of their second year take an ACRE assessment test mandated by the Diocese.
- must be aware of the initiation aspect of the sacrament of Confirmation and be committed to *continuing* the faithful practice and study of their religion.
- must be willing to participate in the Confirmation Preparation Process which includes catechesis, prayer, two retreats(Evening of Reflection in first year, Antioch Weekend in second year) and two interviews scheduled in the 2nd year of preparation. (See next page for details).

RETREATS

As part of the Confirmation process all candidates must attend 2 retreats, the “Evening of Reflection” in the 1st year, and an Antioch weekend during the 2nd year. If you did not attend the “Evening of Reflection” during the 1st year you can attend it during the 2nd year. There is one weekend retreat scheduled, if this date does not work for the candidate he/she must locate and have approved a Confirmation retreat at another parish.

What is the “Evening of Reflection”?

The “Evening of Reflection” is a 4 ½ hour retreat that gives the 1st year candidate a full picture of what the Sacrament of Confirmation is. It gives them time to reflect on their choices and responsibilities of being confirmed in the Catholic Church.

What is the Antioch Weekend?

The Antioch Weekend gives teen’s time and space to question whether they are growing in the Catholic Christian faith or just “going through the motions” of a faith that has lost its meaning. Guided by a group of well-trained young men and women, the teens share their faith stories with each other and come to know our Lord Jesus, the Christ, more personally. The weekend is also a time for relaxation and community spirit. “For the Youth by the Youth....”

INTERVIEWS

2nd year

During the 2nd year of preparation, candidates will have two interviews that are conducted under the guidance of our parish priest.

1st Interview: (With Candidate and Parent) Scheduled in the fall where spiritual maturity and readiness for Confirmation and lifelong dedication to the Catholic faith is assessed. At this time, attendance, goals and status of service is discussed to ensure all preparations are on track.

2nd Interview: (Candidate only) Scheduled in the winter where it is determined if the candidate is indeed ready for reception of Confirmation. The candidate must be able to articulate his/her faith and in that sense this is a knowledge-based interview.

HOW TO CHOOSE A SPONSOR

Confirmation can be a great experience, and hopefully you've thought a lot about what this sacrament means, and how the Holy Spirit will affect your life. You'll be required to have a sponsor—someone who will guide you and share their story of faith with you. A good sponsor will make this process a little easier.

A sponsor is an important part of your preparation for Confirmation. At your Baptism your parents chose two sponsors for you. To emphasize the connection between Confirmation and Baptism—Confirmation seals your Baptism—you may choose one of your baptismal sponsors as your Confirmation sponsor. Or you may choose another person; this person might be a friend, someone from the parish, or a relative other than a parent. This person must have received all sacraments of initiation and is an active and practicing member of the Catholic Faith.

This decision takes thought, prayer, and consultation with others. A sponsor offers spiritual guidance and serves as an example of Christian living. This means you will want to pick someone who is a faithful disciple of Jesus Christ whom you know, trust, and respect.

THE REQUIREMENTS/ ROLE OF SPONSOR

Sponsors:

- should be **at least** 16 years of age
- may not be the parent of the candidate
- support the person to be confirmed in their commitment to a Christian life
- serve during the two year process as a strong Catholic-Christian influence on the candidate
- must be a fully initiated, practicing Catholic themselves (goes to church on a regular basis and participates in their parish) , having received Baptism, Eucharist and Confirmation.
- should be sufficiently mature in their own faith commitment
- may be either male or female for any candidate
- must obtain a statement of eligibility from the pastor of their parish

- may be a baptismal Godparent, thus emphasizing more clearly the relationship between Baptism and Confirmation
- must be reasonably informed on current Church teachings
- encourage the candidate by growing in a faith relationship with the candidate.
- assist in determining the candidate's readiness for the sacrament
- welcome the candidate at the Confirmation celebration to the faith community.



CANDIDATE REVIEW GUIDE

Parents and sponsors should assist candidates in reviewing and learning this material.
This entire review guide will serve as the basis for your interview in the spring

The Commandments

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 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.

The Great Commandments

“Love the Lord, your God
with all your heart,
with all your soul,
with all your strength,
with all your mind;
and love your neighbor as
yourself.”
(Luke 10:27; Deuteronomy 6:5;
and Leviticus 19:18)

Sacraments

Initiation:

Baptism

Holy Eucharist

Confirmation

Healing:

Reconciliation

Anointing of the Sick

Service:

Holy Orders

Matrimony



Beatitudes

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied.

Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

Blessed are the clean of heart, for they will see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven.

Blessed are you when people 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!
(Matthew 5:3-12)

Corporal Works of Mercy

To feed the hungry

To give drink to the thirsty

To clothe the naked

To visit the imprisoned

To shelter the homeless

To care for the sick

To bury the dead

Spiritual Works of Mercy

To correct the sinner

To teach the ignorant

To counsel the doubtful

To comfort the sorrowful

To bear the wrongs patiently

To forgive all injuries

To pray for the living and the dead
into practice through his life and acts as a “witness” for Christ.
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The Gifts of the Holy Spirit

The Gifts of the Holy Spirit help Christians live their lives more fully committed to Christ. These seven gifts are:

Wisdom
Understanding
Right Judgment
Courage
Knowledge
Reverence
Wonder and Awe in God's
Presence

The Fruits of the Holy Spirit

The Gifts of the Holy Spirit are made evident by the life led by the recipient. The twelve Fruits of the Holy Spirit are:

Charity
Joy
Peace
Patience
Kindness
Goodness
Generosity
Gentleness
Faithfulness
Modesty
Self-Control
Chastity



Prayers that Candidates Should Know by Heart

Sign of the Cross

Our Father

Hail Mary

Glory to the Father

Apostle's Creed

Nicene Creed

Act of Contrition

How to pray the

Rosary



Hail Mary

Hail Mary, full of grace,
the Lord is with you;
blessed are thou among women,
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb,
Jesus.

Holy Mary, Mother of God,
pray for us sinners now
and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father
Almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth.
and in Jesus Christ,
his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy
Spirit

born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
he descended into hell;
on the third day He rose again from
the dead;
he ascended into Heaven,
and is seated at the right hand
of God the Father almighty; from
there he will come to judge the
living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Our Father

Our Father, who art in Heaven,
hallowed be Thy name;
Thy kingdom come;
Thy will be done on earth
as it is in Heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Nicene Creed

I believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of Heaven and earth,
of all things visible and invisible.
I believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,
the Only Begotten Son of God,
born of the father before all ages.
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
consubstantial with the Father;
through Him all things were made.
For us men and for our salvation
He came down from Heaven:
And by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary,
and became man.
For our sake He was crucified
under Pontius Pilate;
He suffered death and was buried,
and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures.
He ascended into Heaven and is seated
at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory
to judge the living and the dead,
and His kingdom will have no end.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord, the giver of life,
who with the Father
and the Son.
Is adored and glorified,
who has spoken through the Prophets.
I believe in One, Holy, Catholic
and Apostolic Church.
I confess one baptism
for the forgiveness of sins.
And I look forward to the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come.
Amen

Glory to the Father

Glory to the Father,
and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit.
As it was in the beginning,
is now, and will be forever.
Amen.

Act of Contrition

My God,
I am sorry for my sins with all my heart.
In choosing to do wrong
and failing to do good,
I have sinned against You
whom I should love above all things.
I firmly intend, with Your help,
to do penance, to sin no more,
and to avoid whatever leads me to sin.
Our Savior Jesus Christ
suffered and died for us.
In His name, my God, have mercy.
Amen.

Format for Reconciliation (Confession)

Priest and Penitent: Sign of the Cross

Penitent: Bless me Father. It has been (*length of time*) since my last confession. I am sorry for these sins. (*State your sins*; you must confess all mortal sins) That is all Father.

Priest: Will give necessary advice and assign a penance.

Penitent: **Act of Contrition.**

Priest: Prayer of Absolution and Sign of the Cross.

Penitent: (After making the Sign of the Cross) Amen!

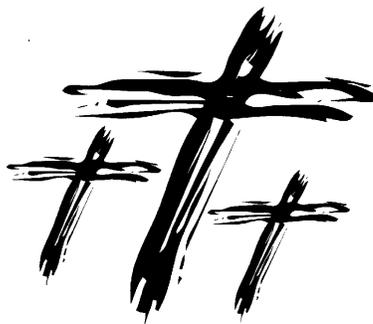
Priest: Go in peace.

Penitent: Thank the priest and leave. Remember to do your penance.

How to Pray the Rosary

Recitation of the Rosary is a combination of meditative and repetitive prayer which recalls the life of Jesus. As you contemplate the Mysteries of the Rosary, try to visualize the scenes, pictures, and stories which correspond with these events. You may wish to dedicate your Rosary petitions to a specific need for yourself or for the needs of another.

- 1. Make the Sign of the Cross and say The Apostles Creed.*
- 2. Say the Our Father.*
- 3. Say 3 Hail Marys.*
- 4. Say the Glory Be to the Father.*
- 5. Meditate upon the First Mystery; then say the Our Father.*
- 6. Say 10 Hail Marys.*
- 7. Say the Glory Be to the Father.*
- 8. Meditate upon the Second Mystery; then say the Our Father, 10 Hail Marys, and Glory Be.*
- 9. Meditate upon the Third Mystery; then say the Our Father, 10 Hail Marys, and Glory Be.*
- 10. Meditate upon the Fourth Mystery; then say the Our Father, 10 Hail Marys, and Glory Be.*
- 11. Meditate upon the Fifth Mystery; then say the Our Father, 10 Hail Marys, and Glory Be.*
- 12. Conclude by saying the Hail, Holy Queen.*



The Mysteries of the Rosary

and Daily Reflections

The Joyful Mysteries

Prayed on Mondays and Saturdays,

and optional on Sundays during Advent and the Christmas Season.

The Joyful Mysteries are marked by the joy radiating from the event of the Incarnation. This is clear from the very first mystery, the Annunciation, where Gabriel's greeting to the Virgin of Nazareth is linked to an invitation to messianic joy: "Rejoice, Mary."

1. The Annunciation (reflect upon Humility)
2. The Visitation (reflect upon the Love of Neighbor)
3. The Nativity (reflect upon the Spirit of Poverty)
4. The Presentation (reflect upon Obedience to God's Will)
5. Finding Jesus in the Temple (reflect upon Joy in Finding Jesus)

The Luminous Mysteries

Prayed on Thursdays.

Moving on from the infancy and the hidden life in Nazareth to the public life of Jesus, Our contemplation brings us to those mysteries which may be called in a special way "mysteries of light." Certainly, the whole mystery of Christ is a mystery of light. He is the "Light of the world" (John 8:12). Yet this truth emerges in a special way during the years of His public life.

1. Baptism of Jesus (reflect and be open to the Holy Spirit)
2. Wedding at Cana (reflect upon Jesus through Mary)
3. Proclaiming the Kingdom (reflect upon repentance and trust in God)
4. Transfiguration (reflect upon a desire for holiness)
5. Institution of the Eucharist (reflect upon Adoration)

The Sorrowful Mysteries

Prayed on Tuesdays and Fridays, and optional on Sundays during Lent.

The Gospels give great prominence to the Sorrowful Mysteries of Christ. From the beginning, Christian piety, especially during the Lenten devotion of the Way of the Cross, has focused on the individual moments of the Passion, realizing that here is found the culmination of the revelation of God's love and the source of our salvation.

1. Agony in the Garden (reflect upon the Spirit of Prayer)
2. The Scourging (reflect upon Modesty)
3. The Crowning with Thorns (reflect upon Purity of Mind and Heart)
4. The Carrying of the Cross (reflect upon Patience in Suffering)
5. The Crucifixion (reflect upon Love for the Mass)

The Glorious Mysteries

Prayed on Wednesdays and Sundays.

“The contemplation of Christ’s face cannot stop at the image of the Crucified One. He is the Risen One!” The Rosary has always expressed this knowledge born of faith and invited the believer to pass beyond the darkness of the Passion in order to gaze upon Christ’s glory in the Resurrection and Ascension...Mary herself would be raised to that same glory in the Assumption.

1. The Resurrection (reflect upon Faith)
2. The Ascension (reflect upon the Desire for Heaven)
3. The Descent of the Holy Spirit--Pentecost (reflect upon Wisdom, Fortitude, and Zeal)
4. The Assumption of Mary (reflect upon a Holy Life and Holy Death)
5. The Coronation of Mary (reflect upon Final Perseverance)

Hail Holy Queen

Hail Holy Queen, Mother of Mercy, of life, our sweetness, and our hope! To you do we cry, poor banished children of Eve; to you do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this vale of tears. Turn, then, most gracious advocate, your eyes of mercy toward us, and after this our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of your womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary! Pray for us, O holy Mother of God, that we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Prayer of Saint Francis

Lord, make me an instrument of Your peace:
where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master,
Grant that I may not so much seek
To be consoled as to console,
To be understood as to understand,
To be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive,
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,

And it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen.



Other Traditional Prayers and Practices

Candidates should be familiar with the following prayers and be able to discuss the practices.

Morning Offering

My God, I offer You all my prayers, works, joys and sufferings of this day for all the intentions of Your most Sacred Heart. Amen.

Evening Prayer

Dear God, before I sleep I want to thank You for this day, so full of Your kindness and Your joy. I close my eyes to rest safe in Your loving care.

Grace Before Meals

Bless us, O Lord, and these Your gifts which we are about to receive, from Your bounty, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Grace After Meals

We give You thanks, Almighty God, for these and all Your gifts which we have received through Christ our Lord. Amen.



The four Marks of the Catholic Church

“I Believe in One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church”

One: Why can there be only One Church?

Just as there is only one Christ, there can be only one Body of Christ, only one Bride of Christ, and therefore only one Church of Jesus Christ. He is the head, the Church is the Body. Together they form the “whole Christ”

Holy: Why is the Church Holy?

The Church is holy, not because all her members are holy, but because God is holy and is at work in her.

Catholic: Why is the Church Catholic? *Catholic means related to the whole.*

The Church is catholic because Christ called her to profess the *whole* faith, to preserve *all* the sacraments, to administer them and proclaim the Good News to *all*; and he sent her to *all* nations.

Apostolic: Why is the Church called Apostolic?

The Church is called apostolic because she was founded by the apostles, holds fast to their Tradition and is governed by their successors.

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Holy Water

A holy water font containing blessed water is placed near the door of the Church. When we enter the Church, we put our fingers into the holy water and then make the sign of the Cross. This action reminds us of the saving Cross of Christ and the water of Baptism.

The Stations of the Cross

1. Jesus is condemned to die.
2. Jesus takes up His Cross.
3. Jesus falls the first time.
4. Jesus meets His mother.
5. Simon helps Jesus carry His Cross.
6. Veronica wipes the face of Jesus.
7. Jesus falls the second time.
8. Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem.
9. Jesus falls the third time.
10. Jesus is stripped of His garments.
11. Jesus is nailed to the Cross.
12. Jesus dies on the Cross.
13. Jesus is taken down from the Cross.
14. Jesus is laid in the tomb.



Blessing and Giving of Ashes

Ash Wednesday is the first day of Lent. On this day the Church uses the ashes of palms left over from Palm Sunday of the year before. The ashes of the palms are blessed and placed on our forehead in the sign of the Cross. Ashes are an ancient sign of sorrow for sin and repentance and a reminder of death. Christians begin the Lenten season of penance by receiving them.

The Memorare

Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to your protection, implored your help, or sought your intercession, was left unaided. Inspired by this confidence, I fly unto you, O Virgin of virgins, my Mother. To you I come, before you I stand sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate! Despise not my petitions, but in your mercy hear and answer me. Amen.

Eucharistic Fast

No food or liquid (except water) is to be taken one hour before receiving Holy Communion.

The Liturgical Seasons of the Year

On appointed days in the course of the year, the Church celebrates the memory of our redemption by Christ. Throughout the year, the entire mystery of Christ is unfolded. The Church does this in sequence during the various seasons of the liturgical year.

Advent: This season begins four weeks (or slightly less) before Christmas. (The Sunday that falls on or closest to November 30 is its starting point.)

Christmas Season: This season lasts from Christmas until the Baptism of the Lord, the Sunday after Epiphany. (The period from the end of Christmas Season until the beginning of Lent belongs to Ordinary Time.)

Lent: The penitential season of Lent lasts forty days, beginning on Ash Wednesday and ending with the Mass of the Lord's Supper on Holy Thursday. The final week is called Holy Week, and the last three days are called the Paschal Triduum.

Easter Season: This season, whose theme is resurrection from sin to the life of grace, lasts fifty days, from Easter to Pentecost.

Ordinary Time: This season comprises the thirty-three or thirty-four weeks in the course of the year that celebrate no particular aspect of the mystery of Christ. Instead, the

mystery of Christ in all its fullness is celebrated. It includes not only the period between the end of the Christmas Season and the beginning of Lent but also all the Sundays after Pentecost to the last Sunday of the liturgical year.



Blessing and Giving of Palms

The Sunday before Holy Week is called Passion Sunday or Palm Sunday. On Palm Sunday we remember the day on which Jesus Christ rode into Jerusalem and was greeted by the people with great joy. They welcomed Him as the Son of David, the Messiah, and broke off palm branches from the trees and waved them in the air. On this day, the Church blesses palms and gives them to the people, who hold them during the reading of the Gospel. Many Christians bring the palms home, placing them behind their crucifixes as a remembrance of the saving work of Jesus.

Visits to the Blessed Sacrament

Catholics believe that Jesus Christ is **truly** present in our Churches in the Blessed Sacrament. The Eucharist is kept in a tabernacle for Communion for the sick and for adoration. We *genuflect* (touch the right knee to the floor) before going into the pew if the tabernacle is before us. We do not genuflect if the Blessed Sacrament is at a side chapel; we only bow to the altar. Genuflection is a sign of our reverence for the presence of Jesus. Catholics go into Church at other times besides the celebration of Mass and the sacraments to make a “visit,” to take a few minutes to tell Jesus about our love, our needs, our hopes, our thanks and praise.

Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament

The word *benediction* comes from the Latin word for “blessing.” At Benediction a large Host is placed in a special holder called a “monstrance” so that all can see the Blessed Sacrament. The priest burns incense before the Blessed Sacrament. The incense is a sign of adoration we offer in God’s presence. The priest then lifts the monstrance and blesses the people by making a sign of the Cross.

Belonging to the Church

There are many people we associate with being Catholic. Others we associate with being Christian. And, of course, many other people we fail to connect with any religious affiliation. We simply view these people as “good.” How often have you wondered: What does being a “good person” have to do with believing in God, with being a Catholic, with going to Mass?

This section will help you to understand what it means to live a Catholic life. In this section you will learn about the benefits and requirements associated with your membership in the Catholic Church.



What does it mean to be a Catholic?

I offer the church my presence at Mass each Sunday and holy day.

I offer the church my money

- To support ministers: priests, sisters, deacons, DRE's, teachers, catechists.
- To support education programs.
- To build and maintain the church.
- To care for the poor at home and abroad.

I offer the church my efforts to deepen my faith

- By daily personal prayer. And/or joining a prayer group

- By reading and praying scripture. And learning more about my faith
- By full participation at Mass.
- By frequent reception of the sacraments.
- By joining a prayer group and/or participate in retreats
- By continuing to learn more and more about my faith.
- By attending retreats, days of prayer, etc. By honestly trying to live a moral life.

I offer the church my life

- As a priest, sister, or brother.
- As a permanent deacon
- As a Christian parent who raises children to know and love God.
- As a full-time pastoral minister, DRE, teacher, catechist.
- As a volunteer who gives some time each week to church service.



Glossary of Terms

Anger

One of the capital sins. A strong feeling of displeasure that prevents us from loving others.

Apostolic

One of the four marks of the Church. The Church is apostolic because it continues to hand on the teaching of the apostles through their successors. The bishops, in union with the successor of Saint Peter, the pope.

Baptism

One of the three Sacraments of Initiation into the Church and one of the seven sacraments. Baptism takes away sin and gives the receiver a new identity as a child of God and disciple of Jesus.

Baptismal Promises

Promises made at Baptism to reject evil and to live as a Christian. These promises also express Christian beliefs in a condensed version of the Apostles' Creed.

Bishop

From a word meaning, "overseer." A bishop, who is a successor of the apostles in the early church, is the leader of a diocese.

Capital Sins

Basic moral faults that give rise to many more sins. The seven capital sins are pride, covetousness (greed), lust, anger, gluttony, envy, and sloth.

Cardinal Virtues

Four principal virtues. The cardinal virtues are justice, fortitude, temperance (moderation), and prudence.

Charity

The greatest of the three theological virtues. Charity is the love of God above all else and the love of neighbors that is based on the love of God.

Chastity

The capital virtue that counteracts lust. Chastity enables us to have properly ordered attitudes and behavior regarding sex.

Chrism

A mixture of the Blessed olive oil and balsam, which is used primarily in the celebration of the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders.

Compassion

Concern for the suffering of others, along with the desire to alleviate it.

Confirmation

A Sacrament of Initiation that celebrates Christian discipleship and brings about an increase and deepening of baptismal grace.

Conversion

A private turning away from a life of sin to a life of virtue and faith or a public turning away from sin to accept faith in Christ and the Church. The Christian life is usually described as an ongoing series of conversions.

Corporal Works of Mercy

Acts of Christian charity and compassion that meet the bodily needs of others. The corporal works of mercy include the following: feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, visit the imprisoned, shelter the homeless, take care of the sick, and bury the dead.



Covetousness

One of the capital sins. Covetousness is the excessive desire to possess something that belongs to others. Another word for covetousness is greed.

Deacon

A single or married man ordained to the diaconate. A cleric ranking just below a priest. Can witness marriages, perform baptisms, teach and preach.

Dignity

The quality or state of being worthy or esteemed. All humans have dignity because they are made in the image and likeness of God.

Diligence

The Cardinal virtue that counteracts sloth, or laziness. Diligence helps us to keep trying to make the persistent efforts needed to complete a task.

Disciple

A person who accepts the gospel message and tries to live his or her life according to the values of Jesus.

Envy

One of the capital sins. Envy is excessive jealousy of another person's good fortune or success.



Eucharist

The sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Wine and bread become the Real Presence of Jesus Christ.

Evangelization

Proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus to people who have not yet heard it.

Faith

One of the theological virtues. In a very general sense, faith is the understanding each person has of God. Christian faith is understood as one's human response to the unconditional love of God as revealed in Jesus.

Faithfulness

One of the fruits of the Holy Spirit. The quality of remaining true to a value, ideal, promise, or person. Faithfulness to the Gospel of Jesus is one of the characteristics of a Christian disciple. Another word for faithfulness is fidelity.

Forgiveness

The ability to pardon others who have hurt or insulted us.

Fortitude

Courage to face dangers or hardships for the sake of what is good. Fortitude is one of the four cardinal virtues. It is also one of the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Fruits of the Spirit

Personal benefits or effects that are the result of being open to the influence of the Holy Spirit. The fruits of the Spirit are experienced in a special way as the result of one's Baptism and Confirmation. They include love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, fidelity (faithfulness), gentleness, and self-control.



Generosity

The Cardinal virtue that counteracts greed. Generosity is the ability to share graciously of one's time talents, and treasures with others. Another word for generosity is liberality.

Gentleness

A fruit of the Holy Spirit that are bestowed at Baptism to help Church members carry out the work of Jesus. The seven gifts of the Spirit include wisdom, knowledge, understanding, piety, counsel, fortitude, and awe.

Good News

A term used to describe the gospel message of Jesus about God's plan of salvation.

Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Special powers of the Holy Spirit that are bestowed at Baptism to help Church members carry out the work of Jesus. The Seven gifts of the Spirit include:

Wisdom- *gives us insight, good judgment, and hope in the future, it gives us the distance we need to see situations and problems as they really are, to see how things look from God's point of view.*

Understanding- *gives us the ability to be compassionate to ourselves and others. A person who is understanding accepts others just as they are and cares for the people no one else notices.*

Knowledge- *enables us to perceive God's truth, to help us make sense out of this complicated world we live in.*

Right Judgment- *helps us to see a situation clearly, to look at all the options open to us analyze the ramifications of each option, and make a clear, decisive and moral choice.*

Courage- *gives us the backbone and guts to stand for our convictions and beliefs. It gives us the strength and stamina we need to keep trying day after day, to be the kind of people our Lord wants us to be.*

Reverence- *enables us to see the true value of every person and of all created things, our faith and God Himself. A person filled with Reverence holds the world with loving hands.*

Wonder and Awe in God's Presence- *gives us the knowledge and appreciation that there is always one greater than us-God! We are given the ability to know that we are standing in the presence of the Holy Spirit.*

Grace

God's life in us through the Holy Spirit, freely given; our loving relationship with God; the free and underserved help God gives us so that we may respond to the call to holiness.

Greed

One of the capital sins. Greed is the excessive desire to possess something that belongs to others. It is also the inability to share. Another word for greed is covetousness.

Holy Spirit

The third person of the Blessed Trinity. The Holy Spirit is the advocate Jesus promised to send to His apostles to be with them and to guide them always.

Homily

A short speech elaborating on the Scripture passages read at Mass or a sacramental celebration.

Hope

One of the theological virtues. Hope enables us to trust in God's goodness and to envision the eventual reality of God's reign of happiness, peace, and joy.

Humility

A Cardinal virtue that allows us to know and appreciate our true worth in a healthy way.

Indwelling

The presence of God within us.

Initiation

The act of bringing new members in to the Church. The Sacraments of Initiation include Baptism, Confirmation, and First Eucharist.

Justice

One of the four cardinal virtues. Justice enables us to give others what is due them as their right.

Laziness

One of the capital sins. Laziness is the refusal to try or to persevere. Another word for laziness is sloth.

Liberality

The capital virtue that counteracts greed. Liberality is the ability to share graciously of one's time, talents, and treasures with others. Another word for liberality is generosity.

Love

The greatest of the three theological virtues. Another name for love is charity. Charity is the love of God above all else and the love of neighbor that is based on the love of God.

Lust

One of the capital sins. Lust is the disorderly, or selfish, desire for sexual pleasure.

Martyr

A person who gives witness to one's beliefs through suffering and death. Within the Church, the word refers to those who were killed because they publicly bore testimony to their belief in Jesus.

Mercy

Love and kindness toward other, particularly in a time of need.

Messiah

A Hebrew term meaning "the anointed one of God." It is the title given to Jesus. God's promise to send a Messiah to save His people can be traced throughout the Hebrew Scriptures. In the Gospels, the evangelists demonstrate how Jesus fulfills these promises.

Ministry

Service provided in the name of Christ for the Church. Some forms of ministry in the Church require that a person be sacramentally ordained (bishops, priests, deacons). All the faithful, by their baptism and Confirmation, are called to some type of ministry.

Miracles

Observable events or effects that cannot be explained by ordinary causes and so are attributed to the direct action of God.

Mission

Being sent to perform a certain work. Through our Baptism and confirmation we are enabled to continue the prophetic, priestly, and kingly mission of Christ.

Moderation

A moral virtue and one of the four cardinal virtues. Moderation is another name for temperance. It is the virtue that enables us to act in ways that are not excessive-either too much or too little.

Monastery

A house for monks, people living under religious vows.

Monstrance

A vessel in which the consecrated Eucharist is exposed for adoration.

Moral Virtues

Another name for the Cardinal virtues, which are habits of choosing what is good, or moral. The moral virtues include humility, generosity, chastity, meekness, temperance (moderation), brotherly love, and perseverance.

Mystery

A truth that cannot be fully explained. The Trinity is an example of mystery.

Omission

Neglect or failure to do something that a person had power to do or which duty or morality required to be done.

Original Sin

The first humans' choice to disobey God and the condition that became a part of human nature whereby we are deprived of original holiness and justice; only Jesus and Mary, his mother, were free of original sin.

Paschal Mystery

The saving mystery of Jesus' passion, death, resurrection, and ascension.

Pastor

The chief priest of a parish. The delegate of the local Bishop, responsible for the day-to-day operations and ministry of a local parish.

Patience

A fruit of the Holy Spirit that enables us to bear trial calmly and without complaint.



Pentecost

The fiftieth day after Easter, when the Holy Spirit came upon the apostles and empowered them to go out to all the world and proclaim the good new of Jesus.

Perseverance

One of the Cardinal virtues. Another name for perseverance is diligence. It is the opposite of sloth or laziness.

Pope (Pontiff)

Francis is the Holy Father. He is the bishop of Rome and the chief shepherd of the Roman Catholic Church.

Prayer

A lifting up of mind and ear to God. A spiritual dialogue between humans and God.

Pride

The capital sin in which a person inordinately loves himself or herself. The opposite of pride is humility.

Prodigal

Someone who wastes a great deal of money; a spendthrift.

Prophetic Stance

Calling people's attention to an evil or injustice they might otherwise ignore. Continuing the work of Jesus.

Prudence

One of the four cardinal virtues. Prudence enables us to use wise judgment in determining the best ways and means of doing good.

Reign of God

The name given by Jesus for his vision of a world in which God would reign over all and in which total peace and fulfillment would be realized. Jesus preached that the Reign of God was possessed by him, was being proclaimed and begun through his life, death, and resurrection.

Religious Life

A lifestyle in which a person dedicates his or her life to God through the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience.

Respect

A gift of the Holy Spirit, which is also known as reverence. To respect, or to reverence someone means to treat that person with high regard or esteem.

Rite

The approved prayers and ceremonies that make up the sacraments and other rituals of the Church.

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA)

The rites that are found throughout the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults. Among these rites are the Rite of Election and the Rite of Enrollment of Names.

Sacrament

A celebration in which Jesus joins with the assembled community in liturgical actions that are signs and sources of God's grace.

Seal

A sign, mark, image, or emblem that signifies identity, ownership, or authenticity.

Sloth

One of the capital sins. Another word for sloth is laziness.

Spiritual Works of Mercy

Acts of Christian charity and compassion that meet the spiritual needs of others. The spiritual works of mercy are the following: Counsel the doubtful, instruct the ignorant, admonish sinners, comfort the afflicted, forgive offenses, bear wrongs patiently, and pray for the living and the dead.

Sponsor

The person who undertakes the responsibility to guide a Baptism and/or Confirmation candidate in preparing to receive the sacrament(s). The sponsor represents both the faith community and candidate, serving as a kind of bridge between them.

Tabernacle

An ornamented chest, placed on or near the altar. A receptacle to store extra communion for the sick and imprisoned.

Temperance

A moral virtue and one of the four cardinal virtues. Temperance is another word for moderation. It is the virtue that enables us to act in ways that are not excessive-either too much or too little.

Theological Virtues

The virtues that have God as their direct object. The three theological virtues are faith, hope, and love.

Trinity

The Christian God; the Christian doctrine that there are three distinct persons-the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit-in one God.

Trust

Another name for hope.

Virtue

A good habit.

Witness

A person who testifies to the truth through words or actions.

Worship

Praying to, reverencing God as a faith community or as an individual in private.

Works of Mercy

Acts of Christian charity and compassion that meet the need of others. The corporal works of mercy deal with physical needs. The spiritual works of mercy deal with spiritual needs.





St. Francis de Sales Church
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