

# Adult Catechism @ Year 1 Sacraments CONFIRMATION

## Immaculate Conception

Catechism Paragraphs 1285-1321 683-747

Aquinas College Online Catechist Formation Program VIDEO link 18:44 <https://vimeo.com/35221913>

Part II 23:53 <https://vimeo.com/35222673>

*Any Seeds Planted? Any Memories Provoked? Any Questions Raised? Any Actions Prompted?*

1285 **Baptism**, the **Eucharist**, and the sacrament of **Confirmation** together constitute the **sacraments of Christian initiation**, whose unity must be safeguarded... The reception of the sacrament of Confirmation is necessary for the **completion of baptismal grace**. *By the sacrament of Confirmation, [the baptized] are more perfectly bound to the Church and are enriched with a special strength of the Holy Spirit. Hence they are, as true witnesses of Christ, more strictly obliged to spread and defend the faith by word and deed.* LG \_\_\_\_\_

1286 In the Old Testament **the prophets announced** that the Spirit of the Lord would rest on the hoped-for Messiah for his saving mission. The descent of the Holy Spirit on Jesus at **his baptism by John** was the sign that this was he who was to come, the Messiah, the Son of God. He was conceived of the Holy Spirit; **his whole life and his whole mission are carried out in total communion with the Holy Spirit** whom the Father gives him *without measure*. \_\_\_\_\_

1287 This **fullness of the Spirit** was not to remain uniquely the Messiah's, but was to be communicated to the whole messianic people. On several occasions Christ promised this outpouring of the Spirit, a promise which he fulfilled first on Easter Sunday and then more strikingly at Pentecost. Filled with the Holy Spirit the apostles began to proclaim *the mighty works of God*, and Peter declared this outpouring of the Spirit to be the sign of the messianic age. Those who believed in the apostolic preaching and were baptized received the gift of the Holy Spirit in their turn. \_\_\_\_\_

1288 *The **imposition of hands** is rightly recognized by the Catholic tradition as the origin of the sacrament of Confirmation, which in a certain way perpetuates the grace of Pentecost in the Church.* Paul VI

1289 Very early, the better to signify the gift of the Holy Spirit, an anointing with **perfumed oil** (*chrism*) was added to the laying on of hands. This anointing highlights **the name Christian**, which means **anointed** and derives from that of Christ himself whom God *anointed with the Holy Spirit*.

1290 **In the first centuries** Confirmation generally comprised **one single celebration** with Baptism, forming with it a *double sacrament*, according to the expression of St. Cyprian. Among other reasons, the multiplication of infant baptisms all through the year, the increase of rural parishes, and the growth of dioceses often prevented the bishop from being present at all baptismal celebrations. In the West the desire to reserve the completion of Baptism to the bishop caused the temporal separation of the two sacraments. The East has kept them united, so that Confirmation is conferred by the priest who baptizes. But he can do so only with the **myron** (oil) consecrated by a bishop. \_\_\_\_\_

1291 A custom of the Roman Church facilitated the development of the Western practice: a **double anointing** with sacred chrism after Baptism. The **first anointing** of the neophyte on coming out of the baptismal bath was performed by the priest; it was completed by a **second anointing** on the forehead of the newly baptized by the bishop. The first anointing with sacred chrism, by the priest, has remained attached to the baptismal rite; it signifies the participation of the one baptized in the **prophetic, priestly, and kingly offices of Christ**. If Baptism is conferred on an adult, there is only one post-baptismal anointing, that of Confirmation. \_\_\_\_\_

1292 The practice of the Eastern Churches gives greater emphasis to the **unity of Christian initiation**. That of the Latin Church more clearly expresses the **communion of the new Christian with the bishop** as guarantor and servant of the unity, catholicity and apostolicity of his Church, and hence the connection with the apostolic origins of Christ's Church. \_\_\_\_\_

1293 Consider the sign of **anointing** and what it signifies and imprints: a spiritual **seal**. **Anointing**, in Biblical and other ancient symbolism, is rich in meaning: oil is a sign of abundance and joy; it cleanses (anointing before and after a bath) and limbers (the anointing of athletes and wrestlers); oil is a sign of healing, since it is soothing to bruises and wounds; and it makes radiant with beauty, health, and strength. \_\_\_\_\_

1294 By Confirmation Christians, that is, those who are anointed, share more completely **in the mission of Jesus Christ** and the fullness of the Holy Spirit with which he is filled, so that their lives may give off **the aroma of Christ**. \_\_\_\_\_

1295 By this anointing the confirmand receives the "**mark**," **the seal of the Holy Spirit**. A seal is a symbol of a person, a sign of personal authority, or ownership of an object. Hence **soldiers** were marked with their leader's seal and **slaves** with their master's. A seal authenticates a juridical act or document and occasionally makes it secret. \_\_\_\_\_

1296 This seal of the Holy Spirit marks **our total belonging to Christ**, our enrollment in his service for ever, as well as the promise of divine protection in the great eschatological trial. \_\_\_\_\_

1297 The *consecration of the sacred chrism* is an important action that precedes the celebration of Confirmation, but is in a certain way a part of it. It is the bishop who, in the course of the **Chrism Mass** of Holy Thursday, consecrates the sacred chrism for his whole diocese.

1298 When Confirmation is celebrated separately from Baptism, as is the case in the Roman Rite, the Liturgy of Confirmation begins with the renewal of baptismal promises and the profession of faith by the confirmands. This clearly shows that Confirmation follows Baptism. When adults are baptized, they immediately receive Confirmation and participate in the Eucharist. \_\_\_\_\_

1299 In the Roman Rite **the bishop extends his hands over the whole group** of the confirmands. Since the time of the apostles this gesture has signified the gift of the Spirit.

**The bishop invokes the outpouring of the Spirit** in these words:

*newly revised form:*

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.

**Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
who brought these your servants  
to new birth by water and the Holy Spirit,  
Freeing them from sin:  
Send upon them, O Lord, the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete;  
give them the spirit of wisdom and understanding,  
the spirit of counsel and fortitude,  
the spirit of knowledge and piety;  
fill them with the spirit of fear of the Lord.  
Through Christ our Lord.**

1300 In the Latin rite, *the sacrament of Confirmation is conferred through the anointing with chrism on the forehead, which is done by the laying on of the hand, and through the words: 'Accipe signaculum doni Spiritus Sancti' [Be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit].* In the Eastern Churches, after a prayer of epiclesis the more significant parts of the body are anointed with **myron**: forehead, eyes, nose, ears, lips, breast, back, hands, and feet. Each anointing is accompanied by the formula: *The seal of the gift that is the Holy Spirit.*

1301 The sign of peace that concludes the rite of the sacrament signifies and demonstrates **ecclesial communion with the bishop and with all the faithful**. St. Hippolytus \_\_\_\_\_

1302 It is evident from its celebration that **the effect of the sacrament of Confirmation** is the full outpouring of the Holy Spirit as once granted to the apostles on the day of Pentecost. \_\_\_\_\_

1303 From this fact, Confirmation brings an increase and deepening of baptismal grace:

- it roots us more deeply in the divine filiation which makes us cry, *Abba! Father!*;
- it unites us more firmly to Christ;
- it increases the gifts of the Holy Spirit in us;
- it renders our bond with the Church more perfect;
- it gives us a special strength of the Holy Spirit to spread and defend the faith by word and action as true witnesses of Christ, to confess the name of Christ boldly, and never to be ashamed of the Cross:

*Recall then that you have received the spiritual seal, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of right judgment and courage, the spirit of knowledge and reverence, the spirit of holy fear in God's presence. **Guard** what you have received. God the Father has marked you with his sign; Christ the Lord has confirmed you and has placed his pledge, the Spirit, in your hearts.* St. Ambrose \_\_\_\_\_

1304 Like Baptism which it completes, Confirmation is given only once, for it too imprints on the soul an indelible spiritual mark, the **character**, which is the sign that Jesus Christ has marked a Christian with the seal of his Spirit by clothing him with power from on high so that he may be his witness. Trent \_\_\_\_\_

1305 This *character* perfects **the common priesthood of the faithful**, received in Baptism, and "the confirmed person receives the power to profess faith in Christ publicly and *as it were officially*." Aquinas \_\_\_\_\_

1306 Every baptized person not yet confirmed can and should receive the sacrament of Confirmation. Without Confirmation and Eucharist, Baptism is certainly valid and efficacious, but Christian initiation remains incomplete. \_\_\_\_\_

1307 The Latin tradition gives **the age of discretion** as the reference point for receiving Confirmation. In danger of death children should be confirmed even if they have not yet attained the age of discretion.

1308 Although Confirmation is sometimes called the **sacrament of Christian maturity**, we must not confuse adult faith with the adult age of natural growth, nor forget that the baptismal grace is a grace of free, unmerited election and does not need *ratification* to become effective.

*Age of body does not determine age of soul. Even in childhood a human can attain spiritual maturity: as the book of Wisdom says: 'For old age is not honored for length of time, or measured by number of years.' Many children, through the strength of the Holy Spirit they have received, have bravely fought for Christ even to the shedding of their blood.* St. Thomas Aquinas \_\_\_\_\_

1309 Catechesis for Confirmation should strive to awaken a sense of **belonging** to the Church of Jesus Christ, the universal Church as well as the parish community. \_\_\_\_\_

1310 To receive Confirmation one must be in a **state of grace**. One should receive the sacrament of Penance in order to be cleansed for the gift of the Holy Spirit. More intense prayer should prepare one to receive the strength and graces of the Holy Spirit with docility and readiness to act. \_\_\_\_\_

1311 Candidates for Confirmation, as for Baptism, fittingly seek the spiritual help of a **sponsor**. To emphasize the unity of the two sacraments, it is appropriate that this be **one of the baptismal godparents**. \_\_\_\_\_

1312 The original minister of Confirmation is the **bishop**.

1313 In the Latin Rite, the ordinary minister of Confirmation is the bishop.

1314 If a Christian is **in danger of death**, any priest should give him Confirmation. \_\_\_\_\_

683 *Baptism gives us the grace of new birth in God the Father, through his Son, in the Holy Spirit. For those who bear God's Spirit are led to the Word, that is, to the Son, and the Son presents them to the Father, and the Father confers incorruptibility on them. And it is impossible to see God's Son without the Spirit, and no one can approach the Father without the Son, for the knowledge of the Father is the Son, and the knowledge of God's Son is obtained through the Holy Spirit.* St. Irenaeus \_\_\_\_\_

684 **The Old Testament proclaimed the Father clearly, but the Son more obscurely. The New Testament revealed the Son and gave us a glimpse of the divinity of the Spirit.** *Now the Spirit dwells among us and grants us a clearer vision of himself... By advancing and progressing 'from glory to glory,' the light of the Trinity will shine in ever more brilliant rays.* St. Gregory of Nazianzus, the Theologian \_\_\_\_\_

685 *...with the Father and the Son he is worshipped and glorified.* Nicene Creed

687 *No one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.* St. Paul, 1Cor 2:11 \_\_\_\_\_

688 **The Church...is the place** where we know the Holy Spirit:

- in the Scriptures he inspired;
- in the Tradition, to which the Church Fathers are always timely witnesses;
- in the Church's Magisterium, which he assists;
- in the sacramental liturgy, through its words and symbols, in which the Holy Spirit puts us into communion with Christ;
- in prayer, wherein he intercedes for us;
- in the charisms and ministries by which the Church is built up;
- in the signs of apostolic and missionary life;
- in the witness of saints through whom he manifests his holiness and continues the work of salvation.

690 *The notion of anointing suggests...that there is **no distance between the Son and the Spirit...** The contact of the Son with the Spirit is immediate...*

*The confession of the Son's Lordship is made in the Holy Spirit by those who receive him, the Spirit coming from all sides to those who approach the Son in faith.* St. Gregory of Nyssa \_\_\_\_\_

691 **Holy Spirit** is the **proper name** of the one whom we adore and glorify with the Father & the Son. The term *Spirit* translates the Hebrew word *ruah*, which, in its primary sense, means **breath, air, wind...** On the other hand, *Spirit* and *Holy* are divine attributes common to the three divine persons. By joining the two terms, Scripture, liturgy, and theological language designate the inexpressible person of the Holy Spirit, without any possible equivocation with other uses of the terms *spirit* and *holy*.

692 When he proclaims and promises the coming of the Holy Spirit, Jesus calls him the **Paraclete**, literally, *he who is called to one's side, advocatus*. *Paraclete* is commonly translated by *consoler*, and Jesus is the **first consoler**. The Lord also called the Holy Spirit **the Spirit of truth**. \_\_\_\_\_

693 Besides the proper name of *Holy Spirit*, which is most frequently used in the Acts of the Apostles and in the Epistles, we also find in St. Paul the titles: the Spirit of the promise, The Spirit of adoption, The Spirit of Christ, The Spirit of the Lord, and the Spirit of God - and, in St. Peter, the Spirit of glory. \_\_\_\_\_

703 The **Word** of God and his **Breath** are at the origin of the being and life of every creature. *It belongs to the Holy Spirit to rule, sanctify, and animate creation, for he is God, consubstantial with the Father and the Son.... Power over life pertains to the Spirit, for being God he preserves creation in the Father through the Son.*

704 *God fashioned the human with God's own hands [that is, the Son and the Holy Spirit] and impressed God's own form on the flesh God had fashioned, in such a way that even what was visible might bear the divine form.* St. Irenaeus \_\_\_\_\_

## Symbols of the Holy Spirit

694 **Water.** The symbolism of water signifies the Holy Spirit's action in Baptism, since after the invocation of the Holy Spirit it becomes the efficacious sacramental sign of new birth: just as the gestation of our first birth took place in water, so the water of Baptism truly signifies that our birth into the divine life is given to us in the Holy Spirit. *As by one Spirit we were all baptized, so we are also made to drink of one Spirit.* Thus the Spirit is also personally the living water welling up from Christ crucified as its source and welling up in us to eternal life.

695 **Anointing.** the symbolism of anointing with oil also signifies the Holy Spirit, to the point of becoming a synonym for the Holy Spirit. In Christian initiation, anointing is the sacramental sign of Confirmation, called *chrismation* in the Churches of the East. Its full force can be grasped only in relation to the primary anointing accomplished by the Holy Spirit, that of Jesus. Christ (in Hebrew *messiah*) means the one *anointed* by God's Spirit. There were several anointed ones of the Lord in the Old Covenant, pre-eminently King David. But Jesus is God's Anointed in a unique way: the humanity the Son assumed was entirely anointed by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit established him as *Christ*. The Virgin Mary conceived Christ by the Holy Spirit who, through the angel, proclaimed him the Christ at his birth, and prompted Simeon to come to the temple to see the Christ of the Lord. The Spirit filled Christ and the power of the Spirit went out from him in his acts of healing and of saving. Finally, it was the Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead. Now, fully established as *Christ* in his humanity victorious over death, Jesus pours out the Holy Spirit abundantly until *the saints* constitute - in their union with the humanity of the Son of God - that perfect human *to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: the whole Christ*, in St. Augustine's expression.

696 **Fire.** While water signifies birth and the fruitfulness of life given in the Holy Spirit, fire symbolizes the transforming energy of the Holy Spirit's actions. The prayer of the prophet Elijah, who *arose like fire* and whose *word burned like a torch*, brought down fire from heaven on the sacrifice on Mount Carmel. This event was a *figure* of the fire of the Holy Spirit, who transforms what he touches. John the Baptist, who goes *before [the Lord] in the spirit and power of Elijah*, proclaims Christ as the one *who will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire*. Jesus will say of the Spirit: *I came to cast fire upon the earth; and would that it were already kindled!* In the form of tongues *as of fire*, the Holy Spirit rests on the disciples on the morning of Pentecost and fills them with himself. The spiritual tradition has retained this symbolism of fire as one of the most expressive images of the Holy Spirit's actions. *Do not quench the Spirit.*

697 **Cloud and light.** These two images occur together in the manifestations of the Holy Spirit. In the theophanies of the Old Testament, the cloud, now obscure, now luminous, reveals the living and saving God, while veiling the transcendence of his glory - with Moses on Mount Sinai, at the tent of meeting, and during the wandering in the desert, and with Solomon at the dedication of the Temple. In the Holy Spirit, Christ fulfills these figures. The Spirit comes upon the Virgin Mary and *overshadows* her, so that she might conceive and give birth to Jesus. On the mountain of Transfiguration, the Spirit in the *cloud came and overshadowed* Jesus, Moses and Elijah, Peter, James and John, and *a voice came out of the cloud, saying, 'This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!'* Finally, the cloud took Jesus out of the sight of the disciples on the day of his ascension and will reveal him as Son of man in glory on the day of his final coming.

698 **The seal** is a symbol close to that of anointing. *The Father has set his seal* on Christ and also seals us in him. Because this seal indicates the indelible effect of the anointing with the Holy Spirit in the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders, the image of the seal (*sphragis*) has been used in some theological traditions to express the indelible *character* imprinted by these three unrepeatable sacraments.

699 **The hand.** Jesus heals the sick and blesses little children by laying hands on them. In his name the apostles will do the same. Even more pointedly, it is by the Apostles' imposition of hands that the Holy Spirit is given. The *Letter to the Hebrews* lists the imposition of hands among the *fundamental elements* of its teaching. The Church has kept this sign of the all-powerful outpouring of the Holy Spirit in its sacramental epicleses.

700 **The finger.** *It is by the finger of God that [Jesus] cast out demons.* If God's law was written on tablets of stone *by the finger of God*, then the *letter from Christ* entrusted to the care of the apostles, is written *with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone, but on tablets of human hearts.* The hymn *Veni Creator Spiritus* invokes the Holy Spirit as the *finger of the Father's right hand.*

701 **The dove.** At the end of the flood, whose symbolism refers to Baptism, a dove released by Noah returns with a fresh olive-tree branch in its beak as a sign that the earth was again habitable. When Christ comes up from the water of his baptism, the Holy Spirit, in the form of a dove, comes down upon him and remains with him. The Spirit comes down and remains in the purified hearts of the baptized. In certain churches, the Eucharist is reserved in a metal receptacle in the form of a dove (columbarium) suspended above the altar. Christian iconography traditionally uses a dove to suggest the Spirit.

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See paragraphs 702 through 716 for a **kind of history** of the Holy Spirit.

712 The characteristics of the awaited **Messiah** begin to appear in the *Book of Emmanuel* (*Isaiah said this when he saw his glory*, speaking of Christ), especially in the first two verses of Isaiah 11:

*There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse,  
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.  
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.*

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713 The Messiah's characteristics are revealed above all in the **Servant songs**. Cf. Isa 42:1-9; cf. Mt 12:18-21; Jn 1:32-34; then cf. Isa 49:1-6; cf. Mt 3:17; Lk 2:32; finally cf. Isa 50:4-10 and Isa 52:13-53:12.

These songs proclaim the meaning of Jesus' Passion and show how he will pour out the Holy Spirit to give life to the many: not as an outsider, but by embracing our *form as slave*.

Taking our death upon himself, he can communicate to us his own Spirit of life.

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714 This is why Christ inaugurates the proclamation of the Good News by making his own the following passage from Isaiah: Isa 61:1-2; cf. Lk 4:18-19.

*The Spirit of the LORD God is upon me,  
because the LORD has anointed me to bring good tidings to the afflicted;  
he has sent me to bind up the broken hearted,  
to proclaim liberty to the captives,  
and the opening of the prison to those who are bound;  
to proclaim the year of the LORD'S favor.*

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See paragraphs 717 through 720 for **John as Baptist**, precursor, and prophet.

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See paragraphs 721 through 726 for **Mary**, full of grace.

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See paragraphs 727 through 730 for **Christ Jesus** in relation to the Holy Spirit.

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See paragraphs 731 through 741 for the **Church** and the Holy Spirit.

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