



Confirmation Question & Answer

1. What is Confirmation?

Confirmation is the second of the three sacraments of Christian initiation. Confirmation is the completion of Baptism and the sacrament by which the baptized faithful are anointed with chrism by the laying on of hands. The grace received is the fullness of the Holy Spirit and his gifts. We also describe this fullness as the completion, strengthening, perfection, or augmentation of the Holy Spirit received in Baptism.

2. What are the Sacraments of Initiation?

The sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist are so interrelated that all three are required for full Christian initiation. The Christian is born anew by Baptism, strengthened by Confirmation, and receives in the Eucharist the food of eternal life.

3. Who is the minister of the Sacrament of Confirmation?

The ordinary minister of Confirmation is the Bishop. The Bishop may designate other Priests (Deans) to confirm as well. In addition, pastors who baptize an adult or child of catechetical age are the ministers of Confirmation as required by the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults (OCIA).

4. Who can receive the Sacrament of Confirmation?

Any baptized person who has not already received Confirmation. The new revised Confirmation policy will allow children between the ages of nine and ten, third and fourth grade, to receive the sacrament.

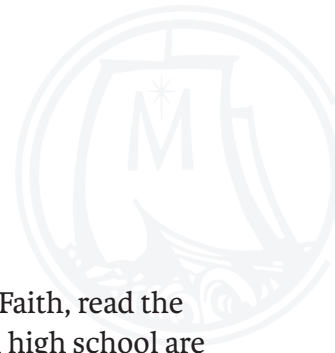
5. Since the Church has not made it a unified practice, why is the Diocese of Columbus changing Confirmation?

Although dioceses across the United States have different approaches, it is of a higher priority to celebrate the sacrament as the Church intends. Increasing numbers of dioceses are considering reestablishing the ancient order of the sacraments, and some have already done so. The bishop of each local church is to decide on the practice.

6. When our children are confirmed at an earlier age, how are they to make an adult commitment to the church?

All sacraments are a gift from our Heavenly Father, who desires to give us His very life, which we call grace. Sacraments are not earned or merited. For this reason, Confirmation should not be perceived as the sacrament of adult commitment to the Church. The Church even requires Priests to confirm infants and children younger than the age of reason when they are in danger of death so that they may receive the fullness of the Holy Spirit.

An authentic mature commitment to Christ and the Church is expressed in full participation in the Eucharistic and apostolic life of the Church. It is not achieved at a single moment but throughout the lifelong deepening of our intimacy with Christ. This begins in childhood and continues until death. Given our fallen condition, we must make a commitment to Christ every day.



8. How can a young child be expected to know everything about the Faith?

Religious education or catechesis is a lifelong process. Adults should regularly study the Faith, read the Scriptures, participate in the sacraments, and practice charity. Kindergarten to seniors in high school are expected to attend WEEKLY catechesis classes. With this in mind, Confirmation preparation is simply an explanation of the sacrament itself in the context of an active family faith life and parish catechesis similar to what took place for First Confession and First Eucharist.

9. Will the Bishop still be able to confirm my child?

The bishop intends to celebrate as many Confirmations as possible, as he is the ordinary minister of the sacrament. The Deans of the Diocese will assist the Bishop with the administration of the Sacrament of Confirmation.

10. Why change the grades and disrupt all of our schedules?

The importance of celebrating the sacraments as the Church intends requires this change. More importantly, each child will receive the much-needed grace God intends for them.

11. How can I keep my child in religious education if he/she is confirmed so early in life?

Confirmation has often been misunderstood and treated as graduation from learning about the faith. This is neither the true meaning of the sacrament nor the intention of the Church.

Growth in the understanding and living out of our faith is the result of a lifelong effort. Parents and siblings have the first responsibility of being an example of Jesus Christ to each other and living the Gospel each day. Children will stay in religious education if they see their parents striving to grow in holiness through family prayer, Scripture reading, Sunday Mass, regular confession, and living a life of charity. Parents are to keep their children in religious education programs just as they keep their children in school until graduation.

12. Does removing Confirmation from the context of a junior high or high school program miss an opportunity for a much-needed ministry to our youth at a time when they are looking for recognition and a sense of belonging?

The preparation for and celebration of Confirmation should not be used simply as a means to an end, however noble. The parish is to develop a proper youth ministry that attends to the spiritual needs of our youth and can be based upon a deepening of the sacramental graces received in the sacraments of Christian initiation. Parents, being the first teachers of their children, have the responsibility to educate their children throughout high school, in all areas, including the Faith. Parents are to keep their children in religious education programs just as they keep their children in school until graduation.

13. Are there resources for Confirmation at this age? What will we use to teach?

Current parish and Catholic school religious education resources will be used and adjusted to address the new age of reception of Confirmation. We will also provide appropriate pedagogical training and resources for all parish catechists and Catholic school educators through the Office of Evangelization and Catechesis and the Office of Catholic Schools.