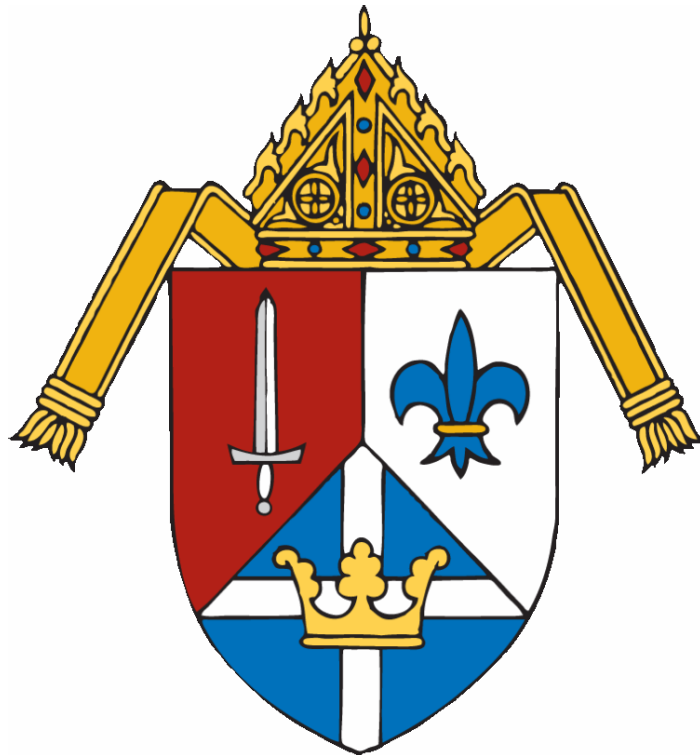


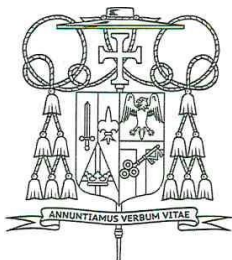
Parish Sacramental Preparation Guidelines  
for  
The Catholic Diocese of Lexington



Adopted April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2022



LETTER OF PROMULGATION



CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF LEXINGTON  
THE CATHOLIC CENTER  
OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

April 2022

Dear Parents, Catechists and all the Faithful of the Diocese of Lexington,

As we celebrate the death and resurrection of Jesus, the central mystery and basis of our faith, we should also recall that the Risen Jesus sent his disciples to share his teaching and his life with the whole world. Parents know that this sharing begins with their own children and so they strive to pass on their faith to their sons and daughters. The Catholic community knows this as well and wants all her children to be formed in the very faith which is nourished by our sacramental encounters with Christ.

The Sacraments are living encounters with Christ that mark key moments in our lives. Some are once in a lifetime events, others can be repeated regularly on our Christian journey. All of them require some formation so that we can appreciate what we are celebrating and profit spiritually from these encounters.

With this in mind, I am officially promulgating the following guidelines for Sacramental preparation for the Diocese of Lexington to be in effect as of Easter Sunday this year (17 April) and to be fully implemented in the 2022-23 academic year.

I am grateful to the catechists who collaborated on these guidelines and to Dr. Rod Stearn for compiling them. May we all be eager to sit at the feet of Jesus the great teacher and learn about the mysteries of his Kingdom.

Given this 4<sup>th</sup> day of April 2022, the Memorial of Saint Isidore of Seville, at the Chancery in Lexington.

Most Reverend John Stowe, OFM Conv.  
Bishop of Lexington

Mrs. Karen Abbey, Chancellor

2022:AD007



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Catholic Diocese of Lexington gratefully acknowledges the hard work and dedication of the Parish Sacramental Preparation Guidelines Committee. The efforts of the committee members have produced a document that, while comprehensive, is also flexible enough to be adapted to different conditions and methods. With thankfulness and appreciation, the Diocese is pleased to adopt the fruit of the Committee's labor.

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## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

These standards cover sacramental preparation for parishes in the diocese of Lexington. Specifically, they apply to First Reconciliation, First Eucharist, and Confirmation. They are not embellished or ornate. Rather, they offer a pragmatic foundation that catechists are free to build upon. Accordingly, they do not micromanage methods or materials, nor require intimidating amounts of catechesis. While they do constitute an expectation, therefore, these standards are constructed to serve catechists as a map, and an aid to guiding students toward a certain destination.

The standards themselves are divided into two halves: one for Reconciliation and Eucharist, the other for Confirmation. Each half is divided into two sections: basic catechesis and sacramental reception.

These sections, in turn, each begin with a brief introduction offering general advice on sacramental preparation.

Sections on basic catechesis are longer than those on sacramental preparation, because they cover the general foundation students are expected to have before approaching the sacrament. Parishes are free to use these sections as a guide for instruction in pre-sacramental years, although that is not a requirement. The reception sections, on the other hand, pertain directly to the sacramental years and the sacrament at hand. Confirmation standards, it should be noted, assume that students already possess the foundation provided in the Reconciliation and Eucharist sections.

Appended to the standards are sections covering the practical aspects of reception. These apply to the work of catechists, and cover elements such as liturgy preparation, Confirmation letters, etc. There are not, however, sections mandating methods or textbooks. Nor has a definitive age for Confirmation been set. Rather, space is given for the unique characteristics of parishes and their catechists.

Parishes are embedded in specific communities and cultures, and a textbook that works in one parish might be ineffective in another. The requirement for textbooks, therefore, is simply that they are chosen in accord with the USCCB's annual Conformity list, which is available online. Similarly, catechists are different people, all with their own strengths. Forcing them to the same methods might stifle their creativity and natural gifts. The requirements for catechists, therefore, are also simple: they must meet diocesan expectations for Safe Environment and catechist certification programs, and submit to the oversight and judgment of their pastors and catechetical leaders.



Finally, these standards are intended as a floor, not a ceiling. It is a diocesan expectation that students have reached at least this level of preparation before approaching the sacrament. They should have a good understanding of the elements contained in this document. That does not mean parishes cannot go beyond these standards. Indeed, each parish will likely find things they would like to add. As long as these additions are in line with Catholic teaching, and as long as students do not become overwhelmed, parishes are encouraged to expand catechesis where appropriate. Given the rapidly changing nature of society, the flexibility to adapt will be important to effective catechesis and sacramental preparation.



## STANDARDS FOR RECEPTION OF FIRST RECONCILIATION AND EUCHARIST





## FIRST RECONCILIATION AND EUCHARIST: BASIC CATECHESIS



## INTRODUCTION

Sacramental preparation requires a basic grounding in the tenets of the faith. Many of those elements have been grouped together in the section that follows. This grouping is not meant to be absolute, nor to function as the fullness of what a child might learn. It is a floor, not a ceiling. Catechists are free to add more according to the needs and possibilities of their situation.

Parishes are free to use this section as the basis for early, pre-sacramental catechesis, but that is not a requirement. Rather, this section outlines the basic tenets that should help a young child contextualize the sacraments they will be receiving. Should parishes choose to use the section in that way, moreover, methodology is not stipulated here. It is important to recognize that flexibility is an asset to catechesis.

In spite of many frustrations, parishes have the freedom to engage community and family in holistic ways. While the lack of stipulated methods or textbooks can be a trying at times, it provides greater opportunity to synthesize with a parish's particular culture and needs.

While providing a floor, then, we would like to encourage the flexibility that allows catechists to meet people where they are. Methodological standardization runs the risk of treating children as a universal abstract. The strength of parish catechesis, however, is to interact with the specific children in front of them, each with their own personalities, backgrounds, and needs.

### Ideas to Consider: Parental Involvement

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*Parishes only have a few hours each year to prepare children for the sacraments. We must take a realistic approach to what we can do in that time. Even the most grounded of programs, however, will require parental involvement to succeed.*

*Parents can help by reading Bible stories with their children. Regular at-home reading will allow children to internalize the stories. It will also enable the catechist to devote attention to other fronts.*

*“At the end of the day, the most overwhelming key to a child’s success is the positive involvement of the parents.” — Jane D. Hull*



## STANDARDS



## **BASIC CATECHESIS: RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD**

### **Understanding of God**

<b>Identifier</b>	<b>Standard</b>	<b>Explanation / Depth of Response</b>
RE.BC.1.1	Basic Understanding of God as Creator.	God created the universe and everything in it. God creates out of love. He makes everything good. God created us. He loves us and cares for us. God created us to live in relationship with Him.
RE.BC.1.2	Basic Understanding of the Trinity.	Catholics worship one God in three persons. Students should be able to identify the three persons of God (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit), and distinguish between them. Students should understand how we address our prayers to the triune God every time we make the sign of the cross.
RE.BC.1.3	Basic Understanding of Jesus Christ.	Christ is at the center of the Catholic faith. He is fully God and fully man, both at once. Christ came to teach, to establish His Church and sacraments, and to sacrifice Himself for our sins. Students should understand this and be able to retell stories from His birth, life, ministry, death, resurrection, and ascension.



## **BASIC CATECHESIS: RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD**

### **Understanding of Prayer**

<b>Identifier</b>	<b>Standard</b>	<b>Explanation / Depth of Response</b>
RE.BC.2.1	Explain why we pray.	Prayer is talking and listening to God. Prayer is important because it brings us closer to God and strengthens our relationship with Him. Prayer is a way to reach out to God, to thank Him for the good things in our lives, to ask Him for help, or just to get to know Him better.
RE.BC.2.2	Describe when we pray.	We are called to pray all of the time, because prayer and Christian life are inseparable. We are also called to pray at specific times, such as at mass, before meals, etc.
RE.BC.2.3	Describe how we pray.	<p>Prayer can be spontaneous and unique. Such prayers often arise when we share personal and/or private moments with God, and speak to Him from the heart.</p> <p>Prayer can be communal or structured. Such prayers are a way to pray with others, the Church, and those who came before us. When the Apostles asked Jesus to teach them how to pray, He taught them a structured prayer (the Our Father).</p> <p>Prayer does not always involve speaking. Sitting in silence and listening to God, or even just spending time with Him (e.g. in Eucharistic Adoration) is a form of prayer.</p>



## **BASIC CATECHESIS: RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD**

### **Understanding of Prayer (Cont.)**

<b>Identifier</b>	<b>Standard</b>	<b>Explanation / Depth of Response</b>
RE.BC.2.4	Describe Intercessory Prayer.	<p>We are all called to pray for one another. When one person prays for another, that is called Intercessory Prayer.</p> <p>We can ask other people to pray for us, or with us. We can also ask the saints in heaven to pray for us, or with us. These requests can be spontaneous and unique. There are also structured prayers for praying with saints. The most famous of these is the Hail Mary.</p>



## **BASIC CATECHESIS: RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD**

### **Prayers to Know**

<b>Identifier</b>	<b>Standard</b>	<b>Explanation / Depth of Response</b>
RE.BC.3.1	The Sign of the Cross.	<p>The Sign of the Cross opens and closes many Catholic prayers. It reminds us that we are entering a time and space of prayer, and that we are addressing the Triune God. Students should know both the physical Sign of the Cross and the words of the prayer:</p> <p>“In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.”</p>
RE.BC.3.2	The Glory Be.	<p>The Glory Be is a prayer of praise to God. Students should understand why we offer praise to God, and know the words of the prayer:</p> <p>“Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.”</p>
RE.BC.3.3	The Our Father.	<p>Sometimes it can be hard to know how to pray. When the Apostles asked Jesus to teach them, he taught them the Our Father. This prayer is special because God gave it to us. It combines many aspects of prayer: praise, giving thanks, asking for help, and more. Students should understand the special nature of the Our Father, and know the words of the prayer:</p> <p>“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.”</p>



## **BASIC CATECHESIS: RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD**

### Prayers to Know (Cont.)

Identifier	Standard	Explanation / Depth of Response
RE.BC.3.4	Grace before Meals.	<p>The Grace before Meals is a way of thanking God for the good things He gives us. Specifically, it is a way of praying together to thank God for the food we have. In a way, it is connected to the Our Father: in that prayer we ask God for our daily bread, and in this prayer we thank Him for providing it.</p> <p>The Grace before Meals is also a way for families or other groups to reorient themselves toward God on a regular basis. Students should understand the purpose of the Grace before Meals, and know the words of the prayer:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">“Bless us, O Lord, and these thy gifts which we are about to receive from thy bounty, through Christ our Lord. Amen.”</p>
RE.BC.3.5	The Hail Mary.	<p>The Hail Mary is the most famous intercessory prayer. In this prayer we ask the greatest saint to pray to her son Jesus on our behalf. We are joining our prayers to the prayers of Christ’s own mother in a special way.</p> <p>The Hail Mary begins with praise for Mary herself. Many of these words were spoken to Mary by the angel Gabriel in Luke’s Gospel. The Hail Mary ends with a petition, asking Mary to pray for us.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Students should understand the reasons to pray to Mary, and know the words of the prayer:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">“Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. 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.”</p>





## **BASIC CATECHESIS: THE WORD OF GOD**

### **Understanding of Scripture**

<b>Identifier</b>	<b>Standard</b>	<b>Explanation / Depth of Response</b>
RE.BC.4.1	Basic Understanding of Scripture.	Scripture is God’s book, which is why we also call it the Bible (Bible means book). Scripture is inspired by God. Written by human authors using human knowledge and creativity, it is nevertheless the primary source of God’s revealed truth. Scripture is divided into two large sections: the Old and New Testaments.
RE.BC.4.2	Basic Understanding of the Old Testament.	The Old Testament is the first large section of Scripture. The Old Testament begins with the story of God’s creation. It contains the history of God’s chosen people, their developing relationship with God, and the greater understanding they come to in time. The Old Testament stops before the coming of Christ. Students should be able to articulate this, and to tell a few stories from the Old Testament.
RE.BC.4.3	Basic Understanding of the New Testament.	The New Testament is the second large section of Scripture. The New Testament is our primary source for the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It also tells of the doings of Christ’s apostles and disciples, and the founding of the Church. Students should be familiar with the New Testament and be able to tell a few stories from it. Students should be particularly familiar with the Gospel accounts of Christ’s life, death, and resurrection.



## **BASIC CATECHESIS: MADE FOR COMMUNION**

### **Right Relationships with God and Each Other**

Identifier	Standard	Explanation / Depth of Response
RE.BC.5.1	Explain what it means to be made in the image and likeness of God.	<p>God is holy, and humans have dignity because they are made in His image and likeness. This dignity does not have to be earned.</p> <p>Instead, every human life is sacred from the moment of conception until death. Because of this, we are called to treat each other with respect and charity.</p> <p>It is important for each of us to remember that we are children of God. We are loved, and have value. We are as worthy of respect as all others.</p>
RE.BC.5.2	Define communion.	<p>Deep union and fellowship with God and each other is called communion. The Church uses this word in many ways. The Communion of Saints, for example, is the term for the union of those redeemed by Christ, both living and dead.</p> <p>Communion reaches its source and summit in the Sacrament of Holy Eucharist, which is why Eucharist is sometimes called Communion.</p>
RE.BC.5.3	Explain our relationship with God.	<p>God created us to live in communion with Him. He created us in love, and maintains our existence through love.</p> <p>Humans are called to live in communion with God. We cannot live fully unless we acknowledge God's love and entrust ourselves to Him.</p>



## **BASIC CATECHESIS: MADE FOR COMMUNION**

### **Right Relationships with God and Each Other**

<b>Identifier</b>	<b>Standard</b>	<b>Explanation / Depth of Response</b>
RE.BC.5.4	Explain our relationship with each other.	<p>We are all God's children. That means we are all siblings. We are one family of humanity, with God as our Father. We are all made in God's image and likeness, and we are all worthy of respect.</p> <p>Scripture is clear that we are to treat each other with love, forgiveness, and charity. Christ reminds us of our duty to help the weak and vulnerable, to deal justly with all, and to make peace wherever possible.</p>
RE.BC.5.5	Explain our relationship with God's creation.	<p>All of reality is God's creation. All of time and space, all inanimate objects and living things, all that was, is, or will be was created by God. Because we were made in God's image and likeness, we have a special relationship with God's creation.</p> <p>God gave us permission to use creation for our benefit, but He also gave us a responsibility to steward creation wisely. That responsibility calls us to respect and care for God's creation, and to lead it toward the fullness of God's plan.</p>



## **BASIC CATECHESIS: MADE FOR COMMUNION**

### **Right Relationships with God and Each Other (Cont.)**

<b>Identifier</b>	<b>Standard</b>	<b>Explanation / Depth of Response</b>
RE.BC.5.6	Define Catholic Church.	The Catholic Church is the assembly of Christians throughout the world that are united in the celebration of the mass and the sacraments. The Church is meant to do Christ's work in the world.
RE.BC.5.7	Explain how we become members of the Catholic Church.	We become members of the Catholic Church through the sacrament of Baptism.
RE.BC.5.8	Describe the role of a parish. Name your parish.	A parish is a place where Catholics go to worship as a local community.
RE.BC.5.9	Describe the role of a priest. Describe the role of a pastor. Name your priest(s).	<p>A priest is a man who teaches us about God and leads us in worship. Priests celebrate the mass, and can also celebrate most of the sacraments. Priests are called to this role by God and ordained as priests by the Catholic Church.</p> <p>A pastor is the priest who leads the local parish. Not all parishes have a priest in residence. Some share a pastor or priest with other parishes.</p>



## **BASIC CATECHESIS: MADE FOR COMMUNION**

### **Right Relationships with God and Each Other (Cont.)**

<b>Identifier</b>	<b>Standard</b>	<b>Explanation / Depth of Response</b>
RE.BC.5.10	Describe the role of saints.	<p>The Catholic Church includes people who are alive on earth. It also includes people who have died and are in heaven with God. We call those people saints. We don't know who all the saints are, but God has revealed some of them to us. These saints can be role models for us, and we can ask them to pray with us and for us.</p> <p>Two of the most famous saints are Mary and Joseph. Together with their son Jesus, Mary and Joseph make up the Holy Family.</p> <p>Although there are many saints God has revealed to us, it is important to remember they are not the only saints in heaven.</p>
RE.BC.5.11	Describe the role of angels.	Angels are spirits who serve as messengers and servants for God.
RE.BC.5.12	Describe Heaven.	Heaven is the place where the angels and saints live with God. Since God is everywhere, however, we might also refer to Heaven as the state of perfect communion with God, the angels, and the saints. Heaven is a blessed community, and the fulfillment of human purpose and happiness.



## **BASIC CATECHESIS: MADE FOR COMMUNION**

### **Morality**

Reference Number	Standard	Explanation / Depth of Response
RE.BC.6.1	Explain sin.	Sin means choosing (on purpose) to turn away from God (to not be loving to God, ourselves, and/or others). This could happen in thought, words, actions, or omissions (not acting when we should).
RE.BC.6.2	Explain the consequences of sin.	Sin can harm us, other people, our relationship with God, and our relationship with the Church.
RE.BC.6.3	Determine whether a choice is good or bad.	A good choice helps you, others, and/or God's creation. A bad choice hurts you, others, and/or God's creation.
RE.BC.6.4	Explain why it is important to share.	It is important to share because the goods of God's creation are made for all people.
RE.BC.6.5	Explain what it means to be sorry.	The explanation includes: saying what we did was wrong, saying we're sorry for doing it, promising to try our best not to do it again, and keeping this promise. If appropriate, we should also ask what we can do to make things better.
RE.BC.6.6	Explain how to forgive others.	The explanation includes: listening to the person who is saying they're sorry, saying we'll forgive them, and trying to be kind to them.



## **BASIC CATECHESIS: THE LITURGY**

### **Understanding the Liturgy**

<b>Reference Number</b>	<b>Standard</b>	<b>Explanation / Depth of Response</b>
RE.BC.7.1	Explain the concept of mass. Explain why we go to mass.	God gives to us freely, and we are called to respond. Mass is Christ's work for the people. It is also a participatory work of and by the people. We go to mass to pray together, to learn about Jesus, to grow closer to Him, to experience His sacrifice for our sins, and to receive His grace in the Eucharist. Through the mass, we come into closer communion with God and each other.
RE.BC.7.2	Differentiate between the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist.	The Liturgy of the Word and Liturgy of the Eucharist are two large parts of the Mass. In the Liturgy of the Word, we hear God's Word proclaimed in Scripture. In the Liturgy of the Eucharist, the Word that was proclaimed and promised to us becomes flesh in the Eucharist.



## FIRST RECONCILIATION AND EUCHARIST: SACRAMENTAL RECEPTION





## INTRODUCTION

Sacramental preparation is an entry into the life of the Church. It leads us to integrate our lives with the sacramental life. If teaching aids help us communicate this to children, they can be a great help. If “getting through the book” dominates the schedule, however, a teaching aid becomes a stumbling block. In those cases we must stretch ourselves as catechists, and find new ways to teach.

Children are naturally inquisitive. If we engage them and build trust, they will drive a class with their questions. When those questions are taken seriously, children can form a stronger relationship with their faith. If we don’t feel ready to explain the faith without teaching aids, however, these conversations can seem daunting.

Fortunately, questions about sacraments can usually be anticipated. Under the guidance of a catechetical leader, catechists can come together to discuss common questions in advance. Properly prepared, they can answer questions well, and connect with the student in the process. Organic growth of this sort, it turns out, often bears the best fruit. Even with the best lessons and most fulfilling discussions, however, sacramental preparation cannot begin and end in the classroom.

Ultimately, Reconciliation and Eucharist are about communion. One repairs our relationship with God. The other strengthens our relationship with God and each other. Keeping this in mind, preparation must take into account that communion is lived, and sacraments are experienced. Academic foundations are important, but we must also prepare children spiritually. How, then, can we deepen children’s *sense* of relationship with God and the Church? How can we heighten their spiritual lives, so they may be more sensitive to the sacramental experience when it arrives? These are difficult questions, but we must grapple with them in order to give children the best possible preparation.

### Ideas to Consider: Setting the Stage

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*The preparation schedule is always a challenge. We simply cannot cover everything in the little time we have. Frustration over this can lead us to rush, to “get through the book.” When we fall into that trap, lessons often go by too quickly for children to absorb.*

*Sometimes we must be pragmatists. Better that a child internalize one lesson than hear and forget three. We prepare—and adjust—accordingly.*

*“A good educator focuses on the essential. She doesn’t get lost in the details, but passes on what really matters so the child or the student can find the meaning and joy in life.” — Pope Francis*



## STANDARDS



## **SACRAMENTAL RECEPTION: FOUNDATION**

### **Understanding the Sacraments**

<b>Identifier</b>	<b>CCC #</b>	<b>Standard</b>	<b>Explanation / Depth of Response</b>
RE.SR.1.1		Explain the concept and purpose of sacraments.	Sacraments are special ways that God shows His love for us. They are gifts from God to help us lead a holy life. Christ instituted seven sacraments, and entrusted them to the Church.
RE.SR.1.2		Explain the concept and purpose of Baptism.	The sacrament of Baptism brings us into the Church as a child of God. It frees us of sin, including original sin. Baptism consists of immersing a person in water or pouring water over their head three times, while invoking the Holy Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
RE.SR.1.3		Explain the relationship between Baptism and the other sacraments.	Baptism is the first sacrament we can receive. Only after being baptized can we receive the other sacraments: it is the “door” that gives us access to the others. The sacrament of Baptism leaves an indelible mark on our soul. It can only be received once.



## **SACRAMENTAL RECEPTION: FIRST RECONCILIATION**

### Understanding First Reconciliation

Identifier	Standard	Explanation / Depth of Response
RE.SR.2.1	Explain the concept and purpose of the sacrament of Reconciliation.	<p>Even after Baptism, human beings continue to sin. These sins damage our relationship with God and the Church, and we need to take steps to repair these relationships. The sacrament of Reconciliation allows us to receive God's forgiveness for our sins and be reconciled with the Church.</p> <p>We are called to receive this sacrament at least once a year, but it is recommended we do so more often. This sacrament is also called Confession.</p>
RE.SR.2.2	Explain how to prepare for the sacrament of Reconciliation.	We should prepare for Reconciliation with an examination of conscience. This is a "prayerful self-reflection on our words and deeds in the light of the Gospel to determine how we may have sinned against God." (CCC, Glossary)
RE.SR.2.3	Describe the steps of the sacrament of Reconciliation.	During Reconciliation, we: a) show contrition, b) confess our sins, and c) state our intention to repair the harm caused by sin and to re-establish Christian habits. The priest then absolves us of our sins.
RE.SR.2.1	Identify who can forgive sins in the sacrament of Reconciliation.	Only Christ can forgive sins, but standing in the place of Christ, the priest can forgive sins in Christ's name.



## SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION: FIRST RECONCILIATION

### Prayers and Practices (First Reconciliation)

Identifier	Standard	Explanation / Depth of Response
RE.SR.3.1	Examination of Conscience.	There are many ways to do an examination of conscience. <b>Catechists are not limited to using the example given below.</b> Most involve sitting quietly and asking ourselves questions about our behavior. The answers we discover will help us to give a more thorough confession during the sacrament of Reconciliation.
RE.SR.3.2	Sample Examination of Conscience (Part I of II).	<p>The following is from the USCCB’s Examination of Conscience for Children.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Responsibilities to God:</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Have I prayed every day?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Have I prayed my morning prayers and night prayers?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Have I prayed with my parents and family?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Have I been moody and rebellious about praying and going to church on Sunday?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Have I asked the Holy Spirit to help me whenever I have been tempted to sin?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Have I asked the Holy Spirit to help me do what is right?</p>



## SACRAMENTAL RECEPTION: FIRST RECONCILIATION

### Prayers and Practices (First Reconciliation, Cont.)

Identifier	Standard	Explanation / Depth of Response
RE.SR.3.3	Sample Examination of Conscience (Part II of II).	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Responsibilities to others:</u></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Have I been obedient and respectful to my parents? Have I lied or been deceitful to them or to others?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Have I been arrogant, stubborn or rebellious? Have I talked back to parents, teachers or other adults?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Have I pouted and been moody? Have I been selfish toward my parents, brothers, and sisters, teachers, or my friends and schoolmates?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Have I gotten angry at them? Have I hit anyone? Have I held grudges or not forgiven others?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Have I treated other children with respect or have I made fun of them and called them names? Have I used bad language?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Have I stolen anything? Have I returned it? Have I performed my responsibilities, such as homework and household chores?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Have I been helpful and affectionate toward my family? Have I been kind and generous with my friends?</p>



## SACRAMENTAL RECEPTION: FIRST RECONCILIATION

### Prayers and Practices (First Reconciliation, Cont.)

Identifier	CCC #	Standard	Explanation / Depth of Response
RE.SR.3.4		Act of Contrition.	<p>The Act of Contrition is an important part of the sacrament of Reconciliation. After telling the priest our sins, we pray this prayer as an expression of our contrition for our sins. That means that we are sorry, seek forgiveness, want to do better, and are willing to do penance to make things right.</p> <p>There are many versions of the Act of Contrition. <b>Catechists are not limited to using the two examples below.</b> It is expected that students learn an Act of Contrition by heart. If a student cannot remember an Act of Contrition during Reconciliation, however, the priest will help them.</p>
RE.SR.3.5		Sample Act of Contrition (Version I of II).	<p style="text-align: center;">The following versions are given by the USCCB:</p> <p>O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee, and I detest all my sins because of thy just punishments, but most of all because they offend Thee, my God, who art all good and deserving of all my love.</p> <p>I firmly resolve with the help of Thy grace to sin no more and to avoid the near occasion of sin. Amen.</p>



## **SACRAMENTAL RECEPTION: FIRST RECONCILIATION**

### **Prayers and Practices (First Reconciliation, Cont.)**

<b>Identifier</b>	<b>Standard</b>	<b>Explanation / Depth of Response</b>
RE.SR.3.6	Sample Act of Contrition (Version II of II).	<p data-bbox="1339 435 1436 459">My God,</p> <p data-bbox="1108 542 1667 675">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.</p> <p data-bbox="1157 756 1619 854">I firmly intend, with your help, to do penance, to sin no more, and to avoid whatever leads me to sin.</p> <p data-bbox="1104 935 1671 997">Our Savior Jesus Christ suffered and died for us. In his name, my God, have mercy.</p>





## **SACRAMENTAL RECEPTION: FIRST EUCHARIST**

### Understanding First Eucharist

Identifier	Standard	Explanation / Depth of Response
RE.SR.4.1	Explain the concept and purpose of the sacrament of Eucharist.	<p>Christ is present in the liturgy because of the sacraments. He is present in the priest because of the sacrament of Holy Orders. He is present in the people because of the sacrament of Baptism. He is present in His Word, which we have from the sacramental authority of the Church. In a special way, Christ is present in the sacrament of Holy Eucharist.</p> <p>The sacrament of Eucharist was instituted by Christ at the Last Supper. “Eucharist” means thanksgiving, and in this sacrament we give thanks and praise to God. More than this, the Eucharist unites us to Jesus.</p> <p>Jesus is truly present in the Eucharist, which is His Body and Blood. This presence is real, not merely symbolic. In the Eucharist we are strengthened by God’s grace and brought into communion with the other members of His Church. For this reason Eucharist is sometimes called Communion.</p> <p>Celebrating the Eucharist is the heart of the Church’s activity, because this sacrament is the source and summit of the Christian life.</p>
RE.SR.4.2	Explain how to prepare for the Eucharist.	<p>The Eucharist is offered to baptized Catholics, usually above a certain age. If the communicant is aware of being in a state of serious sin, they should receive the sacrament of Reconciliation before receiving the Eucharist. This sacrament can and should be received regularly.</p>



## **SACRAMENTAL RECEPTION: FIRST EUCHARIST**

### **Understanding First Eucharist (Cont.)**

<b>Identifier</b>	<b>Standard</b>	<b>Explanation / Depth of Response</b>
RE.SR.4.3	Explain what happens during the Eucharist.	<p>During consecration, the priest takes wheat bread and grape wine, then pronounces the words of Christ at the Last Supper: "This is my body, which is given up for you...This is the cup of my blood..."</p> <p>At this time, the bread and wine truly become the Body and Blood of Christ. This process is also known as transubstantiation.</p>
RE.SR.4.4	Identify who can preside at the Eucharist and consecrate the bread and wine.	Only validly ordained priests can preside at the Eucharist and consecrate the bread and wine so they become the Body and Blood of Christ.



## **BASIC CATECHESIS: MADE FOR COMMUNION**

### Prayers and Practices (First Eucharist)

Identifier	Standard	Explanation / Depth of Response
RE.SR.5.1	Sample Prayer before Communion.	<p style="text-align: center;">O my God, help me to make a good Communion. Mary, my mother, pray to Jesus for me.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">All you holy Angels and saints, pray for me. My dear Angel Guardian, lead me to the altar of God.</p>
RE.SR.5.2	Sample Prayer after Communion (Version I of II).	<p>O Jesus, I believe that you have come to me in Holy Communion because you have said it and your word is true.</p>
RE.SR.5.3	Sample Prayer after Communion (Version I of II).	<p style="text-align: center;">Soul of Christ, be my sanctification. Body of Christ, be my salvation. Blood of Christ, fill all my veins. Water from Christ's side, wash out my stains.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Passion of Christ, my comfort be. O good Jesus, listen to me. In thy wounds, I feign would hide, Never to be parted from thy side.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Guard me should the foe assail me. Call me when my life shall fail me. Bid me to come to thee above, With all they saints to sing thy love. World without end, Amen.</p>



## STANDARDS FOR RECEPTION OF CONFIRMATION



## CONFIRMATION: BASIC CATECHESIS



## INTRODUCTION

Catechesis is more art than science. To be effective, catechists must know and adapt to their audience. The challenge of that adaptation is strongly apparent in sacramental preparation. First communicants are generally eight years old. Confirmandi are usually fourteen. In between lies a world of difference, and we must adapt accordingly.

We expect more of teenagers, and standards reflect their greater aptitude for knowledge. Knowing “what the Church teaches,” however, doesn’t affect teens the way it does eight year olds. By fourteen the world is telling them that “what the Church teaches,” is outdated, judgmental, and confining. Can we adapt our methods to respond effectively?

Catechists have so much to do at this stage. If the students have not had religious education since first communion, the challenge becomes even greater. Can we give them six years of foundation in a few months? If we do, how much time can we spend on spiritual preparation? Even if we have time, how do we hold thoughtful discussions with an age group that loves to argue? How can we build credibility enough to open their minds, when they already hold strong opinions? These questions are often asked, and they don’t have easy answers.

It can be comforting to recall, however, that catechesis is a team sport. Catechists can come together and learn from each other’s experiences. We can adopt methods that are working elsewhere. We can work together to learn how to talk about hot-button issues, like the relationship of faith and science. We can hone our art. For the sake of the students, we can adapt.

### Ideas to Consider: Hot-Button Issues

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*Does science disprove the creation account in Genesis? People feel passionately about this question, and teens do leave the faith over it. Do they have to choose a side? Do we?*

*This debate often takes a literal interpretation of the creation account as a starting point. Yet this is not the Catholic way. Instead, great saints like Augustine and Thomas Aquinas taught us to read the creation account for religious truth, not scientific fact. We don’t have to pick a side.*

*Church teaching on this issue can be complicated, but it is important for us to understand. Helping students to understand it, moreover, is one of the most urgent tasks facing catechists today.*

*“Science without religion is lame. Religion without science is blind.”  
— Albert Einstein.*



## STANDARDS



## **BASIC CATECHESIS: RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD**

### **Understanding of God**

Identifier	Standard	Explanation / Depth of Response
CF.BC.1.1	Understanding of God as Father.	<p>Christ taught us to call God “Father.” This does not mean the Father is physically male. Indeed, the Father has no physical form. Instead, by “Father” we are pointing to God as the creator of all things, the source of justice and mercy.</p>
CF.BC.1.2	Understanding of God as transcendent.	<p>When Catholics say “God,” they do not mean a being like the Greek gods. God is not an old man in the sky, not a person found within space and time, not even the most powerful being in existence.</p> <p>Instead, God is the very essence of reality, the intelligence that has created all that is, and who holds all things in being through His presence. At the same time, God is a person to whom we can pray, not merely an impersonal force or abstract law of reality.</p>
CF.BC.1.3	Understanding of God as creator.	<p>The Bible teaches us the great truths of creation: God initialized reality from nothing, He develops it in stages, etc. Genesis, however, is not meant as a literal scientific account.</p> <p>Today’s youth are often told that faith and science are incompatible. Fortunately, prepared catechists can show that ideas like evolution or the Big Bang are not a threat to our faith. Doing so is one of the great challenges of our time.</p>





## **BASIC CATECHESIS: RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD**

### **Understanding of God (Cont.)**

<b>Identifier</b>	<b>Standard</b>	<b>Explanation / Depth of Response</b>
CF.BC.1.4	Understanding of Christ as divine.	<p>Christ is the Son of God. Fully divine, Christ is the Word of God, the divine reason through whom creation was conceived and accomplished.</p> <p>Scripture is clear: <i>In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came to be through Him, and without Him nothing came to be.</i> – John 1:1-3</p>
CF.BC.1.5	Understanding of Christ as human.	<p>Seeing humanity enslaved to its sins, knowing that it could not save itself, the Son of God humbled Himself and became human. He is not merely human in appearance, but fully God and fully human at once. Jesus shares in human joy, love, pain, and suffering, having become like us in order to save us.</p>
CF.BC.1.6	Understanding of Christ's saving mission.	<p>Christ came to save, to teach, to establish the church, and to institute its sacraments. The Good News of Jesus' birth, life, death, and resurrection is the core Christian message. Priority must be given to explaining this and to helping students develop a relationship with Jesus Christ.</p>



## **BASIC CATECHESIS: RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD**

### Understanding of God (Cont.)

Identifier	Standard	Explanation / Depth of Response
CF.BC.1.7	Understanding of the Person of the Holy Spirit.	<p>The Holy Spirit is the third member of the divine Trinity. Our understanding of the Spirit continues to develop.</p> <p>The Old Testament revealed the Father and gave glimpses of the Son and Spirit. The New Testament revealed the Son and gave glimpses of the Spirit. Understanding of the Spirit, however, has progressed over the life of the Church and continues to this day.</p>
CF.BC.1.8	Understanding of the Role of the Holy Spirit.	<p style="text-align: center;">Among other actions, the Holy Spirit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- inspired the authors of Scripture.</li> <li>- is the advocate and helper sent by Christ.</li> <li>- gives the Gifts of the Spirit at Confirmation (1 Cor 12:7).</li> <li>- produces the fruits of the Spirit (Gal 5:22).</li> </ul>
CF.BC.1.9	Understanding of the Trinity.	<p>The three persons of God exist as a relationship. The very titles of Father and Son imply that the identity of God can only be understood in this way.</p> <p>God invites us to share in this relationship, offering us communion with Him and each other through the Church and its sacraments.</p>



## **BASIC CATECHESIS: RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD**

### Prayers to Know

Identifier	Standard	Explanation / Depth of Response
CF.BC.2.1	<p>Familiarity with Basic Prayers</p> <p>(These prayers can be found in the Standards for Reconciliation and Eucharist).</p>	<p>Students should know and be able to say:</p> <p>The Sign of the Cross            The Grace before Meals            The Lord’s Prayer (Our Father)</p> <p>The Hail Mary            The Glory Be            An Act of Contrition</p>
CF.BC.2.2	<p>The Hail Holy Queen.</p>	<p>The Hail Holy Queen is a medieval hymn to Mary. Like the Hail Mary, it asks Mary to pray with us and for us. It is also the final prayer of the Rosary. Students should understand why we ask Mary to pray for us, and know the words of the prayer:</p> <p>Hail Holy Queen, mother of mercy, our life, our sweetness and our hope.</p> <p>To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve. To thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears.</p> <p>Turn then, most gracious advocate, thine eyes of mercy towards us. And after this, our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus.</p> <p>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. Amen.</p>



## **BASIC CATECHESIS: RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD**

### Prayers to Know (Cont.)

Identifier	Standard	Explanation / Depth of Response
CF.BC.2.3	The Apostles' Creed.	<p>Shorter than the Nicene Creed we pray at mass, the Apostles' Creed is an ancient prayer. It is considered the to be a summary of the apostles' faith, and is the creed we pray as part of the Rosary. Students should understand this, and know the words of the prayer:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">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;</p> <p style="text-align: center;">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.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.</p>



## **BASIC CATECHESIS: RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD**

### Devotions

Identifier	Standard	Explanation / Depth of Response
CF.BC.3.1	Popular devotions.	<p>Catechesis must include popular devotions. There are many devotional prayers. The Rosary, <i>Lectio Divina</i>, and Eucharistic Adoration are given below. Others, like the Stations of the Cross or Liturgy of the Hours, are too long to reproduce here. They can be found in many places, including online.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Students are not expected to know all these devotions.</b> They should have experienced them at least once, however, and a catechist may choose to spend additional time on a devotion that is special to them.</p>
CF.BC.3.2	The Rosary.	<p>The Rosary may be the best-known Catholic devotion. It has a long history and is special to Mary. The Rosary intertwines Scripture, prayer, intercession, and meditation. It can be prayed as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. While holding the cross, pray the Apostles Creed.</li> <li>2. On the first bead, pray the Our Father.</li> <li>3. Pray one Hail Mary on each of the next three beads, then a Glory Be on the following bead.</li> <li>3. <i>For each section</i> (called decades), begin with an Our Father. Pray a Hail Mary on each bead of the decade. Then pray a Glory Be.</li> </ol> <p style="text-align: center;">Step 4: Following the Glory Be, you may pray the Fatima Prayer:          “O my Jesus, forgive us our sins; save us from the fires of hell; lead all souls to heaven, especially those in most need of thy mercy.”</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Step 5: Conclude with the Hail Holy Queen.</p>



## **BASIC CATECHESIS: RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD**

### Devotions (Cont.)

Identifier	Standard	Explanation / Depth of Response
CF.BC.3.3	Meditating with the Rosary.	<p>Each decade of the Rosary has its own mystery to meditate upon. These are events from the lives of Jesus and Mary, and we call them mysteries because they are so full of God's power that we can never fully grasp them.</p> <p>We may include the mysteries in our Rosary by announcing each one before the Our Father at the beginning of a decade. If we choose, we may read the appropriate Scripture passage as well.</p>
CF.BC.3.4	Mysteries of the Rosary (I of II).	<p>The Joyful Mysteries (said on Monday and Saturday)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Annunciation (Luke 1:26-27)</li> <li>2. The Visitation (Luke 1:39-42)</li> <li>3. The Nativity (Luke 2:1-7)</li> <li>4. The Presentation in the Temple (Luke 2:21-24)</li> <li>5. The Finding in the Temple (Luke 2:41-47)</li> </ol> <p>The Sorrowful Mysteries (said on Tuesday and Friday)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Agony in the Garden (Matt 26:36-39)</li> <li>2. The Scouring at the Pillar (Matt 27:26)</li> <li>3. The Crowning with Thorns (Matt 27:27-29)</li> <li>4. The Carrying of the Cross (Mark 15:21-22)</li> <li>5. The Death of Jesus (Luke 23:33-46)</li> </ol>



## **BASIC CATECHESIS: RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD**

### Devotions (Cont.)

Identifier	Standard	Explanation / Depth of Response
CF.BC.3.5	Mysteries of the Rosary (II of II).	<p style="text-align: center;">The Glorious Mysteries (said on Wednesday and Sunday)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Resurrection (Luke 24:1-5)</li> <li>2. The Ascension (Mark 16:19)</li> <li>3. The Descent of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1-4)</li> <li>4. The Assumption of Mary (Luke 1:48-49)</li> <li>5. The Coronation of Mary (Rev 12:1)</li> </ol> <p style="text-align: center;">The Luminous Mysteries (said on Thursday)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Baptism of Jesus (Matt 3:16-17)</li> <li>2. The Wedding at Cana (John 2:1-5)</li> <li>3. The Preaching of Jesus and the Call to Conversion (Mark 1:15)</li> <li>4. The Transfiguration (Matt 17:1-2)</li> <li>5. The Institution of the Eucharist (Matt 26:26)</li> </ol>



## **BASIC CATECHESIS: RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD**

### Devotions (Cont.)

Identifier	Standard	Explanation / Depth of Response
CF.BC.3.6	<i>Lectio Divina.</i>	<p>Catholics believe that the Bible is the inspired Word of God. Even though Scripture was written long ago, God speaks to every generation through His Word. We can hear God's voice by praying on Scripture and letting it speak to our hearts. This practice is called <i>lectio divina</i> or "divine reading". We may pray the <i>lectio</i> as follows (adapted from the USCCB):</p> <p>The first step is reading (<i>lectio</i>): take a short passage from the Bible and read it carefully, perhaps three or more times. Let it really soak-in.</p> <p>The second step is meditation (<i>meditatio</i>). Use your imagination to enter into the Biblical scene in order to "see" the setting, the people, and the unfolding action. It is through this meditation that you encounter the text and discover its meaning for your life.</p> <p>The third step is prayer (<i>oratio</i>), your personal response to the text: asking for graces, offering praise or thanksgiving, seeking healing or forgiveness. In this prayerful engagement with the text, you open yourself up to the possibility of contemplation.</p> <p>Contemplation (<i>contemplatio</i>) is a gaze turned toward Christ and the things of God. By God's action of grace, you may be raised above meditation to a state of seeing or experiencing the text as mystery and reality. In contemplation, you come into an experiential contact with the One behind and beyond the text.</p>





## **BASIC CATECHESIS: RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD**

### Devotions (Cont.)

Identifier	Standard	Explanation / Depth of Response
CF.BC.3.7	Eucharistic Adoration (I of IV).	<p>Catholics believe in the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist. This means that the bread and wine become the body, blood, soul, and divinity of Jesus. The Lord is physically present in them, even though all we see are the appearances of bread and wine.</p> <p>Since Jesus is really present in the host, we can worship and adore it because we are actually worshipping Jesus.</p> <p>Eucharistic Adoration is one way to honor the real presence of Jesus in the host. Adoration begins with placing the host in a beautiful display case, called a monstrance.</p> <p>Adorers then sing the hymn <i>O Salutaris Hostia</i> in either Latin or a modern language. Next there is a reading, or time for silent prayer.</p> <p>At the end, adorers sing the hymn <i>Tantum Ergo</i> in either Latin or modern language, and the priest or deacon blesses everyone with the Eucharistic host.</p> <p>While the priest or deacon removes the host, it is customary to pray the Divine Praises.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">The <i>O Salutaris Hostia</i>, <i>Tantum Ergo</i>, and Divine Praises are included below.</p>



**BASIC CATECHESIS: RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD**

**Devotions (Cont.)**

Identifier	Standard	Explanation / Depth of Response			
CF.BC.3.8	Eucharistic Adoration (II of IV).	<p align="center"><i>O Salutaris Hostia</i></p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td align="center" style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>Latin</p> <p>O salutaris Hostia,            Quæ cæli pandis ostium:            Bella premunt hostilia,            Da robur, fer auxilium.            Uni trinoque Domino            Sit sempiterna gloria,            Qui vitam sine termino            Nobis donet in patria.            Amen.</p> </td> <td align="center" style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>English</p> <p>O saving Victim, opening wide            The gate of Heaven to us below;            Our foes press hard on every side;            Thine aid supply; thy strength bestow.            To thy great name be endless praise,            Immortal Godhead, One in Three.            O grant us endless length of days,            In our true native land with thee.            Amen.</p> </td> </tr> </table>		<p>Latin</p> <p>O salutaris Hostia,            Quæ cæli pandis ostium:            Bella premunt hostilia,            Da robur, fer auxilium.            Uni trinoque Domino            Sit sempiterna gloria,            Qui vitam sine termino            Nobis donet in patria.            Amen.</p>	<p>English</p> <p>O saving Victim, opening wide            The gate of Heaven to us below;            Our foes press hard on every side;            Thine aid supply; thy strength bestow.            To thy great name be endless praise,            Immortal Godhead, One in Three.            O grant us endless length of days,            In our true native land with thee.            Amen.</p>
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**BASIC CATECHESIS: RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD**

**Devotions (Cont.)**

Identifier	Standard	Explanation / Depth of Response			
CF.BC.3.9	Eucharistic Adoration (III of IV).	<p align="center"><i>Tantum Ergo</i></p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td align="center" style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>Latin</p> <p>Tantum ergo Sacramentum  Veneremur cernui:  Et antiquum documentum  Novo cedat ritui:  Præstet fides supplementum  Sensuum defectui.  Genitori, Genitoque  Laus et iubilatio,  Salus, honor, virtus quoque  Sit et benedictio:  Procedenti ab utroque  Compar sit laudatio.  Amen.</p> </td> <td align="center" style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>English</p> <p>Down in adoration falling,  Lo! the sacred Host we hail,  Lo! o'er ancient forms departing  Newer rites of grace prevail;  Faith for all defects supplying,  Where the feeble senses fail.  To the Everlasting Father,  And the Son Who reigns on high  With the Holy Ghost proceeding  Forth from Each eternally,  Be salvation, honour, blessing,  Might, and endless majesty.  Amen.</p> </td> </tr> </table>		<p>Latin</p> <p>Tantum ergo Sacramentum  Veneremur cernui:  Et antiquum documentum  Novo cedat ritui:  Præstet fides supplementum  Sensuum defectui.  Genitori, Genitoque  Laus et iubilatio,  Salus, honor, virtus quoque  Sit et benedictio:  Procedenti ab utroque  Compar sit laudatio.  Amen.</p>	<p>English</p> <p>Down in adoration falling,  Lo! the sacred Host we hail,  Lo! o'er ancient forms departing  Newer rites of grace prevail;  Faith for all defects supplying,  Where the feeble senses fail.  To the Everlasting Father,  And the Son Who reigns on high  With the Holy Ghost proceeding  Forth from Each eternally,  Be salvation, honour, blessing,  Might, and endless majesty.  Amen.</p>
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**BASIC CATECHESIS: RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD**

**Devotions (Cont.)**

Identifier	Standard	Explanation / Depth of Response
CF.BC.3.10	Eucharistic Adoration (IV of IV).	<p align="center">The Divine Praises</p> <p align="center">Blessed be God. Blessed be His holy Name.</p> <p align="center">Blessed be Jesus Christ, true God and true man. Blessed be His most Sacred Heart. Blessed be His most Precious Blood. Blessed be Jesus in the most holy sacrament of the altar.</p> <p align="center">Blessed be the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete.</p> <p align="center">Blessed be the great Mother of God, Mary most holy. Blessed be her holy and immaculate Conception. Blessed be St. Joseph, her most chaste spouse.</p> <p align="center">Blessed be God in his angels and in his saints.</p>



## **BASIC CATECHESIS: THE WORD OF GOD**

### Understanding of Scripture

Identifier	Standard	Explanation / Depth of Response
CF.BC.4.1	Understanding of the Nature of Scripture.	<p>Scripture was written by divinely-inspired human authors. They transmitted God's message using their own creativity and cultural understanding. This can make interpretation difficult.</p> <p>Scripture is always true, but can be true in different senses: literal, allegorical, etc. Our understanding of its meaning can develop over time. The Church is the proper guardian and interpreter of Sacred Scripture.</p>
CF.BC.4.2	Understanding of Scriptural Progression.	<p>Scripture relates humanity's developing relationship with God. It makes more sense if we receive it in order.</p> <p>Although the Bible contains many books, it is still one book because all the books tell the same story. This main storyline of the Bible is the story of God's covenants with specific people leading up to the New Covenant with the whole human race in Jesus.</p> <p>Knowing the five Old Testament covenants helps make sense of Scripture as a whole. It prepares us for Christ's New Covenant, and help frame Mass readings more generally.</p>



## **BASIC CATECHESIS: THE WORD OF GOD**

### **Understanding of Scripture (Cont.)**

<b>Identifier</b>	<b>Standard</b>	<b>Explanation / Depth of Response</b>
CF.BC.4.3	Describe the Old Testament Covenants (I of II).	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Adam and Eve</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">God creates men and women in his own image and likeness. Even after Adam and Eve turn away from God by sin, God promises to send a savior.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Noah</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">After bringing the flood upon the world, God promises to never destroy the world again. God will use Noah and his children to make a new human family. The covenant has gone from one couple to a family.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Abraham</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">God promises Abraham that he will receive a land and countless descendants, and that Abraham will be a source of blessing for the whole world. Abraham responds in faith, and the covenant goes from a family to a clan.</p>



## **BASIC CATECHESIS: THE WORD OF GOD**

### **Understanding of Scripture (Cont.)**

<b>Identifier</b>	<b>Standard</b>	<b>Explanation / Depth of Response</b>
CF.BC.4.4	Describe the Old Testament Covenants (I of II).	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Moses</b></p> <p>Under Moses, God accepts all the children of Abraham and forges them into a people with unique structures.</p> <p>The People of God receive the Ten Commandments, the priesthood, and instructions on how to worship God.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">The covenant has gone from a clan to a people.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>David</b></p> <p>Under David, the People of God become a kingdom on the world stage. God promises David that one of his children will always sit upon the throne.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Under this covenant, Israel builds the Temple.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">The covenant has gone from a people to a nation.</p>



## **BASIC CATECHESIS: THE WORD OF GOD**

### **Understanding of Scripture (Cont.)**

<b>Identifier</b>	<b>Standard</b>	<b>Explanation / Depth of Response</b>
CF.BC.4.5	Describe the New Covenant.	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Jesus</b></p> <p>As the Son of God made man, Jesus is the author of the New Covenant between God and his people.</p> <p>Jesus fulfills all the promises in all the other covenants. By his death and resurrection, Jesus saves his people from sin and allows for a new time in human history.</p> <p>Jesus is the blessing for the whole world. He gives his people laws, a Church (structured community), and worship. As the descendent of David raised in glory, Jesus sits at the right hand of God forever.</p> <p>In Jesus, the covenant has gone from the nation of Israel to all the nations on the face of the earth.</p> <p>This is why the Church is composed of people from all nations and walks of life.</p>





## **BASIC CATECHESIS: THE WORD OF GOD**

### Understanding of Scripture (Cont.)

Identifier	Standard	Explanation / Depth of Response		
CF.BC.4.6	Understanding of Scriptural Structure.	<p>The Catholic Church recognizes 73 books of the Bible as the inspired Word of God. We can divide Scripture into two main sections, the Old Testament and the New Testament.</p> <p>Within each testament, we can further divide the books into four groups: special books, historical books, wisdom books, and prophetic books.</p> <p>Knowing the eight parts of Scripture, together with covenant history, helps us understand Scripture more generally.</p>		
CF.BC.4.7	Understanding Old Testament Structure.	<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p><b>Special Books (Pentateuch/Torah)</b></p> <p>Genesis Exodus Etc.</p> <p><b>Wisdom Books</b></p> <p>Tobit Judith Etc.</p> </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p><b>Historical Books</b></p> <p>Joshua Judges Etc.</p> <p><b>Prophetic Books</b></p> <p>Hosea Amos Etc.</p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p><b>Special Books (Pentateuch/Torah)</b></p> <p>Genesis Exodus Etc.</p> <p><b>Wisdom Books</b></p> <p>Tobit Judith Etc.</p>	<p><b>Historical Books</b></p> <p>Joshua Judges Etc.</p> <p><b>Prophetic Books</b></p> <p>Hosea Amos Etc.</p>
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## **BASIC CATECHESIS: THE WORD OF GOD**

### Understanding of Scripture (Cont.)

Identifier	Standard	Explanation / Depth of Response	
CF.BC.4.8	Understanding New Testament Structure.	<b>Special Books (Gospels)</b>  Matthew Mark Etc.  <b>Wisdom Books (Epistles)</b>  Romans 1 Corinthians Etc.	<b>Historical Books</b>  Acts  <b>Prophetic Books</b>  Jude Revelation



## **BASIC CATECHESIS: MADE FOR COMMUNION**

### **The Four Marks of the Church**

<b>Identifier</b>	<b>Standard</b>	<b>Explanation / Depth of Response</b>
CF.BC.5.1	Know the four “Marks” (defining characteristics) of the Church.	The Church is one, holy, catholic, and apostolic.
CF.BC.5.2	Understanding that the Church is one.	The Body of Christ (Catholic Church) is a true communion with Christ. God exists in a relationship (the Trinity). Through His Church, Christ calls us to join this relationship. In the Body of Christ we become <i>one</i> with Him, and so one with each other.
CF.BC.5.3	Understanding that the Church is holy.	Christ instituted the Church. It is His body. It is <i>holy</i> because He is holy. The Church is further sanctified by Holy Spirit, and the grace that runs through the sacraments.
CF.BC.5.4	Understanding that the Church is catholic.	Catholic means “universal.” Christ came to save everyone. The <i>Catholic</i> Church offers His truth to all, regardless of race, gender, class, or nationality. The Body of Christ is universal in its composition.



## **BASIC CATECHESIS: MADE FOR COMMUNION**

### **The Four Marks of the Church (Cont.)**

Identifier	Standard	Explanation / Depth of Response
CF.BC.5.4	Understanding that the Church is apostolic.	<p style="text-align: center;">The Church is <i>apostolic</i> because of its links to the apostles.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">The apostles handed down many things to the Church: written teachings (Scripture), oral teachings (apostolic tradition), and the succession of their authority.</p>
CF.BC.5.5	Describe the Church’s Tradition.	<p style="text-align: center;">“Tradition” means “things handed down.” The Church’s tradition began with the apostles, who handed down the teachings of Christ.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">As the apostles’ understanding grew, Tradition became a living thing. We can see this at work in their letters. We can see it in Acts, as they tackled new issues under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. This growth did not end with the apostles. The deposit of the Church’s tradition continues to grow under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.</p>
CF.BC.5.6	Describe apostolic authority.	<p style="text-align: center;">Christ gave spiritual authorities to the apostles. He empowered them to forgive sins, make decisions for the Church, and more.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Today’s bishops are direct successors of the apostles. They received full apostolic authority through the line of apostolic succession. This authority includes the ability to act as Christ in the sacraments, as well as the Magisterium, the formal teaching authority of the Church.</p>
CF.BC.5.7	Identify the recipients of apostolic authority.	<p style="text-align: center;">Bishops receive the fullness of apostolic authority. Priests and deacons participate in the bishops’ authority to different degrees. The Pope receives the greater authorities of Peter, who was chief of the apostles.</p>



## **BASIC CATECHESIS: MADE FOR COMMUNION**

### **The Three States of the Church**

<b>Identifier</b>	<b>Standard</b>	<b>Explanation / Depth of Response</b>
CF.BC.6.1	Identify the three divisions/states of the Church.	The three states include Christians on earth, in heaven, and in purgatory. These three divisions are not separated by death.
CF.BC.6.2	Describe the saints in heaven.	Those in heaven are saints. They died in communion with God. Saints can intercede for us with their prayers, and we can ask them to pray for us.
CF.BC.6.3	Describe the souls in purgatory.	Purgatory is not a final destination. It is the process for those who died in friendship with God, but need further purification to enter heaven. All those in purgatory are saved, and will enter heaven when their purification is complete. We can help the souls in purgatory with our prayers and sacrifices.
CF.BC.6.4	Describe the souls in hell.	<p>Hell is the place for those who die in mortal sin through their own free choice. Eternal separation from God is both the condition of those in hell, and the source of their suffering.</p> <p>That souls go to hell is a great sadness. God does not want anyone to go to hell. Because free will is essential to humanity, however, He respects their choices and does not force them into communion with Him.</p>



## **BASIC CATECHESIS: MADE FOR COMMUNION**

### **Mary**

Identifier	Standard	Explanation / Depth of Response
CF.BC.7.1	Recognize Mary's special identity.	God chose Mary and prepared her to be Jesus' mother. She is "full of grace," and born without original sin (the Immaculate Conception).
CF.BC.7.2	Describe Mary's role in salvation.	<p>Being without sin, Mary was prepared to carry Jesus in her womb. She was also prepared to lead a completely sinless life, and to be Christ's first and greatest disciple.</p> <p>Finally, being without sin allowed Mary to stand as representative for the human race. When the angel appeared to tell Mary about God's plan, he did not leave until she said yes. Mary was saying yes not only to God's will for her, but to His plan of salvation on behalf of all humanity.</p>
CF.BC.7.3	Describe Mary's titles.	<p>Because Jesus is fully God and fully human at all times, Mary is the Mother of God.</p> <p>Because she said yes to God on behalf of humanity, Mary is the Mother of the Church.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Because she was born without original sin, Mary is the new Eve.</p>



## **BASIC CATECHESIS: MADE FOR COMMUNION**

### **Morality**

<b>Identifier</b>	<b>Standard</b>	<b>Explanation / Depth of Response</b>
CF.BC.8.1	Describe the reality of sin and original sin.	<p>God made human beings good. Sadly, humanity was badly damaged by original sin.</p> <p>This does not mean we are totally corrupt or evil. It does mean that we are subject to sin, and born with an inclination to sin.</p>
CF.BC.8.2	Describe mortal and venial sin.	<p>Venial sins weaken our relationship with God. They can be forgiven through prayer, works of mercy, and by receiving the Eucharist.</p> <p>Mortal sins are less common but more serious. For a sin to be mortal, it must consist of a grave matter, committed with full awareness, through free choice.</p> <p>Mortal sins destroy our relationship with God, and must be forgiven in confession.</p>
CF.BC.8.3	Explain what makes an action morally good.	<p>Every action has three parts: the act itself, the intention behind it, and the circumstances involved (complicating factors, etc.).</p> <p>For the action to be morally good, all its parts must be good. We cannot perform an evil act hoping to get a good result. The ends do not justify the means.</p>



## **BASIC CATECHESIS: MADE FOR COMMUNION**

### **The Commandments**

Identifier	Standard	Explanation / Depth of Response
CF.BC.9.1	Explain how the Ten Commandments and Jesus' two "greatest commandments" work together.	Jesus says the greatest commandment is to love God with all our heart and our neighbor as ourselves. The Ten Commandments teach us how to love God and our neighbor.
CF.BC.9.2	Explain the first commandment.	The first commandment tells us to believe in and love God above all else. We keep the commandment by offering worship. We break the commandment through atheism and superstition (idolatry, magic, etc.).
CF.BC.9.3	Explain the second commandment.	The second commandment tells us to respect the name of God. We break the commandment by using the names of God, Jesus, Mary, or the saints in an offensive way.
CF.BC.9.4	Explain the third commandment.	The third commandment calls us to worship on the Lord's Day. We break it by missing Mass and doing activities that keep us from mass.
CF.BC.9.5	Explain the fourth commandment.	The fourth commandment calls us to respect our parents and those in authority over us. We break it by disobeying our parents and those in legitimate authority over us.
CF.BC.9.6	Explain the fifth commandment.	The fifth commandment tell us to respect the life and good name of others. We break it by harming someone's body (murder, violence, etc.) or their good name (gossip, spreading rumors, etc.).





## **BASIC CATECHESIS: MADE FOR COMMUNION**

### **The Commandments (Cont.)**

<b>Identifier</b>	<b>Standard</b>	<b>Explanation / Depth of Response</b>
CF.BC.9.7	Explain the sixth and ninth commandments.	The sixth and ninth commandments call us to live chastely according to our state in life. We break them by engaging in sexual activity outside of marriage, or by intentionally indulging impure thoughts.
CF.BC.9.8	Explain the seventh and tenth commandments.	The seventh and tenth commandments teach us to respect our neighbor's property. We violate them by stealing or damaging someone else's things or by being jealous of what another person has.
CF.BC.9.9	Explain the eighth commandment.	The eighth commandment teaches us to love our neighbor by telling the truth to those who need to know it. We break the commandment by lying.



## **BASIC CATECHESIS: THE LITURGY**

### **Understanding the Liturgy**

Identifier	Standard	Explanation / Depth of Response
CF.BC.10.1	Know the four parts of the mass.	The four parts of the mass are the Introductory Rites, the Liturgy of the Word, the Liturgy of the Eucharist, and the Concluding Rites.
CF.BC.10.2	Understanding of the Liturgy of the Word.	The Liturgy of the Word has three purposes.  First, we hear the Word of God. Next, we meditate on that Word. Finally, we respond to the Word in faith and prayer.
CF.BC.10.3	Understanding of the elements in the Liturgy of the Word.	The Liturgy of the Word consists of the First Reading, the Psalm, the Second Reading, the Gospel, the Homily, and the Universal Prayer.  Attentive participation in these elements is how we hear, meditate on, and prayerfully respond to the Word of God at mass.
CF.BC.10.4	Understanding of the Liturgy of the Eucharist.	During the Liturgy of the Eucharist, the Word of God takes on flesh as the bread and wine become the body and blood of Jesus.
CF.BC.10.5	Understanding of the elements in the Liturgy of the Eucharist.	The Liturgy of the Eucharist has three parts.  First the Offertory, when we bring ourselves, symbolized by the bread and wine, to the altar. Next, Jesus changes the bread and wine into his body and blood through the priest. This is called the Eucharistic Prayer.  Finally, in the Communion Rite, Jesus's body is broken and given to us in Holy Communion.



## CONFIRMATION: SACRAMENTAL RECEPTION



## INTRODUCTION

What is a sacrament? The word means “something binding.” The early Church also called them *mysteria*, “mysteries.” Both terms help us remember that sacramental preparation cannot be reduced to purely academic concepts.

Sacramental preparation is about proper disposition. It enables the reverence and openness that facilitate contact with the sacred. Students come to this by different paths, which is why we must sometimes privilege dialogue and discussion over lesson plans.

Ultimately, catechists work to foster relationships with God. That is what prayer is: a relationship with God. Where to start? To begin, we cannot introduce them to someone we do not know. Working on our own relationship with God is a critical part of good sacramental preparation.

We want students to have a *full* relationship with Christ and His Church. That will mean study, and these standards provide an outline for topics and foundations. At the same time, no relationship is a purely intellectual matter. Study must be balanced with mass and spiritual practices. Spending time with someone is a good way to get to know them. That goes for God too.

### Ideas to Consider: Balance

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*How can we fit everything into the short time we have? Only so much is possible. Certainly the help of parents and the parish community will be important.*

*Beyond that, we can strive for balance. These guidelines have cautioned against a purely intellectual approach, but we must remember that programs can be unbalanced in favor of prayer and worship—or fellowship and fun—as well.*

*Ultimately, the sacrament is not a graduation. It is an important step on a journey of faith. Through the life of the Church, we hope to help students take further steps on their own.*

*“I enter into the Church not by a bureaucratic act, but with the help of the sacrament.” — Pope Benedict XVI.*



## STANDARDS



## **CONFIRMATION: SACRAMENTAL FOUNDATIONS**

### Understanding the Sacraments

Identifier	Standard	Explanation / Depth of Response
CF.SR.1.1	Explain why Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist are identified as sacraments of initiation.	The sacraments of initiation introduce us into the faith. Baptism welcomes us into the Church as children of God. Confirmation completes Baptism, as we freely commit to God and receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Eucharist unites us to the Body and Blood of Christ.
CF.SR.1.2	Explain why Reconciliation and Anointing of the Sick are identified as sacraments of healing.	Reconciliation heals our spiritual relationship with God and the Church when we have sinned. Anointing of the Sick helps us endure the difficulties of serious illness or old age.
CF.SR.1.3	Explain why Holy Orders and Matrimony are identified as sacraments of service.	<p>The sacrament of Holy Orders calls men to set themselves apart in order to serve the Church in the name and person of Christ. They do this through teaching, divine worship, and pastoral governance.</p> <p>The sacrament of matrimony calls couples to serve each other and their family. By forming their children in faith, they are also helping to form the Church as a whole.</p>
CF.SR.1.4	Identify who can administer each sacrament.	<p>Baptism – Typically a bishop, priest or deacon. If necessary, any person can baptize if they intend to do what the Church does.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Confirmation – Bishop or his designated priest.            Eucharist – Bishop or Priest.            Reconciliation – Bishop or priest.            Anointing of the Sick – Bishop or priest.            Holy Orders – Bishop.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Matrimony – Those being married mutually administer the sacrament.</p>



## **CONFIRMATION: SACRAMENTAL FOUNDATIONS**

### Understanding the Sacraments (Cont.)

Identifier	Standard	Explanation / Depth of Response
CF.SR.1.5	Describe the purpose of the Anointing of the Sick.	Anointing of the Sick helps us endure the sufferings of illness and old age. It can assist in physical healing, if that is conducive to the soul's salvation. Regardless, Anointing helps us prepare for passing over into eternal life.
CF.SR.1.6	Identify proper times for the Anointing of the Sick.	Anointing of the Sick is administered when a person has a serious condition due to illness or old age. A person may receive this sacrament each time they fall ill or the illness worsens.
CF.SR.1.7	Describe the rite for Anointing of the Sick.	Anointing of the Sick consists of anointing the forehead and hands of a sick person with holy oil. The priest or bishop also lays hands upon the person, and says prayers asking for the special graces of this sacrament.
CF.SR.1.8	Describe the purpose of Matrimony.	<p>The sacrament of Matrimony gives special grace to a couple. Matrimony helps the couple love each other, strengthens their unity, and sanctifies them on the way to eternal life.</p> <p>Matrimony orients the couple toward helping each other get to heaven, and toward the having and educating of children.</p>



## **CONFIRMATION: SACRAMENTAL FOUNDATIONS**

### **Understanding the Sacraments (Cont.)**

<b>Identifier</b>	<b>Standard</b>	<b>Explanation / Depth of Response</b>
CF.SR.1.9	Describe the rite for Matrimony.	<p>Matrimony takes place publicly, typically during Mass. To be valid, the sacrament requires the informed, free consent of both parties. Professing this consent, the two persons mutually administer the sacrament themselves.</p> <p>On behalf of the Church, the celebrant ratifies the marriage and gives a blessing.</p>
CF.SR.1.10	Describe the purpose of Holy Orders.	<p>Holy Orders grants a degree of spiritual authority and responsibility through the line of apostolic succession. It must be performed by a validly ordained bishop, because the fullness of apostolic authority rests with him. Once ordained, clergy serve the Church through teaching, divine worship, and pastoral governance.</p>





## **CONFIRMATION: SACRAMENTAL FOUNDATIONS**

### Understanding the Sacraments (Cont.)

Identifier	Standard	Explanation / Depth of Response
CF.SR.1.11	Identify and describe the three degrees of Holy Orders.	<p style="text-align: center;">The degrees of this sacrament are bishop, priest, and deacon.</p> <p>Bishops receive the fullness of Holy Orders, and so share in the fullness of apostolic responsibility. Bishops govern the Church in a particular area (diocese), and share in the larger governance of the universal Church.</p> <p>Priests participate in the bishop’s authority. They are entrusted with an office or ministry, and may perform certain sacraments with the bishop’s permission.</p> <p>Deacons receive important functions in the ministry of the word, divine worship, pastoral governance, and the service of charity. Deacons perform these tasks under the bishop’s authority, but do not receive a share in the ministerial priesthood. At this time, deacons are the only degree of Holy Orders that regularly ordain married men within the Roman rite.</p>
CF.SR.1.12	Describe the rite for Holy Orders.	<p>The rite consists of laying on of hands by the bishop. This is followed by prayers asking that the ordained man receive the graces of the Holy Spirit. Ordination imprints an indelible (permanent) mark of the recipient’s soul.</p>



## **CONFIRMATION: THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION**

### **The Sacrament of Confirmation**

<b>Identifier</b>	<b>Standard</b>	<b>Explanation / Depth of Response</b>
CF.SR.2.1	Explain the purpose of Confirmation.	<p>Confirmation perfects Baptismal grace. Both sacraments imprint a one-time spiritual mark on the soul.</p> <p>In Confirmation, Christ—through the Holy Spirit—marks the person as a Christian.</p> <p>During Confirmation, the Holy Spirit incorporates us more fully into Christ, the Church, and its mission. The Holy Spirit also bestows its Gifts at this time.</p>
CF.SR.2.2	Explain the requirements for Confirmation.	<p>Candidates must be baptized, have reached a certain age, and be able to profess the Catholic faith. Candidates must also have the intention to receive, and be prepared to assume a larger role as a Christian in the Church and the world.</p>
CF.SR.2.3	Describe the role of the Confirmation sponsor.	<p>The Confirmation sponsor provides spiritual help and counsel to the person preparing for Confirmation.</p>
CF.SR.2.4	Describe the essential rite of Confirmation.	<p>During the rite, the bishop lays hands upon the person while proclaiming the words: “Be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit.” At this time the candidate’s head is anointed with sacred chrism.</p>



## APPENDICES



## APPENDIX A: SACRAMENTAL PREPARATION FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS



## WORKING WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Sacramental preparation for special needs children can require different methods. Sometimes it can be difficult to know where to start. The USCCB's *Guidelines* for this topic are included below, and there are curricula designed for special needs children, such as RCL Benzinger's *Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy Program* or Loyola Press' *Adaptive Finding God*. When getting started, it may also be helpful to consider the following suggestions, which represent the hands-on experience of diocesan catechists with personal knowledge of the topic.

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1. Because "special needs" is a broad category, the child's Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is often a good starting point. Parishes may request this plan from parents in order to better prepare the individual child in question.

2. Enlisting local resources is important. This begins with the child's family, as they have the child's trust and the most experience working with them. As a next step, parishes may seek out parishioners with experience working with special needs children, and bring them into the process.

3. Children with special needs can be integrated into parish life in many ways. Fostering the child's relationship with his/her pastor is an important part of this process, and involving the larger parish community can be rewarding as well. Regardless of approach, however, it is often still important to provide them with a companion. Older siblings can be well suited to this role.

4. Flexibility and adaptability are vital when working with special needs children. This can mean presenting difficult words and concepts in picture form, or perhaps giving the child multiple opportunities to taste the host in order to negotiate sensory difficulties. As always, providing a warm, comforting atmosphere for the child can make the process of adaptation easier for all concerned.

5. When in doubt, we must remember the right of the baptized to receive the sacraments. Decisions should be made in favor of the child, and no undue obstacles should be placed between them and the sacrament.



USCCB GUIDELINES for the Celebration of the  
Sacraments with Persons with Disabilities

*Revised Edition*

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops  
Washington, DC



The document *Guidelines for the Celebration of the Sacraments with Persons with Disabilities (Revised Edition)* was developed by the Committee on Divine Worship of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). It was approved by the full body of the USCCB at its June 2017 General Meeting. It has been directed for publication by the undersigned.

Msgr. J. Brian Bransfield  
General Secretary, USCCB

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The Church continues to affirm the dignity of every human being, and to grow in knowledge and understanding of the gifts and needs of her members who live with disabilities. Likewise, the Church recognizes that every parish community includes members with disabilities, and earnestly desires their active participation. All members of the Body of Christ are uniquely called by God by virtue of their Baptism. In light of this call, the Church seeks to support all in their growth in holiness, and to encourage all in their vocations. Participating in, and being nourished by, the grace of the sacraments is essential to this growth in holiness. Catholic adults and children with disabilities, and their families, earnestly desire full and meaningful participation in the sacramental life of the Church.

In this regard, as it issues a revised and expanded *Guidelines for the Celebration of the Sacraments with Persons with Disabilities*, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops wishes to reiterate what was said in previous pastoral statements on this issue:

It is essential that all forms of the liturgy be completely accessible to persons with disabilities, since these forms are the essence of the spiritual tie that binds the Christian community together. To exclude members of the parish from these celebrations of the life of the Church, even by passive omission, is to deny the reality of that community. Accessibility involves far more than physical alterations to parish buildings. Realistic provision must be made for Catholics with disabilities to participate fully in the Eucharist and other liturgical celebrations.<sup>1</sup>

## PREFACE

Catholics with disabilities, as well as those who minister to or with them, often point out that pastoral practice with regard to the celebration of the sacraments varies greatly from diocese to diocese, even from parish to parish. Inconsistencies arise in such areas as the provision of sign language interpreters and captioning for persons who are deaf, in the accessibility of church facilities for persons with mobility needs, and in the availability of catechetical programs for persons with intellectual, developmental, and other disabilities. Pastoral inconsistencies may occur in other areas as well.

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<sup>1</sup> *Pastoral Statement of US Catholic Bishops on Persons with Disabilities* (November 1978, revised 1989),





The inconsistencies in pastoral practice often arise from distinct yet overlapping causes. Some result from a misunderstanding about the nature of disabilities. Others arise from an uncertainty about the appropriate application of church law toward persons with disabilities. Others are born out of fear, misunderstanding, or unfamiliarity. Still others seem to be the result of the real or perceived limitations of a parish's or diocese's available resources.

These guidelines were developed to address many of the concerns raised by persons with disabilities and their families and advocates, and also clergy and other pastoral ministers, for greater consistency in pastoral practice in the celebration of the sacraments throughout the country. With this objective in view, and with the desire to meet the spiritual, sacramental, and pastoral needs of persons with disabilities, the guidelines draw upon the Church's ritual books, its canonical tradition, and its experience in ministering to or with persons with disabilities in order to dispel misunderstandings that may impede sound pastoral practice in the celebration of the sacraments. It is our hope that the guidelines will enhance diocesan policies already in existence.

The bishops of the United States offer the *Guidelines for the Celebration of the Sacraments with Persons with Disabilities* in order to give a more concrete expression to our longstanding concern for "realistic provision" for the means of access to full sacramental participation for Catholic persons with disabilities.<sup>2</sup>

While they do not address every conceivable situation that may arise in pastoral practice, the guidelines present a set of general principles to provide access to the sacraments for persons with disabilities. Diocesan staff, pastoral leaders, catechists, parishioners, health care workers, and all those who minister to or with Catholics with disabilities are invited and encouraged to reflect upon and utilize these guidelines in their continuing effort to bring Christ's healing message and call to justice to the world.

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<sup>2</sup> The *Guidelines* were developed specifically for the Latin Church. They may be of assistance, however, to all Churches *sui iuris* in the United States, following the necessary adaptation to reflect the particular traditions, pastoral life, and requirements of the *Code of Canons of the Eastern Churches*.



## I. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

1. All human beings are equal in dignity in the sight of God. Moreover, by reason of their Baptism, all Catholics also share the same divine calling.
2. Catholics with disabilities have a right to participate in the sacraments as fully as other members of the local ecclesial community.<sup>3</sup> “Sacred ministers cannot deny the sacraments to those who seek them at appropriate times, are properly disposed, and are not prohibited by law from receiving them.”<sup>4</sup>
3. Parish sacramental celebrations should be accessible to persons with disabilities and open to their full, active, and conscious participation, according to their capacity. Pastoral ministers should not presume to know the needs of persons with disabilities, but should rather—before all else—consult with them or their advocates before making determinations about the accessibility of a parish’s facilities and the availability of its programs, policies, and ministries. Full accessibility should be the goal for every parish, and these adaptations are to be an ordinary part of the liturgical life of the parish.<sup>5</sup>
4. Since the parish is the center of the Christian experience for most Catholics, pastors and other parish ministers should make every effort to provide for all Catholics with disabilities who reside within a parish’s boundaries. Special effort should be made to reach out to and welcome all parishioners, including persons with disabilities who live independently, with their families, in institutions, or in other living arrangements. Pastoral visitation, the parish census, and the diverse forms of parish and diocesan social communication are just a few of the many ways in which the pastoral staff can work toward the inclusion of all parishioners in the parish’s sacramental life.
5. Pastors are responsible to provide evangelization, catechetical formation, and sacramental preparation for parishioners with disabilities,<sup>6</sup> and dioceses are encouraged to establish appropriate

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<sup>3</sup> See *Codex Iuris Canonici* (CIC), c. 835, §4.

<sup>4</sup> CIC, c. 843, §1.

<sup>5</sup> See Pope Benedict XVI, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Sacramentum caritatis* (February 22, 2007), 58.

<sup>6</sup> See CIC, c. 777, 4°.



support services to assist pastors in this duty. Persons with disabilities, their advocates and their families, as well as those knowledgeable in serving those with disabilities can make a most valuable contribution to these efforts. Parish catechetical and sacramental preparation programs may need to be adapted for some parishioners with disabilities, though, as much as possible, persons with disabilities should be integrated into the ordinary programs. They should not be segregated for specialized catechesis unless their disabilities make it impossible for them to participate in the basic catechetical program.<sup>7</sup> Even in those cases, participation in parish life is encouraged in all ways possible.

6. Having received the sacraments, which “contribute in the greatest way to establish, strengthen, and manifest ecclesiastical communion,”<sup>8</sup> persons with disabilities, like all other parishioners, should be encouraged to participate in all levels of pastoral ministry that are available and for which they are qualified. For example, members of the laity are often needed to perform various services or functions in liturgical celebrations, particularly in the celebration of Mass. In choosing those who will be invited to use their gifts in service to the parish community, the parish pastoral staff and lay volunteers, including ushers and liturgical ministers, should be mindful of extending Christ’s welcoming invitation to qualified parishioners with disabilities. Like others, Catholics with disabilities are not only recipients of the Gospel, but are also called to proclaim it and to be witnesses to its truth.<sup>9</sup>

7. The creation of a fully accessible parish reaches beyond mere physical accommodation to encompass the attitudes of all parishioners toward persons with disabilities. All members of the faith community have a role to play in the invitation, welcome, and inclusion of people with disabilities. Pastoral ministers are encouraged to foster attitudes and a parish culture, and to develop informational materials, aimed at forming a community of believers known for its joyful inclusion of all of God’s people around the table of the Lord.

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<sup>7</sup> See *National Directory for Catechesis* (NDC) (Washington, DC: USCCB, 2005), 49.

<sup>8</sup> CIC, c. 840.

<sup>9</sup> See NDC, 49.



8. Difficult situations may be encountered by those making pastoral decisions. Dioceses are encouraged to establish appropriate policies for handling such instances, which respect the rights of all involved, and which ensure the necessary provision of evaluation and recourse.

## II. PARTICULAR SACRAMENTS

### Baptism

9. Through the Sacrament of Baptism the faithful are incorporated into Christ and into his Church. They obtain forgiveness of all their sins and are formed into God's people. They become a new creation and are called, rightly, the children of God.<sup>10</sup>

10. So that Baptism may be seen as a sacrament of the Church's faith and of admittance into the People of God, it should be celebrated ordinarily in the parish church on a Sunday or, if possible, at the Easter Vigil.<sup>11</sup> The Church, made present in the local community, has an important role to play in the Baptism of all of its members. Before and after the celebration of the sacrament, the baptized have the right to the love and help of the community.<sup>12</sup>

11. Because it is the sacrament of universal salvation, Baptism is to be made available to all who freely ask for it, are properly disposed, and are not prohibited by law from receiving it. In the case of infants and those who cannot request it for themselves, Baptism may be deferred only when there is no reason for hoping that the person will be brought up in the Catholic faith.<sup>13</sup> Disability, of itself, is never a reason for deferring Baptism. Persons who lack the use of reason are to be baptized provided at least one parent or guardian consents to it.<sup>14</sup>

Parents who receive a prenatal diagnosis of a life-threatening condition should receive the support they need to assure that their child will be baptized "without delay."<sup>15</sup> Indeed, priests,

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<sup>10</sup> See *Christian Initiation*, General Introduction, 1-2; see CIC, c. 849.

<sup>11</sup> See CIC, cc. 856 and 857.

<sup>12</sup> See *Rite of Baptism for Children*, 4 and 10.

<sup>13</sup> See CIC, c. 868, §1, 2<sup>o</sup>.

<sup>14</sup> See CIC, cc. 868, §1, 1<sup>o</sup> and 852.

<sup>15</sup> CIC, c. 867, §2.



deacons, and other pastoral ministers should provide spiritual and emotional support to families who have received any difficult prenatal diagnosis and offer on-going support before and after the birth of a child, with special concern in the event of the death of a child.

12. Either personally or through others, the pastor is to see to it that the parents of an infant with a disability, those who take the place of the parents, and those who will fulfill the function of godparent are properly instructed as to the meaning of the Sacrament of Baptism and the obligations attached to it. If possible, either the pastor or a member of the parish community should visit with the family, offering them the strength and support of the community, which rejoices at the gift of new life, and which promises to nurture the faith of its new member. It is recommended that preparation programs for Baptism gather several families together so that they may commonly be formed by pastoral direction and prayer, and so that they may be strengthened by mutual support.<sup>16</sup>

13. “The Initiation of catechumens is a gradual process that takes place within the community of the faithful.”<sup>17</sup> Adults and children of catechetical age with disabilities should be welcomed into all stages and rites of the initiation process. If the catechumen is of catechetical age, the rites may be adapted according to need.<sup>18</sup> In these cases, catechesis for persons with disabilities must be adapted in content and method to their particular situations.<sup>19</sup> Like others, adults and children of catechetical age with disabilities should normally receive the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist in a single celebration.<sup>20</sup>

14. A sponsor is to be chosen who will assist the catechumen in preparing for the Sacraments of Initiation and, as such, will have a special role in fostering the faith life of the catechumen. Likewise, godparents are to be chosen who will guide the catechumen through the final preparation for Baptism, and to assist the newly-baptized adult or child through the rest of their Christian life. The same person may be both sponsor and godparent. Catholics with disabilities may serve as

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<sup>16</sup> See CIC, c. 851, 2°.

<sup>17</sup> RCIA, Introduction, 4.

<sup>18</sup> See CIC, cc. 851, 1° and 852, §1; see RCIA, 34 and 35.

<sup>19</sup> See NDC, 49.

<sup>20</sup> See *National Statutes for the Catechumenate* (NSC) (Washington, DC: NCCB, 1986), 14.



sponsors and godparents, and like others who fulfill these roles, they are to be carefully chosen and formed for these responsibilities.<sup>21</sup>

## CONFIRMATION

15. “Those who have been baptized continue on the path of Christian Initiation through the Sacrament of Confirmation.” In this way, they receive the Holy Spirit, conforming them more perfectly to Christ and strengthening them so that they may “bear witness to Christ for the building up of his Body in faith and charity.”<sup>22</sup>

16. Parents, those who care for persons with disabilities, and shepherds of souls—especially pastors—are to see to it that the faithful who have been baptized receive the formation needed for the Sacrament of Confirmation and approach it at the appropriate time.<sup>23</sup> “The diocesan bishop is obliged to take care that the Sacrament of Confirmation is conferred on subjects who properly and reasonably seek it.”<sup>24</sup>

17. Confirmation is to be conferred on the faithful between the age of discretion (which is about the age of seven) and about sixteen years of age, within the limits determined by the diocesan bishop, or when there is a danger of death, or in the judgment of the minister a grave cause urges otherwise.<sup>25</sup>

18. All baptized Catholics who possess the use of reason may receive the Sacrament of Confirmation if they are “suitably instructed, properly disposed and able to renew the baptismal promises.”<sup>26</sup> Persons who because of intellectual or developmental disabilities may never attain the use of reason can receive the Sacrament of Confirmation and should be encouraged either

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<sup>21</sup> See CIC, c. 872 and 874.

<sup>22</sup> *Order of Confirmation*, 1-2; see CIC, c. 879.

<sup>23</sup> See CIC, c. 890.

<sup>24</sup> CIC, c. 885, §1.

<sup>25</sup> See United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), Decree implementing canon 891 (August 21, 2001): <http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/what-we-believe/canon-law/complementary-norms/canon-891-age-for-confirmation.cfm>.

<sup>26</sup> CIC, c. 889.



directly or, if necessary, through their parents, to receive it. It is important that they receive the pastoral guidance needed, along with the welcome and embrace of the whole community of faith. To the degree possible, those with disabilities should be included along with others during the preparation and celebration of the sacrament. At times, pastoral need may necessitate an accommodated setting and a simpler manner.

19. A sponsor for the one to be confirmed should be present. The sponsor assists the confirmed person on the continuing path of Christian Initiation.<sup>27</sup> For this reason, it is desirable that one of the godparents chosen for Baptism be the sponsor for Confirmation.<sup>28</sup>

20. When those with disabilities who are already baptized Christians desire to become Catholic, they should participate in the *Rite of Reception of Baptized Christians into the Full Communion of the Catholic Church*, which normally includes the reception of the Sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist.<sup>29</sup>

## EUCCHARIST

21. The Eucharist is the most august sacrament, in which Christ the Lord himself is contained, offered, and received, and by which the Church constantly lives and grows. It is the summit and the source of all Christian worship and life, signifying and effecting the unity of the People of God, providing spiritual nourishment for the recipient, and achieving the building up of the Body of Christ.<sup>30</sup> The celebration of the Eucharist is the center of the entire Christian life.

22. Parents or guardians, together with pastors, are to see to it that children who have reached the use of reason are correctly prepared and are nourished by the Eucharist as early as possible. Pastors are to be vigilant lest any children come to the Holy Banquet who have not reached the use of reason or whom they judge are not sufficiently disposed.<sup>31</sup> It is important to note, however, that

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<sup>27</sup> See CIC, c. 892.

<sup>28</sup> See CIC, c. 893, §2.

<sup>29</sup> See RCIA, 473-498; see NSC, 35.

<sup>30</sup> See CIC, c. 897.

<sup>31</sup> See CIC, c. 914.



the criterion for reception of Holy Communion is the same for persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities as for all persons, namely, that the person be able to “distinguish the body of Christ from ordinary food,” even if this recognition is evidenced through manner, gesture, or reverential silence rather than verbally.<sup>32</sup> Pastors are encouraged to consult with parents, those who take the place of parents, diocesan personnel involved with disability issues, psychologists, religious educators, and other experts in making their judgment. If it is determined that a parishioner who is disabled is not ready to receive the sacrament, great care is to be taken in explaining the reasons for this decision. Cases of doubt should be resolved in favor of the right of the Catholic to receive the sacrament. The existence of a disability is not considered in and of itself as disqualifying a person from receiving Holy Communion.

23. Given the paramount significance of the Eucharist in the lives of the faithful, and in light of medical and technological advancements that affect Catholics with disabilities, new questions have arisen regarding the reception of Holy Communion, and circumstances that were once rare have even become relatively common. Clergy and extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion are encouraged to become familiar with the needs of their parishioners. In many instances, simple accommodations can be very helpful, and should be embraced by all at the parish level.

24. Catholics who require nourishment through feeding tubes are encouraged to receive Holy Communion, as are all the Catholic faithful. Christ is sacramentally present under each of the species, and Holy Communion can be received under the species of bread or wine alone.<sup>33</sup> Since the full presence of Christ and his sanctifying grace are found in even the smallest piece of the consecrated host or in a mere drop of the consecrated wine, the norm of receiving through the mouth remains the same for those who otherwise use a feeding tube for sustenance, and Holy Communion is not to be administered through a feeding tube. For these communicants it will commonly be possible to place one or a few drops of the Precious Blood on the tongue. Clergy and pastoral ministers are encouraged to use these guidelines and consult with physicians, family members, and other experts on a case-by-case basis, to determine how those who use feeding tubes

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<sup>32</sup> CIC, c. 913, §2; see Pope Benedict XVI, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Sacramentum caritatis* (February 22, 2007), 58.

<sup>33</sup> See *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1390; CIC, c. 925.





may avail themselves of the abundant fruits of Holy Communion. Specialized instruction for extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion is to be provided as required.

25. Catholics with Celiac Sprue Disease or other conditions that make them gluten intolerant should be given the opportunity to receive a small fragment of a regular host, and made aware of the options to receive a low-gluten host or to receive under the form of wine alone. In the event of intolerance to gluten and wine, mustum may also be an option, with the approval of the local ordinary.<sup>34</sup> Clergy and extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion need to be aware of the possibility of cross-contamination and related issues in order to plan for the safe administration of the sacred species to Catholics with gluten intolerance. For example, the chalice given to a person with gluten intolerance should not contain a particle of the host, and low-gluten altar breads should never be intermingled with regular altar breads. As people may feel self-conscious at the prospect of needing special arrangements for the reception of Holy Communion, pastoral sensitivity in this area is particularly important.

26. When baptized Catholics who have been regular communicants develop advanced Alzheimer's or other age-related dementias, there is to be a presumption in favor of the individual's ability to distinguish between Holy Communion and regular food. Holy Communion should continue to be offered as long as possible, and ministers are called to carry out their ministry with a special patience. If swallowing becomes particularly difficult, decisions regarding the continued reception of Holy Communion may have to be faced. This pastoral decision is to be made on a case-by-case basis, in consultation with the individual, those closest to him or her, physicians, and the pastor.

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<sup>34</sup> See Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Circular Letter to all Presidents of the Episcopal Conferences concerning the use of low-gluten altar breads and mustum as matter for the celebration of the Eucharist* (July 24, 2003), C-1.



27. In the Sacrament of Penance, the Catholic faithful obtain from the mercy of God pardon for their sins. At the same time, they are reconciled with the Church, which they have wounded by their sins and which works for their conversion by charity, example, and prayer.<sup>35</sup>

28. Only those who have the use of reason are capable of committing mortal sin. Nevertheless, even young children and persons with intellectual disabilities often are conscious of committing acts that are sinful to some degree and may experience a sense of guilt and sorrow. As long as the individual is capable of having a sense of contrition for having committed sin, even if he or she cannot describe the sin precisely in words, the person may receive sacramental absolution. Those with profound intellectual disabilities, who cannot experience even minimal contrition, may be invited to participate in penitential services with the rest of the community to the extent of their ability.

29. In the case of individuals who are nonverbal or have minimal verbal communication ability, sorrow for sin is to be accepted even if this repentance is expressed through some gesture rather than verbally. Many Catholics experience significant communication difficulties related to autism spectrum disorder, traumatic brain injury, post-stroke complications, and other conditions. Catholics with significant communication disorders may be permitted to make their confessions using the communication system with which they are most fluent. Individuals preparing for the sacrament are to be taught to be as independent as possible in the use of their communication system to allow for the norm of private reception of the sacrament.

Confessors are encouraged to work with families and individuals to familiarize themselves with various alternative communication options to ensure that all who desire to celebrate this sacrament may do so, provided that the seal of confession is properly safeguarded. In posing questions and in the assignment of penances the confessor is to proceed with prudence and discretion, mindful that he is at once judge and healer, minister of divine justice within the context of divine mercy.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> See Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen Gentium*, 11; see CIC, c.959.

<sup>36</sup> See CIC, cc. 978, §1, 979, and 981.



30. Catholics who are deaf should have the opportunity to confess to a priest able to communicate with them in sign language, if sign language is their primary means of communication. They may also confess through an approved sign language interpreter of their choice.<sup>37</sup> The interpreter has the obligation to observe secrecy.<sup>38</sup> When neither a priest with sign skills nor a sign language interpreter is available, Catholics who are deaf should be permitted to make their confession in writing or through the use of an appropriate portable electronic communication device that can be passed back and forth between the penitent and confessor. The written or digital materials are to be returned to the penitent and properly destroyed or deleted.

31. Pastoral consideration needs to be given to those for whom reception of the sacrament within the confines of the confessional may be problematic. While this would certainly constitute a just cause for Reconciliation outside of a confessional, every effort should be made to ensure that penitents who are wheelchair users have access to both face-to-face and private confessionals, with due regard for the right of the priest to insist on confession behind a fixed screen.<sup>39</sup>

## ANOINTING OF THE SICK

32. Through the Anointing of the Sick, the Church commends to the suffering and glorified Lord the faithful who are seriously ill, so that they may be relieved of their suffering and be saved.<sup>40</sup>

33. Those who have the care of souls and those who are close to the sick are to see to it that the faithful who are in danger due to sickness or old age are supported by the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick at the appropriate time.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> See CIC, c. 990.

<sup>38</sup> See CIC, cc. 983, §2 and 1388, §2.

<sup>39</sup> See CIC, c. 964; see USCCB, Decree implementing canon 964, §2 (October 20, 2000): <http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/what-we-believe/canon-law/complementary-norms/canon-964-2-the-confessional.cfm>; see Pontifical Council for the Interpretation of Legislative Texts, Response, July 7, 1998: *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 90 (1998), 711.

<sup>40</sup> See CIC, c. 998.

<sup>41</sup> See CIC, c. 1001.



34. Since disability does not necessarily indicate an illness, Catholics with disabilities should receive the Anointing of the Sick on the same basis and under the same circumstances as any other member of the Christian faithful.<sup>42</sup>

35. The Anointing of the Sick may be conferred if the recipient has sufficient use of reason to be strengthened by the sacrament, or if the sick person has lost the use of reason and would have asked for the sacrament while in control of his or her faculties.<sup>43</sup> If there is doubt as to whether the sick person has attained the use of reason, the sacrament is to be conferred.<sup>44</sup> Persons with disabilities may at times be served best through inclusion in communal celebrations of the Anointing of the Sick.<sup>45</sup>

## HOLY ORDERS

36. By divine institution, some among the Christian faithful are constituted sacred ministers through the Sacrament of Orders. They are consecrated and deputed to shepherd the People of God, each in accord with his own grade of orders.<sup>46</sup>

37. The existence of a physical disability is not considered in and of itself as disqualifying a person from Holy Orders. However, candidates for ordination must possess the necessary spiritual, physical, human, moral, intellectual, emotional, and psychological qualities and abilities to fulfill the ministerial functions of the order they receive.<sup>47</sup> The proper bishop or competent major superior makes the judgment that candidates are suited for ordained ministry in the Church.<sup>48</sup> Cases are to be decided on an individual basis and in light of pastoral judgment and the opinions of diocesan personnel and other experts involved with disability issues.

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<sup>42</sup> See CIC, c. 1004.

<sup>43</sup> See *Pastoral Care of the Sick: Rites of Anointing and Viaticum*, 12 and 14.

<sup>44</sup> See CIC, c. 1005.

<sup>45</sup> See CIC, c. 1002.

<sup>46</sup> See CIC, c. 1008.

<sup>47</sup> See CIC, cc. 1029 and 1041, 1°.

<sup>48</sup> See CIC, cc. 241, §1; 1025, §2; 1029; and 1051, 1°.



38. Diocesan vocations offices and offices for ministry with persons with disabilities should provide counseling, informational resources, and reasonable accommodations for men with disabilities who are discerning a vocation to serve the Church through one of the ordained ministries.

39. In preparation for responsible leadership in ordained ministry, the diocesan bishop or major superior is to see to it that the formation of all students in the seminary includes awareness of and experience with persons with disabilities. Formation personnel should consult with persons with disabilities, parents, psychologists, religious educators, and other experts in the adaptation of programs for ministerial formation related to disabilities. Indeed, these *Guidelines* might even be part of the course of studies in seminaries and in ongoing formation of the clergy.

40. Some men with disabilities already serve the Church as bishops, priests, or deacons. Clergy who have or acquire a disability are to have access to resources and accommodations that will aid them in continuing in their ministry.

## MARRIAGE

41. In the Sacrament of Matrimony, Christians signify and participate in the mystery of the unity and fruitful love which exists between Christ and his Church. They help each other to attain holiness in their married life and in the rearing and education of their children.<sup>49</sup>

42. “All persons who are not prohibited by law can contract marriage.”<sup>50</sup>

43. Pastors of souls should make the necessary provisions to ensure the inclusion of persons with disabilities in marriage preparation programs. Through this preparation all couples may become predisposed toward holiness and to the duties of their new state. In developing diocesan policies, the local ordinary should consult with men and women of proven experience and skill in understanding the emotional, physical, spiritual, and psychological needs of persons with

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<sup>49</sup> See *Order of Celebrating Matrimony*, 8.

<sup>50</sup> CIC, c. 1058.



intellectual disabilities.<sup>51</sup> Including persons with disabilities in sponsor couple programs is an especially effective way of supporting both the needs and the gifts of couples preparing for marriage.

44. Couples with intellectual or developmental disabilities who believe they are called to the vocation of married life are encouraged to seek counsel by discussing the Sacrament of Matrimony with their families and pastors. For matrimonial consent to be valid, it is necessary that the contracting parties possess a sufficient use of reason; that they be free of any grave lack of discretion affecting their judgment about the rights and duties to which they are committing themselves; and that they have the mental capacity to assume the essential obligations of the married state.<sup>52</sup> It is also necessary that the parties understand that marriage is a permanent union and is ordered to the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of children.<sup>53</sup> Pastors and other clergy are to decide cases on an individual basis and in light of pastoral judgment based upon consultation with diocesan personnel involved with disability issues, and canonical, medical, and other experts.

A physical disability, in and of itself, does not necessarily constitute an impediment to marriage. Medical and canonical opinions should be sought in determining the presence of any impediments to marriage. It should be noted, moreover, that paraplegia does not always imply impotence, nor the permanence of such a condition, and it is not in itself an impediment. In case of doubt with regard to impotence, marriage may not be impeded.<sup>54</sup>

45. Catholics who are deaf are to be offered the opportunity to express their matrimonial consent in sign language, if sign language is their primary means of communication.<sup>55</sup> Marriage may also be contracted with the assistance of a sign language interpreter whose trustworthiness has been certified by the pastor.<sup>56</sup> Likewise, those who are nonverbal or have minimal verbal

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<sup>51</sup> See CIC, cc. 1063, 2° and 1064.

<sup>52</sup> See CIC, c. 1095.

<sup>53</sup> See CIC, cc. 1096 and 1055, §1.

<sup>54</sup> See CIC, c. 1084, §2.

<sup>55</sup> See CIC, c. 1104, §2.

<sup>56</sup> See CIC, c. 1106.



communication ability should be offered the opportunity to express their matrimonial consent using the communication system with which they are most fluent.

46. Pastoral care for married persons extends throughout their lives. By their care and example, the entire ecclesial community bears witness to the fact that the matrimonial state may be maintained in a Christian spirit and make progress toward perfection. Special care is to be taken to include parishioners with disabilities in parish programs aimed at assisting and nourishing married couples in leading holier and fuller lives within their families.<sup>57</sup>

As people live longer, more will experience loss of mental and physical capabilities, including Alzheimer's and other age-related dementias. The faith community must minister both to the spouse whose body or mind begins to fail and also to the spouse who becomes the caregiver. The witness to their matrimonial commitment "in good times and in bad, in sickness and in health"<sup>58</sup> should be recognized and honored by the whole faith community. Adult children who care for their parents also deserve the community's support and encouragement.

## CONCLUSION

These guidelines are presented to all who are involved in liturgical, pastoral, and catechetical ministry. All persons with disabilities have gifts to contribute to the whole Church. When persons with disabilities are embraced and welcomed, and invited to participate fully in all aspects of parish community life, the Body of Christ is more complete. "The Church owes persons with disabilities her best efforts in order to ensure that they are able to hear the Gospel of Christ, receive the sacraments, and grow in their faith in the fullest and richest manner possible."<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> See CIC, c. 1063, 4°.

<sup>58</sup> *Order of Celebrating Matrimony*, 62.

<sup>59</sup> NDC, 49.



## APPENDIX B: CONFIRMATION PROCEDURES IN THE DIOCESE OF LEXINGTON





## GENERAL GUIDELINES



This document has been adapted from the 2008 original. The Diocese of Lexington expresses its gratitude for the time, talent and effort given by the 2008 task force members:

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Sr. Ellen Kehoe, Holy Spirit

Pat Riestenberg, Mother of Good Counsel

Jamie Settles, Sts. Peter & Paul

Beth Murner, Holy Spirit



## Note to Pastors & Parish Priests

In addition to all parish leadership, the participation of the pastor and/or another priest in the Confirmation preparation program is crucial to its success. Consequently, pastors and parish priests are asked to consider the following as opportunities to support and strengthen the parish preparation program:

- Teaching a class
- Spending time with the candidates during preparation classes
- Setting aside special times to answer questions candidates may have

These are just a few of the ways that pastors & parish priests can contribute to strong preparation programs and reinforce the significance of what the candidates are about to celebrate.

## Policy Regarding Age of Candidates

In the Diocese of Lexington, candidates for Confirmation must be at least in the **Fifth Grade\*** of school. The Bishop will consider exceptions in only the most extraordinary circumstances.

\*This policy **does not** apply to children seven (7) years old or older at the time of Baptism. In such cases, Canon Law dictates that a child receives his/her Baptism, Confirmation and First Holy Communion at the Easter Vigil in accordance with the Rites of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA) adapted for Children. For more information regarding RCIA adapted for Children, please contact the Diocesan Office of Worship.



## I. Discipleship through Service & Ministry

**Program Requisite:** Each preparation program within the Diocese of Lexington will include service learning, service experience opportunities and service reflection.

### **Guidelines for addressing the Program Requisite:**

#### 1. Service Learning

- a. It is important that service learning precedes service experiences so that the Confirmation Candidate can come to understand the “why” of service. A connection needs to be made to the reason that Christians are called to “feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked...” in order to set the “stage” for the service experiences
- b. Service Learning should include (but is not limited to) social justice education and an understanding of the difference between service and charity with an emphasis on the call to serve.
- c. The Diocesan Office of Peace and Justice can help with ideas in this area.



# I. Discipleship through Service & Ministry (cont.)

## 2. Service Experience

a. Service experiences that expose the Confirmation candidate to the three areas of service opportunity – the Candidate’s parish, the local community and the world at large – are recommended. In addition, at least one of the service opportunities should expose the Candidate to a new cultural or socio-economic experience.

b. Where possible these should be carried out as group experiences, inviting parents, sponsors and adult members of the parish to join in the activities so that the idea of life-long service may be emphasized.

c. Examples of service experiences in each of the three areas include:

### i. Candidate’s Parish

- participation in liturgy as a server, lector, musician, usher.
- involvement in a fundraising activity.
- assisting with a social activity – serving food, setting up, decorating, cleaning up.
- assisting with a formation class for younger children.

### ii. Local Community (**Note:** This should be directed to service to **PEOPLE.**)

- soup kitchen.
- food bank.
- helping at a nursing home.
- helping at a hospital.
- visiting shut-ins.
- lawn care for elderly or shut-ins.

### iii. World at Large\*

- Catholic Relief Services (eg. Rice Bowl Project).
- Invisible Children.
- Heifer Project.
- and many more.

\* In this case, we must address larger projects as service experiences, not charitable contributions.



## I. Discipleship through Service & Ministry (cont.)

d. Be mindful not to overburden the Candidates. Young people have many activities in their lives. This service experience should result in the young person wanting to do more, not less.

### 3. Service Reflection

a. Service experiences would be incomplete without an opportunity for reflection afterwards.

b. Reflection:

i. Allows time to explore the feelings behind the actions of service.

ii. Allows for discussion of both the positive and negative aspects of service..

iii. Gives the opportunity to ask questions that further clarify the “why” of service..

iv. Encouraged a life-long commitment to service and allows for immediate planning of follow-up service experiences.

iv. Fosters the candidate’s enthusiasm, so that service work might continue long after the Rite is celebrated.



## II. Retreat

**Program Requisite:** Each preparation program within the Diocese of Lexington will include a retreat component.

### **Guidelines for addressing the Program Requisite:**

The basis of a retreat experience is to “retire” or move away from day to day activities, and give oneself to the moving of the Holy Spirit in our lives. If we are to form a “more intimate union with Christ” we should follow his example by retreating from the world from time to time to pray and listen in an atmosphere that is less distracting.

Confirmation retreats should involve prayer, meditation, and worship experiences. It should also lead candidates toward a greater understanding of the role of the Holy Spirit, and how the Sacraments of Initiation bring them into full participation in the life of the Church.

Basic elements of a Confirmation retreat include:

1. **Prayer** is essential to a retreat and can be experienced in a number of ways – through worship experiences (liturgy, prayer services, Eucharistic Adoration), meditation, etc.
2. **Sacrament of Reconciliation** provides a reminder of the limitless mercy of God, and our need to be forgiven and to begin again, renewed in spirit and love for ourselves and each other. Candidates should have ample chance to prepare through an appropriate examination of conscience and a review of the “how-to” of the sacrament.
3. **Community Building** should permeate the activities of the retreat. Candidates should understand that not only are they children of God, but that *all* are blessed and deserving of our friendship, respect, and love. This can be done by forming small groups for the various activities, by allowing for “managed” free time which gives opportunities for the retreatants to learn about each other, and through icebreakers or other games.
4. **Witness** is an important element of a retreat. It allows each person to listen to stories of faith from peers and/or from respected adults. In listening, they are able to connect their own faith story with that of the other person and the story of the people of God told in Scripture and Church Tradition



## II. Retreat (cont.)

5. **Catechesis** in a retreat experience should have the purpose of preparing the retreatants for the Rite of Confirmation. The symbols of the ritual and their meaning may be explored as well as what it means to be a Catholic confirmed in faith. The gifts of the Holy Spirit that are strengthened in them as they are confirmed should also be opened up and explained.

6. **Parish Community Involvement** is essential, as all sacraments are communal in nature. Therefore, the entire parish may participate in the retreat, particularly through private and communal prayer.





### III. Parent/Parish Participation

**Program Requisite:** Each Confirmation preparation program within the Diocese of Lexington will clearly delineate and instruct both parents and parish members as to respective roles and responsibilities.

#### **Guidelines for addressing the Program Requisite:**

In discerning the level of involvement of parents and parish it is necessary to be aware of the age and aptitude of the candidates. Though most of the responsibilities are the same across all age levels, there is some variation. All ages of candidates, however, look to parents and their parish family for direction, wisdom, instruction and example.

#### **Parent Involvement**

The parent(s) of the Confirmation candidate is/are responsible for:

1. Providing the primary formation in the Catholic faith through family prayer and through examples of Christian life lived out at home and in the community.
2. Supporting the candidate during the preparation process by:
  - a. Faithfully attending Sunday liturgy and Holy Days of Obligation with the candidate.
  - b. Sharing their own faith journey.
  - c. Prioritizing attendance at the parish formation sessions by making sure the candidate's schedule is free of other commitments and making sure they have transportation to and from events so they are able to be on time.
  - d. Participating in preparation sessions, retreats, liturgies, and service opportunities when requested and attending all parent sessions.
  - e. Participating with the candidate in the choosing of a sponsor and making sure that the sponsor is aware of activities, liturgies, and his/her responsibilities as a sponsor and mentor.
  - f. Helping the candidate understand the meaning of the Sacrament of Confirmation in their ongoing faith development.



### III. Parent/Parish Participation (cont.)

#### Parish Involvement

The parish is responsible for:

1. Providing, supporting, and encouraging catechists who are trained and knowledgeable about Catholicism and who are willing to walk with and support the candidates and their parents on the journey.
2. Supplying the candidates and catechists with all necessary materials to complete the process.
3. Providing ongoing catechesis for candidates, catechists, parents and sponsors. This would include an understanding of the history and theology of Confirmation, the Rite of Confirmation, the other Sacraments of Initiation and the Gifts of the Holy Spirit.
4. Providing parish community rituals that bring all the faithful together in welcoming, supporting and recognizing each candidate as a member of the church. This could include:
  - a. Mirroring the RCIA in a blessing of the candidates, parents, and sponsors at the beginning of the process, a recognition of their commitment at the end of the process, and a period of mystagogy.
  - b. Participating in a communal Reconciliation service prior to the Rite of Confirmation.
  - c. Sending notes of encouragement and prayer.
  - d. Including candidates in the Prayers of the Faithful at times throughout the year.
  - e. Asking each candidate and family to bring up the gifts at a weekend liturgy.
  - f. Providing activities and service opportunities for the candidates, their parents, and their siblings.



## IV. Sponsor

**Program Requisite:** Each Confirmation preparation program within the Diocese of Lexington will provide for the proper formation of candidate sponsors.

### **Guidelines for addressing the Program Requisite:**

Canon Law stipulates the following requirements regarding Sponsors for Baptism and/or Confirmation. These should be provided at the time of registration in order for the candidate to have time to give prayerful consideration as to who might be the best person to fill this role.

#### **Can. 874**

§1 To be admitted to undertake the office of sponsor, a person must:

1° be appointed by the candidate for baptism [confirmation – see Can 893 on p. 15], or by the parents or whoever stands in their place, or failing these, by the parish priest or the minister; to be appointed the person must be suitable for this role and have the intention of fulfilling it;

2° be not less than sixteen years of age, unless a different age has been stipulated by the diocesan Bishop, or unless the parish priest or the minister considers that there is a just reason for an exception to be made;

3° be a catholic who has been confirmed and has received the blessed Eucharist, and who lives a life of faith which befits the role to be undertaken;

4° not labour under a canonical penalty, whether imposed or declared;

5° not be either the father or the mother of the person to be baptized.

#### **Can. 892**

As far as possible the person to be confirmed is to have a sponsor. The sponsor's function is to take care that the person confirmed behaves as a true witness of Christ and faithfully fulfils the duties inherent in this sacrament.

#### **Can. 893**

§1 A person who would undertake the office of sponsor must fulfill the conditions mentioned in can. 874.

§2 It is desirable that the sponsor chosen be the one who undertook this role at baptism.



## IV. Sponsor (cont.)

Other **Diocesan guidelines** for selection of Sponsors are:

-Sponsors are practicing Roman Catholics – practicing in this context means the sponsor is:

- a registered member of a Catholic Parish.
- a regular participant at Sunday Mass.
- involved in some regular form of time/talent at their parish.
- a regular contributor to the financial needs of their parish.

-Sponsors are able to provide a verification from their parish as to the above criteria.

-Sponsors are to attend an orientation program that provides material and information about the Confirmation Preparation program as is appropriate for the parish.

-Sponsors are to have regular contact/meetings with their candidate throughout the confirmation preparation (person-to-person, via email, via phone, etc.) as stipulated by their parish program guidelines.

-Sponsors are willing to participate in any parish function as stipulated by the parish program Agenda.

-Sponsors are to attend the Confirmation practice and Confirmation Mass.

**Note:** Candidates should provide their Sponsor's name and contact information early enough in the program for the Sponsor to play a vital role.

**Note:** If a Sponsor is **unable to comply** with the aforementioned guidelines, candidates are to **consult** with the coordinator of the Confirmation preparation program and/or the pastor of the parish. They can discuss other possibilities for the participation of the Sponsor, such as employing a **proxy** and/or assigning a member of the parish to act as a **mentor** to the candidate, in lieu of a Sponsor unable to be present or maintain frequent contact with the candidate.



## V. Relationship with the Bishop

**Program Requisite:** Each Confirmation preparation program within the Diocese of Lexington, KY will offer opportunities for the candidate(s) to be introduced to the Bishop, to communicate with the Bishop, to hear the Bishop in his role as teacher, and to otherwise spend time with the Bishop.

### **Guidelines for addressing the Program Requisite:**

#### 1. Candidate Letters to the Bishop

This practice encourages the candidates to reflect on why it is they want to receive the sacrament. By articulating the reasons for wanting to receive the sacrament, candidates can gain a deeper understanding of their own faith life and can develop a greater sense of ownership/participation in what is about to take place. The Bishop also enjoys this practice and gains valuable insight into the personalities and thought-processes of the candidates. This adds a sense of familiarity to the celebration of the sacrament thereby contributing to a feeling of communion.

#### **Content:**

Letters to the Bishop should reflect the individual character and style of each candidate. They are not simply form letters. While honoring the letters as unique expressions, however, the following three topics should be worked into the letter's body:

1. **Biographical Information** - The candidate should introduce themselves to the Bishop, i.e. who are they? how old they are? what grade they are in? what parish they belong to? who are their family members?
2. **Description of Preparation** – The candidate needs to communicate to the Bishop how he or she has prepared for the reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation.
3. **Personal Meaning** – The candidate should reflect on what the reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation means to them.



## V. Relationship with the Bishop (cont.)

4. **Confirmation Name** – The candidate should indicate their choice of name and the reason for this choice. Candidates may choose to use their baptismal name. However, there is value in choosing to use a different name:

- a. A change in name represents a change in status. For example, the Pope takes a new name upon his election; Members of royalty often change names once they assume the throne. Likewise, Confirmation marks a change in the status of the candidate who becomes a fully initiated Catholic Christian. The taking of a Confirmation name, if presented in its richness, can help signify this new relationship to the Church.
- b. The candidate establishes a relationship with the saint whose name he or she takes. This saint then becomes an intercessor before God on the candidate's behalf and a patron for the candidate. In short, it is another way of fostering the candidate's relationship with the Church, both on earth and in heaven.
- c. Finally, in the process of choosing a name, the candidate learns about the life of a saint and acquires a role model for a holy life.

### Things to keep in mind:

#### a. Legibility

In the event that the letters to the Bishop are handwritten by the candidates, catechists should check them for legibility.

#### b. The Purpose is Relationship

These letters are designed to establish and build a relationship with the Bishop. They are not intended to convince the Bishop to confer the sacrament, an approach that would imply the candidate merits the sacrament in some way.

Instead, candidates should be encouraged to reflect more deeply on what the sacrament means to them and their life rather than viewing the letter as a "case" for the sacrament.

Catechists should look over the letters to ensure the candidates understand the purpose of these letters.



## V. Relationship with the Bishop (cont.)

### 2. Meeting with the Bishop Prior to the Celebration of the Sacrament

It has become a regular practice in the Diocese of Lexington that the Bishop meets with the candidates prior to the celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation. Commonly, parishes will host this meeting and incorporate a dinner into the event. In any case, at least **40 minutes** should be reserved exclusive of any dinner for the Bishop to meet with the candidates.

This pre-sacrament meeting allows the candidates to meet the Bishop in a more personal atmosphere thereby facilitating the development of a sense of relatedness between the Bishop and the candidates.

In the course of this meeting, the Bishop gives the candidates an opportunity to ask him questions. Catechists might mention this to their candidates so that if a good question is asked by a candidate during a preparation session, the catechist might make the suggestion that the candidate “ask the Bishop that question when you meet him.”



Please return a copy of this sheet no less than two weeks prior to: krood@cdlex.org or fax: 859-255-1134 or

Karen Rood  
The Catholic Center  
1310 W. Main St.  
Lexington, KY 40508

### LITURGY-PLANNING SHEET FOR CONFIRMATION

PARISH/CITY \_\_\_\_\_

DATE OF LITURGY \_\_\_\_\_ TIME OF LITURGY \_\_\_\_\_

TIME BISHOP IS TO MEET WITH CANDIDATES \_\_\_\_\_

PLACE TO MEET W/CANDIDATES \_\_\_\_\_

ASSISTING DEACON(S) \_\_\_\_\_

CONCELEBRANT(S) \_\_\_\_\_

NUMBER OF SERVERS \_\_\_\_\_ NAMES OF SERVERS: \_\_\_\_\_

NUMBER OF COMFIRMANDI \_\_\_\_\_

PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR PLANNING THE LITURGY \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE NUMBER (cell) \_\_\_\_\_ E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR MUSIC: \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE FILL IN THE INFORMATION ON THE BLANK:**

Entrance Procession:

Incense \_\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO

Cross \_\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO

Candles \_\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO      NUMBER OF CANDLES \_\_\_\_\_

Candidates (*SEE GUIDELINES*)

Other (sponsors, lectors, etc. ): \_\_\_\_\_

Book of Gospels \_\_\_\_\_ YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO    CARRIED BY: \_\_\_\_\_

*(Carried by the Deacon, if present - the Lectionary is never carried in the procession.*

*For weekdays, check to see if reading is contained in the Book of Gospels))*

Other vested Deacon(s)

Concelebrant(s)

MC (*Worship Office will assign*)

Bishop John Stowe

Mitre and crozier bearers (*either one or preferably two – include these in number of servers*)





## INTRODUCTORY RITE

GATHERING SONG \_\_\_\_\_

BOOK AND NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

SPRINKLING RITE (Sundays and Saturday after 4pm)

*Song sung during the sprinkling rite:* \_\_\_\_\_

PENITENTIAL ACT (*on days other than Sunday*): *circle or highlight one:*

First Form (Confiteor); Second Form; Third Form \_\_\_\_\_ ;

Kyrie/Lord have mercy is \_\_\_spoken \_\_\_sung

GLORIA SETTING \_\_\_\_\_

COLLECT

## LITURGY OF THE WORD (*See Eucharistic Liturgy Guidelines for Confirmation*)

1<sup>ST</sup> READING \_\_\_\_\_ LECTOR \_\_\_\_\_

RESPONSORIAL PSALM AND SETTING (*preferably sung*) \_\_\_\_\_

CANTOR \_\_\_\_\_

2<sup>ND</sup> READING \_\_\_\_\_ LECTOR \_\_\_\_\_

ALLELUIA SETTING (*sung*) \_\_\_\_\_

Incense : \_\_\_yes \_\_\_no

Candles: \_\_\_yes \_\_\_no

GOSPEL \_\_\_\_\_ READ BY: (*circle one and add name*)

Deacon: \_\_\_\_\_ Priest: \_\_\_\_\_

PRESENTATION OF THE CANDIDATES Presented By: \_\_\_\_\_

HOMILY (*Bishop John*)

RENEWAL OF BAPTISMAL PROMISES (*for candidates only – not entire assembly*)

THE LAYING ON OF HANDS

Please check one if under 25 candidates:

\_\_\_ candidates will line up and Bishop will approach each individually  
(*preferred*)

\_\_\_ candidates will individually approach the Bishop (*only if necessary*)



ANOINTING (*individual candidates w/sponsor approach Bishop*)

SONG (*if necessary*) \_\_\_\_\_ BOOK AND NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

UNIVERSAL PRAYER (*see notes*) Read by: \_\_\_\_\_

**LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST**

PREPARATION OF GIFTS Incense \_\_\_\_\_yes \_\_\_no

GIFT BEARERS (*see notes*) \_\_\_\_\_

SONG \_\_\_\_\_ BOOK AND NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

THE EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

SANCTUS ACCLAMATION (*should be sung*) Setting: \_\_\_\_\_

MEMORIAL ACCLAMATION (*should be sung*) Setting: \_\_\_\_\_

GREAT AMEN (*should be sung*) Setting: \_\_\_\_\_

COMMUNION RITE

LORD'S PRAYER: \_\_\_\_\_ RECITED \_\_\_\_\_ SUNG: setting: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGN OF PEACE

BREAKING OF THE BREAD

LAMB OF GOD setting (*should be sung*) \_\_\_\_\_

COMMUNION SONG \_\_\_\_\_ BOOK AND NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

AFTER COMMUNION \_\_\_\_\_ Sacred Silence **or** Hymn of Praise \_\_\_\_\_

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

CONCLUDING RITE

SOLEMN BLESSING

RECESSIONAL SONG \_\_\_\_\_ BOOK AND NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

**EXTRA: IMPORTANT INFORMATION !**

\* Adults to be confirmed? (*Please include names and particular circumstances of each adult to be confirmed:*

\* Spanish-only speaking candidates, sponsors or parents and godparents at an English Mass?



*(Please give details)*

\* Is there a reception? \_\_\_Yes \_\_\_ No. If "yes", is it:\_\_\_ Before Confirmation \_\_\_After Confirmation OR Time Reception Begins: \_\_\_\_\_ Location of reception: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\*Comments or questions: *(use additional page if necessary)*





## EUCHARISTIC LITURGY FOR CELEBRATING CONFIRMATION

### **Letters to Bishop/Meeting the Bishop**

Candidates should write a letter to the Bishop stating their understanding of this sacrament, why they want to be confirmed, and how they intend to be faithful to their Christian commitment.

**This should not be a form letter; but should be well prepared and presented.** The letter is not a prerequisite for receiving the sacrament. Letters should be sent as a group to the Bishop (no individual envelopes, please) at least 2 weeks prior to the date of Confirmation.

**The Bishop and candidates for confirmation should be scheduled to arrive one hour prior to the scheduled start of the Confirmation Liturgy, so that the Bishop may meet with the candidates alone prior to the beginning of the Confirmation Liturgy. A space where the Bishop and the candidates can comfortably gather should be arranged.**

### **Special Circumstances**

Please inform the Worship Office if there are adults to be confirmed with the youth, along with their name and the circumstances surrounding their situation. This information may be included with the Liturgy Planning Sheet. Please notify the Worship Office immediately/as soon as is possible if there are non-English speaking confirmandi or non-English speaking families of confirmandi will be present (unless this is a Spanish Mass).

### **Confirmation Names and Name Cards**

Choosing a new name for Confirmation is optional. If a confirmation name is chosen, it is with the expectation that the candidate learns something about the saint and the virtues of the saint he or she wishes to imitate. Bishop John prefers that the sponsor introduce the candidate, "Bishop John, this is \_\_\_\_\_, (who has chosen the confirmation name \_\_\_\_\_)". The bishop will call the candidate by his/her baptismal name, adding the confirmation name when one is used. Please remember to complete the paperwork recording the name and date of Confirmation on the Baptismal Certificate or sending the information to the parish of Baptism.

### **Dress for Candidates and Sponsors**

The candidates and sponsors should be reminded to dress appropriately in modest dress: Please no shorts, T-shirts, jeans, revealing or tight tops, tight pants, or short skirts/dresses. **Note: No stoles should be worn by or given to the candidates, either before, during or after the Mass.** The stole is the symbol of the ordained, therefore is not appropriate for any lay person.

### **Seating arrangement for Candidates**

Seating: (This will vary with each parish depending on number of candidates and space). **The confirmandi are to sit together, not be interspersed with sponsors.** The Candidates should be seated so they and their sponsor can approach the altar with ease.

**The Oil of Chrism.** The **Bishop will bring the Chrism needed for the confirmation.** Candidates for Confirmation are to attend the Chrism Liturgy to better understand the symbol of the Sacred Chrism. This Mass takes place the every year near Holy Week, so parishes should



**make the appropriate plans to include this date on the confirmandi's schedule when they begin preparation. Contact the Worship Office for information: 859-253-1993, ext 251.**

### **Recognition of those already confirmed**

Individuals who received the Sacrament of Confirmation/Chrismation at the time of their Baptism are welcome to participate in the Confirmation Liturgy. **Please contact the Worship Office for the manner of recognition to be included in the Presentation of Candidates, and mention in the petitions. RCIA candidates for full communion are not to be confirmed at this celebration.**

### **Master of Ceremonies**

An MC assists Bishop John with any liturgy in which he presides. The MC is assigned by the Worship Office, has been instructed in his/her duties and should work closely with the servers, but not do the servers' tasks. The MC will be sent a copy of the plan sheet and may call the parish to schedule a meeting time with the servers. Please let the MC know of a scheduled liturgical rehearsal with the confirmandi, as he/she may find it helpful to be at this rehearsal.

### **Deacons**

In parishes that have parish Deacons, the deacon is to be asked to assist at the Confirmation Mass. In parishes where more than one deacon is assigned, the parish may choose which TWO deacons assist the Bishop at the Confirmation Mass.

### **Servers**

The parish should provide servers who are trained and experienced in serving at a Eucharistic Liturgy. There is no set number of servers, but bear in mind that at least one will need to serve as mitre bearer and crozier bearer (it is preferred to assign 2 for these tasks ), **therefore when no incense is used, a minimum of four servers are needed.** In addition to this, have only the number that helps the celebration to flow smoothly. Example: if using incense and a cross and 2 candles are carried in the gathering procession, there is a need for 6 servers (if no incense is used, 5 are needed). All servers are to work with the MC, who may request a brief rehearsal time prior to the celebration, and will want to meet with the servers no less prior to the scheduled start time of the Confirmation Mass.

### **Lectors**

**Having candidates serve as lectors is not permitted.** The reception of the sacrament is their primary concern. The Confirmation Rite itself explains that, "Great emphasis should be placed on the celebration of the word of God that introduces the rite of confirmation. It is from the hearing of the word of God that the many-sided work of the Holy Spirit flows out upon the Church and upon each of the baptized and confirmed." (#13) Parish lectors are a more appropriate and preferred choice, **especially** family members of the Confirmandi who normally serve as lectors in the parish. **[Please note: The Confirmandi are encouraged to bring the gifts forward at the Preparation of the Gifts, where only the bread, wine and gifts for the poor and/or Sunday collection are brought forward.]**



## **Music**

The music selected for this celebration should flow from the readings or the liturgical season – especially during the Easter Season, when “Alleluia” music should be chosen. They should be songs that the assembly, especially the candidates, can sing. A “Meditation Song” after Communion is not necessary or appropriate according to the rubrics. Nor is it appropriate for the Confirmandi to sing a “solo” song for the congregation. Rather, sacred silence or a hymn of praise (sung by all) should follow Communion.

If a booklet containing the words or music of the songs is printed, be sure that appropriate copyrights accompany each song. Since the Bishop presides at this liturgy, the diocesan copyright license may be used. All booklets or worship aids must be sent to the Worship Office for approval prior to printing. Contact the Worship Office for more information.

## **Entrance Procession**

It is recommended that the candidates process in the entrance procession, and with careful rehearsal to observe the proper reverence (bow or genuflect before entering their pews). Please also inform the MC if the newly confirmed are to process out in the recessional and arrangements for group and individual pictures with the bishop.

## **Sprinkling Rite**

In Confirmations that take place on Sunday (including Saturday evening), except during penitential seasons, the Sprinkling Rite will replace the Penitential Rite. During the Easter season, if the water in the baptismal font was blessed at the Easter Vigil, that water should be used and does not require further blessing, therefore the Bishop will omit the words of blessing in the rite as outlined in the Appendix of the Missal. A song of baptismal character is sung during the actual sprinkling.

## **Selection of Scripture Readings**

When Confirmation is celebrated on a solemnity, the octave of Easter, a Sunday or Saturday as the anticipated Mass for Sunday, the readings appropriate to that day are used. When Confirmation is celebrated on a weekday in Easter Season, the readings of the day should be used, and an additional second reading may be chosen from the confirmation ritual Mass, Lectionary Nos. 765. Note that in the Easter Season, the first reading should always be from Acts, so the second reading should be chosen from choices other than Acts.

## **Confirmation Ritual**

Begins after the Gospel is proclaimed as follows: The Presentation of Candidates may be made by the pastor or another priest, deacon or catechist, and is done using the formula provided by the Worship Office. If the number of candidates is relatively small, each name could be called separately. If the number of candidates is large, please amend the formula appropriately. The candidates stand, the Bishop accepts them and the congregation responds with applause. The candidates are seated and Mass continues with the Homily.



After the homily, the Bishop invites the candidates to stand and Renew their Baptismal Promises. The candidates should respond with a strong vocal "I DO" after each question.

#### [Candles for the Candidates

*If candles are to be carried by or are in the pew with the candidates, if possible, the candles should be their baptismal candle, and these should be lit for their Renewal of Baptismal Promises as well. Please indicate this on the plan sheet.]*

This is followed by the Laying On of Hands and the prayer which follows (where all concelebrating priests extend hands). If the number of candidates is 25 or less, the Bishop will lay hands on each candidate individually. It is preferred that the candidates line up in the sanctuary facing the altar and have the Bishop travel from one to the next

The Anointing with Sacred Chrism takes place next. The deacon or priest assists by holding the Chrism oil (it should be placed in a small shallow bowl) and a towel. During the anointing, the pastor or second deacon (or associate) may stand on either side of the Bishop and collect the Confirmation name cards (if used). **Each candidate with sponsor approaches the Bishop (again, facing the altar) and the sponsor places his/her right hand on the candidates shoulder during the anointing. Please remind the candidates of their responses during and after the anointing – “And with your spirit” and “Amen”** : If there are a large number of candidates, music may be appropriate during this time. The washing of the hands immediately follows the anointing. The parish should provide a basin/bowl with a lemon (cut in half and placed by itself in the bowl), fresh water to pour over the hands for rinsing, and a towel. (Note: no soap!)

#### Prayers of the Faithful

These may be taken from the Confirmation ritual or the candidates may compose these prayers, using those in the ritual as models. The number should be within reason and the content according to the usual model for intercessions (for the needs of the Church, for public authorities and the salvation of the whole world, for those burdened by any kind of difficulty, and for the local community.) These should be typed and sent to the Worship Office with the planning sheet. The Bishop will use the introduction and concluding prayer from the Confirmation ritual. The Deacon, if present, reads the petitions; the lector reads them if there is no deacon.

#### Communion

Communion is always to be offered under both forms. Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are needed only if necessary to supplement the priests and deacons present (Ordinary Ministers of Holy Communion) to ensure smooth and timely distribution, bearing in mind the usual procession of the people for Communion. Anyone serving as an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion should be properly mandated and commissioned for the particular parish in which the Confirmation Liturgy is presently taking place.





## PRESENTING THE CANDIDATES TO BISHOP JOHN (Sample)

Bishop John:

Several months ago these young people were called by name to begin a journey of formal preparation for the sacrament of Confirmation.

Throughout this time they have been prayerfully guided and encouraged by their church community, their families, mentors, sponsors, catechists, and one another.

They have taken this time of preparation seriously as they explored the importance of God's Word, the wisdom of the traditions of the Roman Catholic Church, the life examples of holy men and women, and the grace imparted through the sacraments, especially as experienced through the Rite of Confirmation.

They have reflected on the gifts and the fruits of the Holy Spirit already apparent in their lives and have begun to share these gifts in service throughout the community.

They have also expressed a sincere desire to be strengthened in these gifts in order to continue to be of even greater service to God's people.

I believe that they have clearly demonstrated both the understanding and spiritual readiness to confirm their faith and become adult members of the Catholic Church.

Therefore, I confidently present to you (*insert names and candidates stand as their name is called*) for Confirmation. **OR** Therefore, I confidently present to you these candidates from (*insert parish name*) for Confirmation.