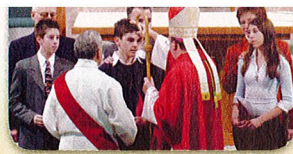


## Looking Ahead

In this chapter, the Holy Spirit invites you to ►



**EXPLORE** how the Chinese martyrs witnessed their faith in Christ.



**DISCOVER** that in Confirmation, the Holy Spirit strengthens us.



**DECIDE** on ways to live as a witness for Christ.



# The Sacraments of Christian Initiation: Confirmation

**?** To whom do you look for guidance and help when you are confused or afraid?

During the time of the Jewish festival of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples of Jesus when they were fearful, and they were given the strength and courage to proclaim the Gospel. Listen to how Luke describes that event:

*And suddenly there came from the sky a noise like a strong driving wind, and it filled the entire house in which they were. Then there appeared to them tongues as of fire, which parted and came to rest on each one of them. And they were all filled with the holy Spirit and began to speak in different tongues, as the Spirit enabled them to proclaim.*

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES 2:2-4

**?** What promise of Jesus came true in this reading?



# Disciple Power

## Fortitude

Fortitude is one of the four Cardinal Virtues. It is the strength of mind and will to do what is good in the face of adversity or difficulty. It enables a person to be a steadfast witness for Christ.

# THE CHURCH FOLLOWS JESUS

## Land of Martyr Saints

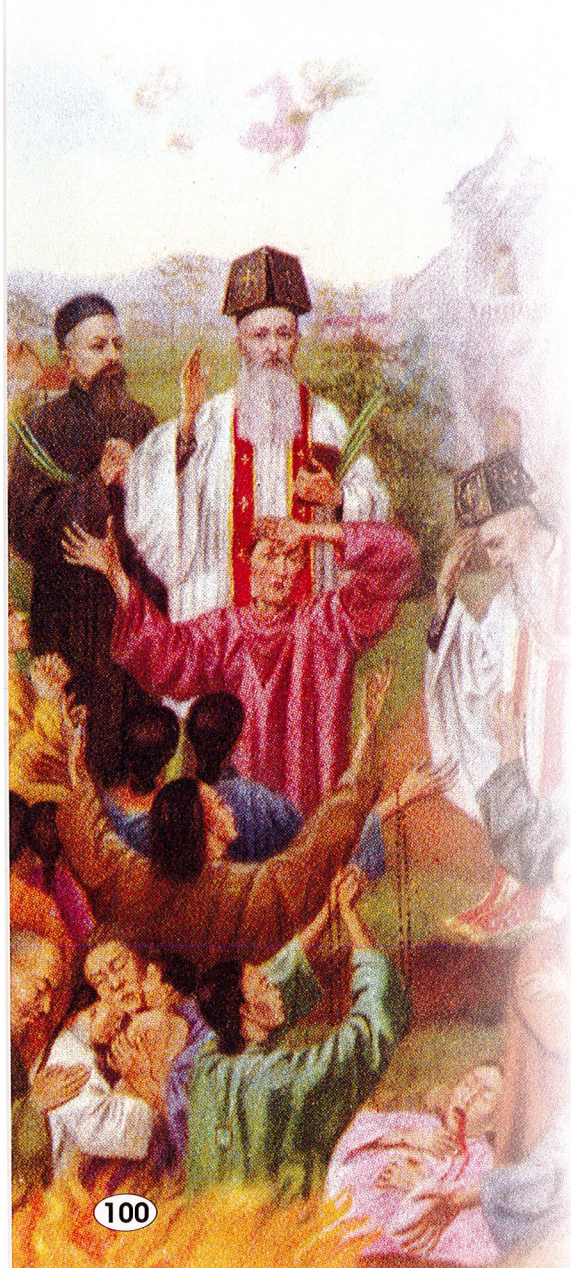
For centuries, Catholics in China have responded to the call of the Holy Spirit to be witnesses for Christ. In the 500s, the Gospel was preached in China, and the first church was built there around the year A.D. 600. The Jesuit missionary Saint Francis Xavier arrived in China and preached the Gospel there in the 1600s. Through the centuries, the Catholics in China have lived and died for their faith with great courage.

From the mid-1600s to 1930, 120 Chinese martyrs have been named Saints by the Church. The first of these martyrs was the Dominican priest and missionary Father Francisco Fernández de Capillas. He was killed in 1648 by the invading Manchu Tartars. They imprisoned him and then tortured and beheaded him while he was praying the Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary.

The courage of Catholics in China only grew stronger and, from 1796 to 1856, twelve more Chinese Catholics died for their faith in Christ. Among these were Agnes Cao Guiying, Peter Liu, Jerome Lu Tingmei, Lawrence Wang Bing, and Agatha Lin Zao, who were all catechists.

In the 1900s, beginning with the Boxer Rebellion, the courage of more than ninety Catholics in China cost them their lives. Among these martyrs were Paulus Lang Fu and Andreas Wang Tianqing, age 9; Maria Zeng Xu, age 11; and Anna Wang and Simon Qin Chunfu, age 14.

The English word martyr comes from the Greek word meaning “witness.” The Church in China is a courageous living witness to the power of the Holy Spirit at work leading the Church to fulfill Jesus’ command to preach the Gospel to all nations.



### Activity

Reflect on the meaning of the word “martyr.”

Use the letters of the word to write words or phrases (such as courageous) describing the qualities or works of a martyr.

M  
A  
C O U R A G E O U S  
T  
Y  
R

# Confirmed in Christ

Most Roman Catholics today are baptized as infants and are confirmed many years later. In the Eastern Catholic Churches, **Confirmation** is administered immediately after Baptism and is followed by participation in the Eucharist.

The Sacrament of Confirmation perfects and strengthens the graces of Baptism. The baptized receive and accept important Christian responsibilities and the graces to fulfill those responsibilities. They accept the grace and make the commitment to join Christ in his mission to prepare for the coming of the Kingdom of God. They cooperate with the grace of the Holy Spirit and bring healing and reconciliation to the world as members of the Church.

## Requirements for Confirmation

In the Roman Catholic Church, there are unique requirements for a baptized person preparing to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. These requirements are:

- **Faith:** The person must be baptized. Candidates for Confirmation must profess their faith with the Church.
- **Age:** Today, young people who are Roman Catholic are confirmed at various ages, usually when they are young teens.
- **Grace:** Candidates must also be in a state of grace. They must be free of mortal sin. Their relationship with God must be close.
- **Will:** Candidates must have a clear and deliberate intention to receive the Sacrament. In other words, they are to accept the responsibilities of being a witness for Christ.

Confirmation marks our lifelong commitment to be witnesses for Christ. With the help of the Holy Spirit, we prepare ourselves for Confirmation. This preparation includes prayer, service, and reception of the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation.

It also includes choosing a sponsor. A sponsor is someone who gives spiritual help and encouragement to a person preparing to receive Confirmation.

**?** What spiritual qualities would you want to have if you were a Confirmation sponsor for someone?

### FAITH FOCUS

Why does the Church celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation?

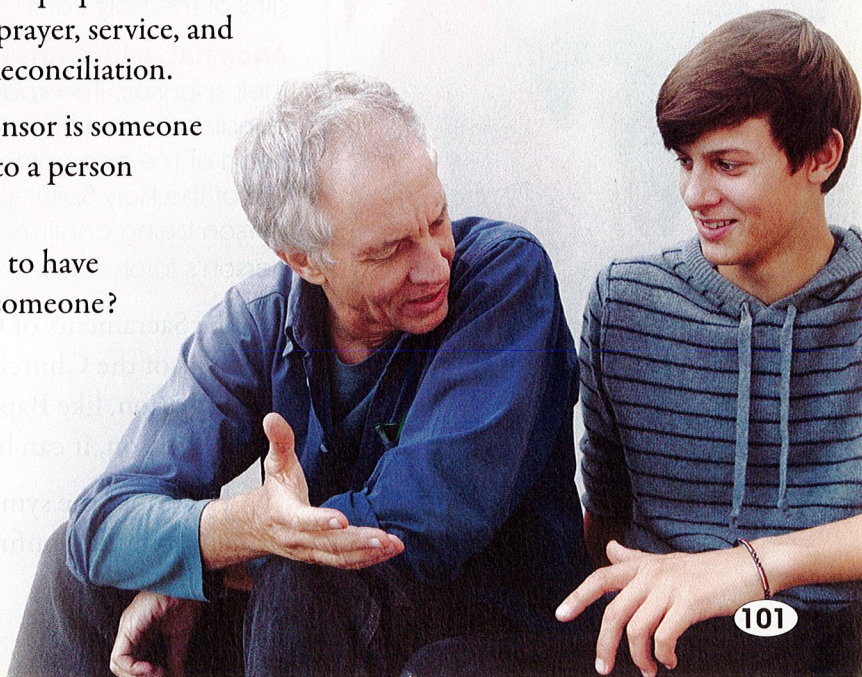
### FAITH VOCABULARY

#### Confirmation

Confirmation is the Sacrament of Christian Initiation that strengthens the grace of Baptism and in which our life in Christ is sealed by the gift of the Holy Spirit.

#### consecrate

To consecrate is to set aside and dedicate for a holy purpose.

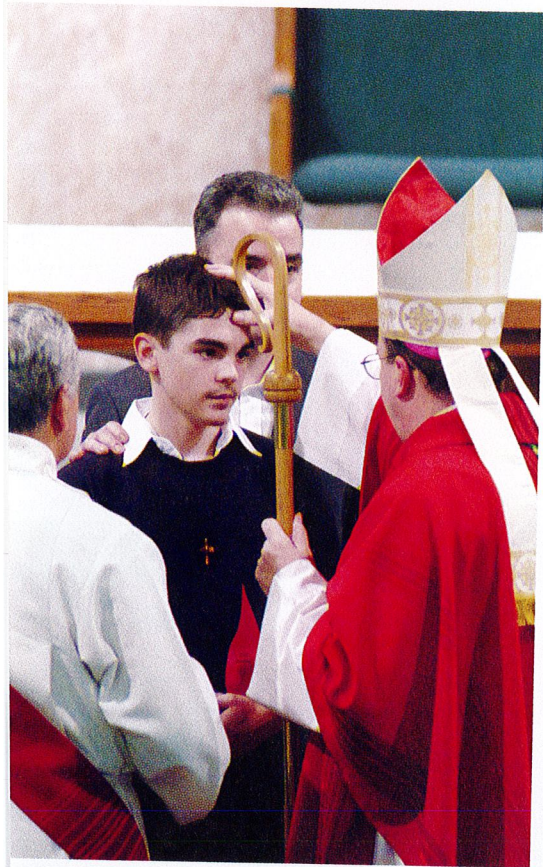




# Faith-Filled People

## United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB)

The bishops are anointed to lead the Church in worshiping God, proclaiming the Gospel to all people, and living as disciples of Christ. The U.S. bishops work together as a conference to fulfill their responsibilities. Together they work to unify, coordinate, encourage, promote, and carry out Catholic activities in the United States of America.



## Anointing in the Old Testament

Anointing with oil is essential to the Rite of Confirmation. Oil is used as a sign to **consecrate** a person, or set that person aside for a holy purpose. In different ways, the ritual of anointing with oil in the Old Testament prepared for its use in the Sacraments of the Church. In the First Book of Samuel, for example, we read about the anointing of David, the shepherd boy whom God had chosen to be king of Israel (read 1 Samuel 16:1–13). This anointing was a sign that the Spirit of God lived within David and would help him to do the work that God had chosen him to do.

## The Rite of Confirmation

The Rite of Confirmation is usually celebrated during the Eucharist. This helps point to the unity of the three Sacraments of Christian Initiation. When Confirmation is celebrated during Mass, it begins after the reading of the Gospel. The parts of the Rite of Confirmation when celebrated during Mass and separated from Baptism are:

**Presentation of the Candidates:** The pastor or a representative of the parish presents the candidates, if possible, by name to the bishop.

**Homily:** The bishop preaches a homily to help the candidates understand the mystery of Confirmation.

**Renewal of Baptismal Promises:** The *confirmandi* (those to be confirmed) renew the profession of faith that they made at Baptism or that their parents and godparents made in union with the whole Church at that time.

**The Laying on of Hands:** In the Roman Rite, the bishop or the priest delegated by him extends his hands over the *confirmandi*. Since the time of the Apostles, this gesture has signified the gift of the Holy Spirit. The minister of the Sacrament prays, invoking the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

**Anointing with Chrism:** The candidates come forward with their sponsors. The sponsor places his or her right hand on the candidate's shoulder. The bishop places, or lays, his hand on the head of the one being confirmed and says, "Be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit," as he anoints the forehead of the baptized person being confirmed. At the same time, the bishop anoints the person's forehead with the Sacred Chrism.

The Sacraments of Christian Initiation celebrate our becoming members of the Church and our sharing in the life of God. Confirmation, like Baptism, imprints a spiritual mark on our souls. For this reason, it can be received only one time.

**?** How does the symbol of oil in the Old Testament help us understand Confirmation?



## Gifts of the Holy Spirit

The Rite of Confirmation identifies the seven-fold Gifts of the Holy Spirit as wisdom, understanding, right judgment or counsel, knowledge, reverence, and wonder and awe. The more traditional names for these gifts are wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord.

## The Effects of Confirmation

At Confirmation, we receive and accept some important responsibilities and graces to fulfill those responsibilities. The graces and responsibilities, or the effects, of Confirmation are:

- We receive the grace of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in our lives.
- We accept grace and commit to join Christ in his mission to prepare for the coming of the Kingdom of God.
- We cooperate with the grace of the Holy Spirit and bring healing and reconciliation into the world.
- The grace of the Holy Spirit strengthens our bond with the Church and her mission to defend the faith.
- The grace of the Holy Spirit guides us to live as signs of the Covenant as the prophets did.

We receive the seven-fold Gifts of the Holy Spirit to remain witnesses for Christ, even in the face of misunderstanding, ridicule, and suffering. The confirmed person receives the strength and power to confidently profess his or her faith in Jesus, the Lord and Savior of the world, and to live as a witness for him.

**Activity** Write a brief description of a person (real or fictional) who is living the call to be a witness for Christ. What kind of person is he or she?

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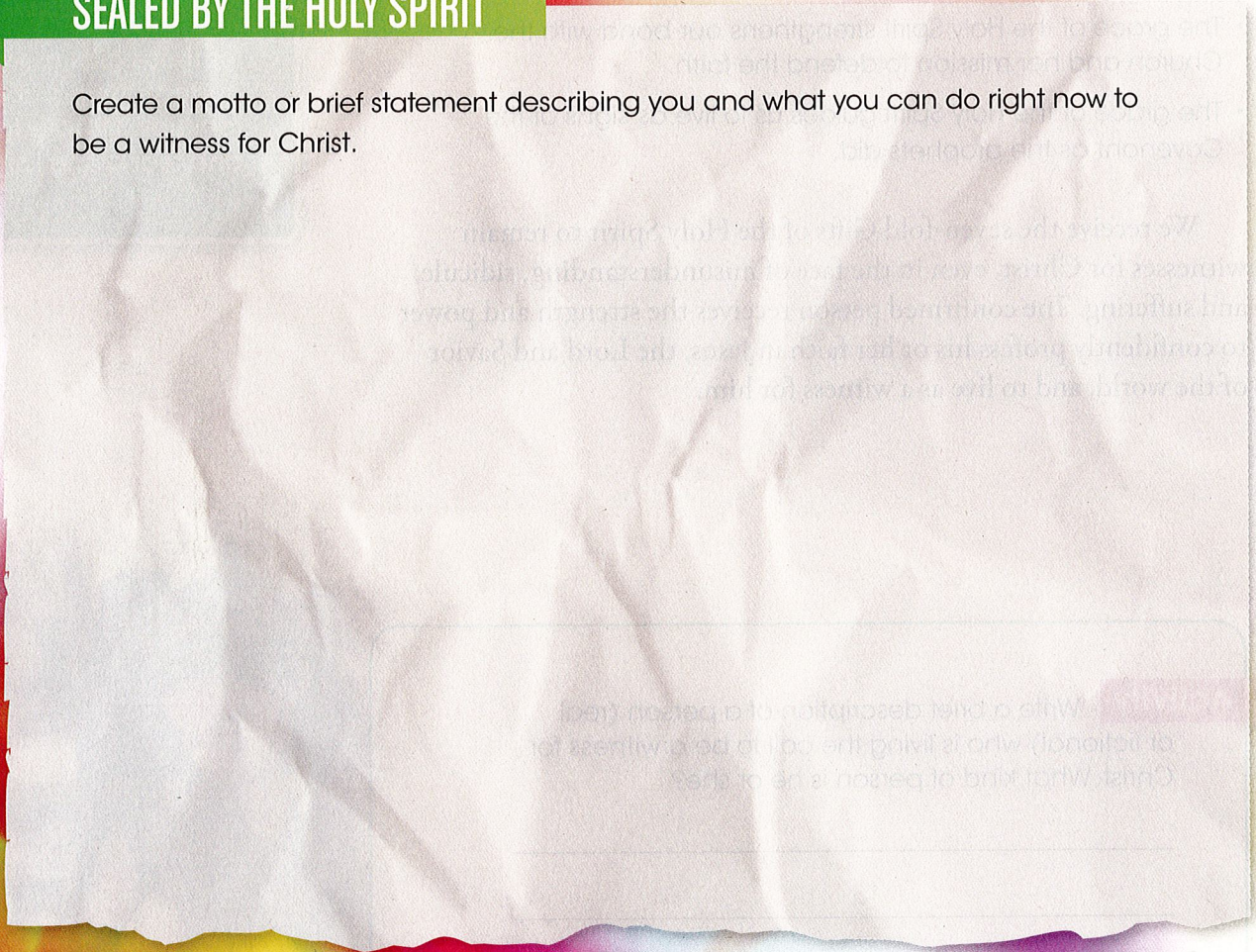


# I FOLLOW JESUS

You are called to be a living witness for Christ. Strengthened with the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, you continue the work of Christ as a member of the Church, in your home, school, neighborhood—or wherever you are.

## SEALED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT

Create a motto or brief statement describing you and what you can do right now to be a witness for Christ.



## MY FAITH CHOICE

With the gift of courage, or fortitude, I can be strong in my stance as a witness for Christ. I will put my witness motto into action this week. I will:

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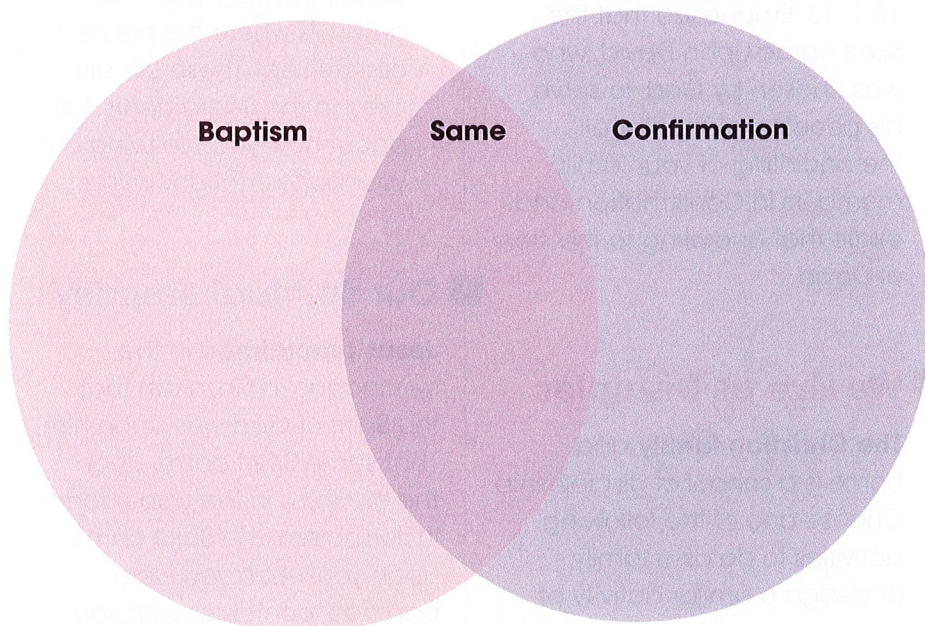
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Pray, "Lord and Giver of life, continue to strengthen me with your gifts so that I may be a witness for Christ."

# Chapter Review

Compare and contrast the Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation. Write the unique features of each Sacrament in the large circles. In the center space, tell how they are the same.



## TO HELP YOU REMEMBER

1. The Sacrament of Confirmation perfects the grace of Baptism.
2. Like Baptism, the Holy Spirit marks us with his seal in Confirmation. This sacramental character leaves an indelible spiritual mark imprinted on our souls.
3. In the Latin Rite of Confirmation, the bishop or priest-delegate rests his hand on the top of each candidate's head as he anoints each candidate's forehead with Chrism.

# Come, Holy Spirit

We first receive the gift of the Holy Spirit at Baptism and are sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit at Confirmation. Pray together for the strength of the Holy Spirit.

**Leader:** On the day of Pentecost, tongues of fire parted and came to rest on the disciples. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit.

**Reader:** Proclaim Galatians 5:22–26

**Leader:** Remember that the Holy Spirit dwells within us. Let us ask the Holy Spirit to give us the grace to be living witnesses for Christ.

**All:** Come, Holy Spirit,  
fill the hearts of your faithful.  
And kindle in them the fire of your love.  
Send forth your Spirit  
and they shall be created.  
And you will renew the face of the earth.  
Amen.



# With My Family

## This Week ...

In **Chapter 11**, "The Sacraments of Christian Initiation: Confirmation," your child learned:

- ▶ In the Sacrament of Confirmation, the graces of Baptism are strengthened by the Gifts of the Holy Spirit.
- ▶ The Holy Spirit marks, or seals, the confirmed with an indelible spiritual mark. Confirmation, therefore, may be received only one time.
- ▶ The confirmed person receives the strength and fortitude to profess and confidently give witness to his or her faith in Jesus Christ.

**For more** about related teachings of the Church, see the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1285-1321, and the *United States Catholic Catechism for Adults*, pages 201-211.

## Sharing God's Word

**Read** together I Samuel 16:1-13. Emphasize that the Spirit came upon David, who was chosen by God, to serve his people as king. Recall the anointing of your family members in Confirmation and relate that anointing to the story of David.

## We Live as Disciples

**The Christian family** and home is a school of discipleship. Choose one of the following activities to do as a family, or design a similar activity of your own:

- ▶ Invite family members to name someone they know who is confirmed and is living as a witness for Christ. Describe what this person does that reflects Christian living.

- ▶ When you participate in Mass this week, find the ambry in your parish. The ambry is where the blessed oils are kept. These oils are used in the Sacraments. Talk about how you are living out your baptismal anointing.

## Our Spiritual Journey

**Jesus proclaimed** in the synagogue in Nazareth that the Spirit of God was upon him. That same Spirit came upon the disciples in the upper room in Jerusalem. The Spirit came upon you when you were baptized, continues with you wherever you are, and will be with you wherever you go. We can look to the Holy Spirit in prayer to give us the gifts we need to follow Christ.



For more ideas on ways that your family can live as disciples of Jesus, visit

[www.BeMyDisciples.com](http://www.BeMyDisciples.com)