


## UNIT TWO: HOW WE CELEBRATE

### LESSON 4: CONFIRMATION: An Outpouring of the Spirit

#### CONTENTS OF LESSON:

1. Confirmation is the sacrament that completes Baptism. In it the gift of the Holy Spirit is 'poured out' as at Pentecost. [YouCat 203, CCC 1302]
2. The Rite of Confirmation includes the i. Presentation of the Candidates ii. Homily iii. Renewal of Baptismal Promises and Profession of Faith iv. Laying on of Hands v. Anointing with chrism. [CCC 1298-1300]
3. The Laying on of Hands is a gesture used from the time of the apostles and signifies the gift of the Holy Spirit. [CCC 1299]
4. Chrism is a sweet-smelling ointment made with olive oil and balsam. It is consecrated on Holy Thursday. Oil is a symbol of joy, health and strength. Anointing with chrism is a sign that we belong to Christ and are sent to give out the 'aroma of Christ'. [YouCat 203, CCC 1293, 1302]
5. 'Seal': At Confirmation Christ seals us with the Holy Spirit: a permanent seal on the soul of a Christian. [YouCat 205, CCC 1304]
6. Effects of Confirmation: We receive a special outpouring of the Holy Spirit and therefore the graces of Baptism are increased: i. We become more aware of God as our father; ii. Receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit; iii. Come closer to Christ and his Church and iv. Receive power to be witnesses of Christ. [CCC 1302-1203]
7.  *In Confirmation God strengthens us and sends us out on a mission. We must go out with confidence and live as his witnesses.* [YouCat 203]

REFERENCES: Acts Ch 2.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Handouts A & B; equipment for obstacle race; sweet-smelling oil (can be made by adding perfume to oil)

#### I. STARTER:

*[Conduct an obstacle race outside the classroom. Ask for a few volunteers to take part. (If the class is divided into groups, ask for one from each group). The race should have about 3 elements: E.g. Jumping over a hurdle; going around a brick 10 times keeping one hand in contact with it at all times; and jumping from one piece of newspaper to another to reach the finish line.]*

- What helped you win? If this was a race in the Olympic Games, and you had a chance to take part, what would you do to make sure you do well? How do coaches prepare the horse riders for the steeplechase, for example? (The steeplechase is like an obstacle course with different kinds of jumps that the horse and rider have to face.) *[Bring out:]*
  - In order to do well, we need to study the whole race carefully.
  - Video clips of former winners are viewed again and again in slow motion, to learn their skills.
  - They would also make sure they are physically and emotionally fit: exercise, diet etc.
  - Of course, the competitors practice over and over again.

#### II. DEVELOPMENT:

- Many Christians receive the sacrament of Confirmation, but don't really understand it or take part in it well. Today we will look at the Rite of Confirmation in slow motion, to see what actually happens, not only physically, but also spiritually. We will find out what God does and also what our part is. Our question at the end: What must I do in order to really get the maximum benefit and reach the finish line (heaven) successfully?

*[Distribute Handout A. (The Rite of Confirmation) A few students enact each part, after which a few comments are added by the teacher:]*

1. Presentation of the Candidates: (If there are many students the 'priest' only names a few.) Before your Confirmation Day your parish priest will meet each of you personally, so that he can honestly tell the bishop that you are ready for the sacrament.

2. Homily: *[If any student is capable, he/she could take the part of the bishop and give a brief homily based on the Pentecost event (Acts 2.)]*
3. Renewal of Baptismal Promises and Profession of Faith: Most of us were baptized as babies. We could not say to God, “I believe in you!” or “I reject Satan!” Our parents said it on our behalf. Now it is important that we say this for ourselves, understanding and meaning what we say.
4. Laying on of Hands: If you read the book of Acts, you will find the apostles laying their hands on people to receive the Holy Spirit. This action is an important part of Confirmation. The Bishop will extend his hands over you and call on the Holy Spirit.
  - What gifts does he especially ask for you? (*Wisdom and understanding, right judgment and courage, knowledge, reverence, and wonder and awe.*) These gifts help us to grow in holiness and live as true children of God. (We have studied these gifts in detail last year.)
5. Anointing with Chrism: Chrism is a sweet-smelling oil which is specially blessed on Holy Thursday. ‘Chrism’ means ‘Christ-oil’. When we are anointed we are supposed to spread the perfume of Christ in the world. Oil is a symbol of joy, strength and health. Athletes and wrestlers use it to strengthen their bodies. It is also used in many medicines to soothe bruises and wounds. The Holy Spirit works like oil on our souls.

*[Give out Handout B and ask the students to fill in the missing words using the words in the ‘Word Bank’. They could work in pairs. Go over the answers so that they can check them. (The teacher should work out the answers before-hand)]*

### III. INTERIORISATION/PRAYER:

- Read the quote from the YouCat. Imagine God putting his hand on your shoulder and talking to you. What is he saying to you? Listen and write down what you think he is saying. Then write your own response to him. *[Students reflect and write in silence.]*

### IV. ACTIVITY:

*[If time permits hold a simple quiz based on the two handouts. The students first study the handouts for 5 minutes, then form groups. Each group is asked one question in turn.]*

1. Who presents the candidates to whom? *[The parish priest to the bishop]*
2. What is the first question asked when the baptismal promises are renewed? *[‘Do you reject Satan?’]*
3. What action does the bishop make when he asks the Father to send the Holy Spirit? *[He extends his hands over the candidates OR lays his hands on them.]*
4. The bishop asks the God the Father to send the Spirit to be 2 things for us. What are they? *[Our Helper and Guide.]*
5. Name any 2 gifts that the bishop asks for. *[Wisdom, understanding, right judgment, courage, knowledge, reverence, wonder and awe.]*
6. When is the chrism oil consecrated? *[On Holy Thursday]*
7. What is oil a symbol of? *[Joy, health, strength]*
8. What sacrament does Confirmation complete? *[Baptism]*
9. What Biblical event does it remind us of? *[Pentecost]*
10. Give at least 2 effects of Confirmation.
 

*[We receive a special outpouring of the Holy Spirit and the graces of Baptism are increased:*

  - i. We become more aware of God as our Father;*
  - ii. Receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit;*
  - iii. Come closer to Christ and his Church and*
  - iv. Receive power to be witnesses of Christ.]*
11. What does the bishop say at the actual moment of confirmation? *[“(Name) be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit.”]*
12. What does he do? *[He marks a cross on the forehead with chrism oil.]*

**HOME ASSIGNMENT:** ⇨ Read the handout.