

SESSION 8 - History & meaning of Confirmation

Opening Prayer

Holy Spirit descend on us today and enable us to come to a deeper understanding of Your role in our lives. Help us to use Your gifts to strengthen us and grow in our Christian lives.

In groups

1. 5 minutes circle time.

Each person in the group takes no longer than one minute to share with the others the name that they have chosen to be their Confirmation name, why they have chosen it and something about that Saint.

2. Gifts of the Holy Spirit (15 mins max.)

3. Students read through the First Confirmation play. Ask them to produce their own play (No longer than 5 mins.) It should be aimed at junior school pupils to get across the history and meaning of Confirmation. They will need to consider ,

- The language they use
- What characters they need
- What props they might need
- How will they set the scene?

Please reconvene in the Upper room for 7.45pm. We will all watch one of the plays.

Closing prayer

To be said together,

Holy Spirit wind and flame
Move within my mortal frame
Make our hearts an altar pyre
Kindle them with Your own fire
Breathe and blow upon that blaze
'Til our lives, our deeds and ways
speak that tongue which every land
by Your grace will understand.
Amen

Gifts of the Holy Spirit



What is a gift?

.....
.....

When are gifts/presents given?

.....
.....
.....

How do you feel when you receive a present?

.....
.....
.....

The Holy Spirit gives us **seven gifts** in a special way at Confirmation.



1. UNDERSTANDING
2. WISDOM
3. GOOD JUDGEMENT
4. KNOWLEDGE
5. COURAGE
6. REVERENCE
7. WONDER AND AWE

Using the gifts of the Holy Spirit

The gifts of the Holy Spirit can affect, in a positive way, whatever you do. They are not, however, magical powers; they are strengths that help you grow in your Christian life. The gifts are there for you to use – they don't work automatically, you have to call upon them. In each of the stories given below answer the questions and explain how you would apply a particular gift.

Wisdom

Imagine you are the wealthy parent of a young child. Your child comes to you asking constantly for things such as new clothes, money to go out, records etc. You can afford to buy your child anything he or she desires.

- do you give him/her everything that is asked for?
- if not, why?
- how would you decide on what to give and what not to give?
- how would you apply **wisdom** to this situation?

Courage

You have a friend who is a black belt karate expert. At a party you're both at, trouble breaks out and things are looking as though they may get nasty. You want to leave but your friend decides to go in and sort things out.

You have another friend whose smaller sister is desperately ill in hospital. The doctors suspect bone cancer and she has to undergo a lot of painful treatment. However she is always happy and tries to cheer

Understanding

You have a friend who has an emotional problem. You think that she is blowing it out of all proportion but she keeps phoning you up and calling around telling you that same story everytime. You try to help by giving advice, but although she listens she never takes any advice. You can't see any way of helping her.

- have you ever come across a similar situation?
- if so, how did you deal with it?
- should you carry on listening to her problems and trying to help even though you think it will never help?
- how would you apply **understanding** to this situation?

up her parents and other children in the ward.

- which of the two people, the karate expert or the little girl is showing more courage?
- explain your answer.
- does courage always mean showing physical strength?
- in what ways can you apply **courage** in your life?

Right judgment

A magistrate that you know sits in a court and dispenses justice. When he sits in the traffic court defendants appear before him who have committed traffic offences. One day he is judging a person caught for doing a U-turn in a particular street. The magistrate himself often does a U-turn at the same place as it saves time driving around the block.

- can the magistrate still dispense justice when he has committed the same offence but has never been caught?
- if so, why? Is this not hypocritical?
- how can you apply **right judgment** in this situation?

Knowledge

A neighbour's son of about your age is a bit of a swot. Whenever you call around to suggest going out he says that he wants to study. He appears more interested in reading about nature than going out for a walk in the country. He gets all his information from books and watching TV documentaries rather than experiencing it for himself.

■ is it good enough for someone to have lots of knowledge from books rather than from experience?

■ if not, why?

■ is it good enough to have knowledge of Jesus' message without going out and putting it into practice? Explain your answer.

■ how should we apply knowledge?

Reverence

A class mate of your is always bragging about things she has done and people she's met, and parties that she's been to, and countries that she's visited. It wouldn't be so bad if the stories were interesting but she tells them again and again. It's really getting on your nerves as she always seems to pick on you to talk to.

■ how do you deal with someone like this. You don't really want to be rude but it's driving you mad.

■ how can you apply the gift of reverence to this person?

Wonder and awe

You are a fan of a particular mega pop star. On the day you're due to see him in concert you pop into a quiet coffee bar. There's hardly anyone in there – but you are amazed to see this pop singer on his own having a coffee – apparently getting away from it all. You often dreamt of meeting him – but you are dumbstruck.

■ do you go over to talk to him? Explain your answer.

■ how do you feel seeing him?

■ who are the people that you would be in wonder and awe at if you saw or met them?

19. Play

The First Confirmation

Players: Narrator, Jesus, Mary, Peter, John, Mary Magdalene, Martha, James, Andrew, Philip, Thomas, Bartholomew, Matthew, James, Person 1, Person 2.

Narrator: Three days after Jesus was crucified, Mary Magdalene went to mourn outside the tomb of Jesus. She was surprised to see that the stone had been moved and that the body of Jesus had gone. However, Jesus, in the guise of a gardener, sees Mary and approaches her. At first she didn't recognise Him.

Jesus: Woman, why are you weeping?

Mary M: They have taken my Lord away and I don't know where they have put Him. Do you know where He is?

Jesus: Mary.

Mary M: *(now recognising Jesus) Master. (she goes to touch Him)*

Jesus: Do not cling to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go and find my disciples and tell them that I am ascending to my Father.

Narrator: Mary ran to the room where the disciples were hiding for fear of the Jews. Mary burst into the room full of excitement.

Mary: I have seen the Lord. He is risen.

Bartholomew: What are you talking about?

Mary M: Jesus is alive.

Narrator: Although the doors were closed, for fear of the Jews, everyone in the room became aware of a presence. Jesus suddenly appeared and stood in the midst of them. The disciples were at once astonished and pleased to see Him. Jesus then spoke.

Jesus: Peace be with you.

Narrator: And Jesus showed them His hands and His side. The disciples were filled with joy, and Jesus said again,

Jesus: Peace be with you.

Narrator: Thomas, also known as the doubter, always wanted proof before he believed anything. He was absent when Jesus first appeared, when Thomas returned he was told the good news of the resurrection of Jesus.

Bartholomew: Thomas, Jesus has risen from the dead. He was here and He spoke to us.

Thomas: How do we know for certain that it was Jesus? Unless I see the holes that the nails made in his hands and can put my finger into them, and unless I can put my hand into His side I refuse to believe.

Narrator: Eight days later the disciples were in the house again and Thomas was with them. The doors were closed, but Jesus came in and stood among them.

Jesus: Peace be with you. Thomas put your finger here; look, here are my hands. Give me your hand; put it into my side. Doubt no longer but believe.

Thomas: My Lord and my God. I believe that it is you.

Jesus: Thomas, you believe because you can see me. Happy are those who have not seen yet believe.

Narrator: Jesus appeared to His followers on numerous occasions over the next forty days and spoke to them about the Kingdom of God. On one occasion they were sharing a meal together and He told them to expect the coming of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus: Do not leave Jerusalem. Wait here for my Father will send you the Holy Spirit that I promised you. John baptised with water but you, not many days from now, will be baptised with the Holy Spirit. For soon I must leave.

John: But why must you leave us?

Jesus: I must return to my Father, but my Spirit will always be with you and you will be my witnesses not only in Jerusalem but throughout the whole world.

Narrator: Soon afterwards Jesus was lifted up into heaven and a cloud took Him from their sight. All Jesus' followers were gathered in Jerusalem praying and preparing to be confirmed in the Holy Spirit. Among them was Mary, the mother of Jesus, who was leading them in prayer.

Mary, Our Lady: Jesus, help us to continue your mission on earth. It is a difficult task and we welcome the coming of the Holy Spirit to help us in our work.

James: Lord, I do not know fully what you want of me. Give me the wisdom to know what you would like me to do.

Andrew: Jesus, I have problems in knowing how to carry out your will. Give me the understanding of how to carry out your wishes.

Philip: Lord, I am going to be put in difficult situations. Give me the gift of right judgment that I will know how to react when I have problems.

Matthew: Lord, I know I am a man and supposed to be brave, but I do feel frightened when carrying out your work. Give me the courage to speak out and spread your word.

James: Lord, sometimes I find it difficult to love my neighbour. Give me the gift to love my neighbour as I should love you.

Martha: Lord, sometimes I feel there is so much other work to do that I have little time for you. Give me the gift of wonder and awe that I might remember your greatness.

Narrator: Suddenly they heard what sounded like a powerful gust of wind from heaven, the noise of which filled the entire room in which they were sitting; and something appeared to them that seemed like tongues of fire; these separated and came to rest on the head of each of them. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak foreign languages as the Spirit gave them the gifts.
Before receiving the Holy Spirit, they were fearful and hiding in a room. After they received the Spirit, they burst out into the streets, proclaiming the word of God in many languages and everyone was amazed.

Person 1 in crowd: Surely, all these people speaking are Galileans. How are they able to speak all these foreign languages?

Person 2 in crowd: I think they have been drinking too much wine.

Narrator: Then Peter stood up and addressed the crowd in a loud voice.

Peter: People of Jerusalem, we are not drunk. On the contrary, this is what Joel the prophet, said: 'In the days to come I will pour out my Spirit on all mankind'. Jesus, the man, who you killed, is alive, raised by God and we are all witnesses to this. He promised to send the Holy Spirit to us and what you see before you is the outpouring of that Spirit.

Narrator: Hearing this the crowd was cut to the heart.

Person 2: What must I do to receive the Holy Spirit too?

Peter: You must repent, believe in Jesus, and be baptised. Then you will be ready to be confirmed in the Holy Spirit.

*Not the End
- but just the Beginning.*