

On the Sacrament of Confirmation by Pope Francis

In this catechesis on the Sacraments, we will reflect on Confirmation or Cresima, which is understood in continuity with Baptism, to which it is connected in an inseparable way. These two Sacraments, together with the Eucharist, make up one salvific event -- "Christian initiation" --, with which we are inserted in Jesus Christ dead and risen and become new creatures and members of the Church. This is why originally these three Sacraments were celebrated at the same time, at the end of the catechumenal journey, normally during the Easter Vigil. Thus the course of formation was sealed and a gradual insertion in the Christian community, which could last even several years. It was done step by step to arrive at Baptism, then to Confirmation and the Eucharist.

Ordinarily one speaks of the Sacrament of "Cresima," a word which means "anointing." And, in fact, through the oil called "sacred Chrism" we are conformed, in the power of the Spirit, to Jesus Christ, who is the only true "Anointed One," the "Messiah," the Holy One of God.

The term "Confirmation," therefore, reminds us that this Sacrament brings a growth of Baptismal grace: it unites us more firmly to Christ; it brings to fulfillment our bond with the Church; it gives us the special strength of the Holy Spirit to spread and defend the faith, to confess the name of Christ and never to be ashamed of His cross (cf. Catechism of the Catholic Church, n. 1303).

"For this reason it is important to care that our children, our young one have this sacrament. We all must take care that they be baptized: and this is good, but perhaps we don't care so much if they receive Confirmation: they remain half-way and do not receive the Holy Spirit, which is very important in Christian life, because it gives us the strength to go forward!

Let us think, each one of us: do we, truly care that our children and our young ones receive Confirmation? This is important, it is important! And if you have children in your home, young ones who have not received it yet and are of age to receive it, do everything possible to bring to fulfillment this Christian initiation and that they may receive the strength of the Holy Spirit. It is important!

Of course it is important to give the candidates for Confirmation a good preparation, which must seek to lead them to personal adherence to faith in Christ and to awaken in them the sense of belonging to the Church.

Confirmation, like every Sacrament, is not the work of men but of God, who takes care of our life in order to mold us to the image of His Son, to make us capable of loving like Him. He does so by infusing in us His Holy Spirit, whose action pervades the whole person and the whole of life, as shining through the seven gifts that Tradition, in the light of Holy Scripture, has always evidenced. These seven gifts: I do not wish to ask you if you remember the seven gifts. Maybe you all do...But I will say them in your name. *What are these gifts? Wisdom, Understanding, Counsel, Fortitude, Knowledge, Piety and Fear of God. And these gifts are given to us by the Holy Spirit in the sacrament of Confirmation.* I intend to dedicate to these gifts the catechesis that will follow those of the Sacraments.

When we receive the Holy Spirit in our heart and allow Him to act, Christ Himself makes Himself present in us and molds our life. Through us, it will be He who prays, who forgives, who infuses hope and consolation, who serves brethren, who makes Himself close to the needy and the least, who creates communion, who sows peace. Think of how important this is: through the Holy Spirit, Christ Himself comes to do all this in our midst for us. For this reason it is important that children and young ones receive the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Dear brothers and sisters let us remind ourselves that we have received Confirmation! All of us! Let us remember it first of all to thank the Lord for this gift, and then to ask Him to help us to live as true Christians, to walk always with joy according to the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.



ST. MONICA PARISH

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PARISH OFFICE HOURS
Monday – Friday
9:30 am – 1 pm / 1:30 pm – 4:30 pm

MASS SCHEDULES
WEEKDAYS: **9:00 am**
SATURDAYS: **9:00 am & 5:00 pm**
SUNDAYS: **9:00 am, 11:00 am**
& 4:00 pm (YVR)

CONFESSION SCHEDULES
SATURDAYS: **9:45 am—10:30 am**
20 minutes before Daily Mass

BAPTISM every Saturday @ 11am
WEDDING – Please call the Parish Office
at least 6 months in advance.
FUNERAL, HOUSE BLESSING, SICK CALL
Please call the Parish Office.

WEDNESDAY:
Perpetual Help Novena after 9am Mass
FRIDAY:
Holy Hour after 9am Mass
1st SATURDAY:
Rosary for Vocation after 9am Mass

Pentecost Sunday Weekend of May 18/19, 2024

Today we celebrate the gift of the Holy Spirit, the birth of the Church and the beginning of its mission in the world. Pentecost Sunday reminds us that our lives are filled with the Holy Spirit and that God has accomplished creative things in us through this gift. We have been entrusted with this great gift of the Holy Spirit. This great gift empowers us to be bold proclaimers of the Gospel in word and deed. It urges us to speak truth to power. It encourages us to use words and exhortations and even arguments that are meant to heal, show care and compassion and to reconcile. Now is a good time to ask: Are we being good stewards of this gift of the Holy Spirit? What creative things have we done to glorify God's accomplishments in us?



Sacrament of Confirmation/First Communion at St Monica Parish

Join us in praying for Chloe Chan from RCIA who will receive the Sacrament of Confirmation on Sunday, May 19 at the 11am Mass. Likewise, let us continue praying for our PREP Grade 2 students who received their First Communion last May 4.

Project Advance 2024: Building our Parish Community

Your support of Project Advance will help grow our parish and expand the reach of Christ's love to those who need it most. Parish Projects for 2024: (1) Installation of acoustic panels in the church, (2) Installation of laser projectors in the parish hall, (3) repair of the hall roof.

Tax-deductible donations can be made in person at the parish or online.

St Monica Parish goal is \$75,000.00. Learn more and donate at projectadvance.ca.

Catholic Women's League—St Monica Parish

St Monica CWL happily invites you to their 25th Charter Anniversary on Sunday, May 26 at the 11am Mass. Reception to follow.

Ordinations of Permanent Deacons

The Archdiocese of Vancouver will be celebrating the Ordinations to the Sacred Order of Deacons to the Permanent Diaconate through the imposition of the hands by Archbishop J. Michael Miller, CSB, on Saturday, June 1, 10:00 a.m. at Holy Rosary Cathedral in Vancouver. All are welcome to attend this joyous occasion!

Gifts of the Holy Spirit [Gifts of the Holy Spirit | Loyola Press](#)

In the Book of Isaiah 11:2-3, the Gifts of the Holy Spirit are described. In the passage the gifts are considered ones that the Messiah would have possessed. Through Jesus, we also receive the Gifts of the Holy Spirit in the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Wisdom helps us recognize the importance of others and the importance of keeping God central in our lives.

Understanding is the ability to comprehend the meaning of God's message.

Knowledge is the ability to think about and explore God's revelation, and also to recognize there are mysteries of faith beyond us.

Counsel is the ability to see the best way to follow God's plan when we have choices that relate to him.

Fortitude is the courage to do what one knows is right.

Piety helps us pray to God in true devotion.

Fear of the Lord is the feeling of amazement before God, who is all-present, and whose friendship we do not want to lose.

Pentecost: The Holy Spirit at Work in the World

The feast of Pentecost is quickly approaching (May 19) and it is an annual reminder that the Creed we profess is not for the timid. It's not a part-time deal, a Sunday morning interlude, something we try to get around to when we're not so busy. Pentecost also reminds us, with mighty wind and terrifying flame, that as Christian stewards we must be all in to acknowledge the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives and be open to the Spirit's direction and power.

Throughout the history of Christianity we can see evidence of how the Holy Spirit continuously breaks out afresh in our Church and world. The Holy Spirit has awakened Christians from their complacency, led them into new frontiers of celebration, sacramentality and evangelization. The working of the Spirit continues to make forgiveness possible and transforms our lives. We believe that God's Holy Spirit has been poured out as a principle of unity to bring to completion the divine plan of salvation for everyone. Good stewards know that they must cooperate and not resist the work of the Spirit.

Saint Paul tells us that there are characteristics by which we can recognize the Holy Spirit at work within each of us. These characteristics are called **the fruits of the Spirit** and they are: **love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control** (Galatians 5:22). These fruits are made manifest through our attitudes and actions in Church, among our neighbors, in the marketplace, the public square and in our use of social media.

In his first Letter to the Corinthians, Saint Paul also writes that no one can believe in Jesus Christ without the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:3). No one can even live as a disciple of the Lord without the Holy Spirit. No one can pray without him. We are convinced that when someone speaks or thinks well of another, the Holy Spirit is at work. When people do not think first of themselves but treat others as sisters and brothers, when they do not give up hope in God's promises for humanity and the world, God's Spirit is at work. Stewards know that the Spirit inspires trust, confidence and the energy not to be satisfied with what one has already accomplished. The Holy Spirit gives us the wisdom to follow the Gospel and put the Eucharist into action every single day.

The working of the Holy Spirit, though, does not restrict or oblige people to do what they do not accept. God has given us the freedom to follow Jesus or not to follow him. Of course, the Holy Spirit will not be denied, but works most effectively through us when we are committed to the Gospel. If we open ourselves to the Holy Spirit we discover, often to our surprise, capabilities in ourselves of which we could hardly imagine. This in turn allows us to inspire others.

In a world where there is so much conflict, divisiveness and polarization, even among Christians, good stewards have confidence that in the end, the Holy Spirit is going to win. The Feast of Pentecost is a feast celebrating stewardship, for it is a reminder for us to be ever vigilant to listen for the Holy Spirit's wisdom and allow ourselves to be guided by that wisdom as we seek to do the will of the Father whose plan will be fulfilled.