



## DIOCESE OF HAMILTON

### Models for Immediate Sacramental Preparation in the Parish – Diocese of Hamilton Revised, 2024

#### CONFIRMATION

Three to five sessions of preparation may be offered in the parish including some or all of the following elements. It is noted that such sessions are most helpful for children enrolled in Catholic school receiving ongoing Sacramental Catechesis through their religion program, *Growing in Faith, Growing in Christ*. For children who are homeschooled or receiving public education, it is essential for them to be connected to a catechetical support for more comprehensive preparations (i.e. the Catechetical Correspondence Program). Children who are coming forward for Confirmation who have yet to be baptized or received First Eucharist ought to receive a thorough preparation for the full Rite of Christian Initiation.

The Office for Evangelization and Catechesis can provide assistance in choosing materials and in training parish volunteers/catechists, if needed. For more information, please contact us at: [catechesis@hamiltondiocese.com](mailto:catechesis@hamiltondiocese.com).

*Children with special needs may require adapted resources in preparation for the Sacraments. Please reach out to the Office for Evangelization and Catechesis for suggestions of appropriate materials.*

#### Four Session Options for Confirmation Preparation:

##### 1. *Informational session for families*

- This is an opportunity to welcome, encourage, organize and catechize.
- This session is to take place with both parents and candidates present.
- This is most often a larger group gathering including the support of the local Catholic Schools.
- This is a time to gather necessary information for the sacraments, including baptismal certificates. Important dates and necessary materials for ongoing communication can be distributed.
- The pastor and other parish staff should lead this session.

**Diocesan resource for those children not yet Baptized can be found [HERE](#).**

**Diocesan Guidelines for Confirmation can be found [HERE](#).**

## **2. *Group catechetical session***

- This meeting is an opportunity to prepare the candidates to celebrate Confirmation.
- This gathering is intended to give candidates the information necessary to allow them to be fully aware of the meaning of the sacrament they are to receive so to be open to the fullness of God's grace.
- Parents are encouraged to be a part of these gatherings, having independent time to reflect on their role in the faith life of their child.

**Sample outlines of these meetings are found on pages 5-7.**

## **3. *Liturgical sessions***

- The celebration of minor rites such as the Rite of Enrollment.
- This enrollment can take place within a regular Sunday Mass.
- The Rite of Enrollment can be found in Appendix B of the [Diocesan Guidelines for The Sacrament of Confirmation](#).
- It is encouraged that the Sacrament of Reconciliation also be made available to candidates as a part of their formation and preparation.

## **4. *Retreat day***

- This gathering provides a time and space for reflection on the grace of Confirmation and the gifts of the Holy Spirit.
- This retreat may include parents and candidates or candidates only and may take place within a regular school day, organized well in advance with school administration.
- This gathering is to be prepared by the pastor alongside a parish team, and can incorporate resource and support from the local Catholic school community.

## RECOMMENDED RESOURCES FOR CONFIRMATION

Please note, resources for Confirmation Preparation can be sourced independently, or through the Office for Evangelization and Catechesis. Often there are discounts associated with purchasing from the Chancery as purchases are made in bulk. Please reach out to the Diocesan Office to place an order: [catechesis@hamiltondiocese.com](mailto:catechesis@hamiltondiocese.com).

### Print Materials for Parents:

*Catholic Parent Know How Series* – Two booklets are available, [\*“Preparing Your Child for Confirmation”\*](#), and [\*“How to be a Confirmation Sponsor”\*](#). An 8-page full colour magazine with Scripture, FAQ, and tips to help parents/godparents to be teachers of the faith for their children.

*The Faith We Believe: Unpacking the Creed* – A diocesan resource offering a rich and comprehensive understanding of the Creed. A helpful tool in having parents better understand the Baptismal Promises their children will be making for themselves for the first time. This resource is available in digital format as well as printed booklets on order from the Diocesan Office for Evangelization and Catechesis. You can review the material [HERE](#).

[\*About Confirmation\*](#) – A 2-in-1 flip book including a brief introduction to Catholicism, as well as brief history of the roots of Confirmation and a catechesis on the Holy Spirit. A helpful tool for parents who may be new to the Church, or for a parent who may not be Roman Catholic. *Please note, this resource includes information about the “Confirmation Mass”* which no longer pertains to the Diocese of Hamilton as the Sacrament is celebrated within a Liturgy of the Word.

### Print Materials for Candidates:

*Call to Celebrate Confirmation* – A new resource endorsed by the Diocese of Hamilton Office for Evangelization and Catechesis. This text includes eight complete catechetical sessions that help young people reflect on the mystery of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Confirmation through celebrations, colorful and appealing visuals, and interactive pages with activities and prayers. A digital journal has been produced by the Diocese of Hamilton to accompany this program. A catechist guide is also available for use. Available to order from the Diocesan Office for Evangelization and Catechesis. You can review the material [HERE](#).

*Gifted by God* - is a contemporary guide for parish catechists who are preparing candidates for Confirmation and provides everything the catechist needs to deliver the program with ease and confidence. This program includes six sessions on living out a Christian life and the sacraments with an end-of-session retreat. Through reading and reflection, youth will learn more about Confirmation and their vocation to live their faith and serve God’s people. This resource is available to order from the Diocesan Office for Evangelization and Catechesis.

## RECOMMENDED RESOURCES FOR CONFIRMATION CONT'D

### Digital Content for Parents:

Please note, these resources can be used for an in person or virtual preparation session.

[\*FORMED\*](#) – For those with membership to this digital platform, the audio recording “We Must Go Out” by Father Mike Schmitz may prove helpful in your preparations. This episode is 47 minutes in length and can support parents in their understanding of Confirmation as a commissioning of the Holy Spirit to live as missionary disciples. This resource would be helpful for any adults preparing for Confirmation as well.

[\*Real+True\*](#) – A series produced by Our Sunday Visitor in conjunction with the Pontifical Council for the New Evangelization. Short, accessible videos explaining the history of Confirmation and its scriptural roots. Each video has between a 3-6 minute run time and are intended for parents, sponsors and older candidates. These videos would serve as excellent follow up to a group catechetical session, or food for thought after an initial meeting with the pastor.

### Digital Content for Candidates:

Please note, these resources can be used for an in person or virtual preparation session.

[\*Confirmation Placemat\*](#) – A new resource created by the Diocese of Hamilton Office for Evangelization and Catechesis to stir thoughts, prayer and conversation in the hearts of Confirmation Candidates preparing for this important Sacrament. This sheet is double-sided, including resources for candidates on one side, and parents/sponsors on the other. These are available printed in colour cardstock for purchase from the Diocesan Office for Evangelization and Catechesis.

[\*Sofia Sketchpad: Confirmation\*](#) – Sofia Institute for Teachers. This video focuses on Confirmation, explaining the connection to Pentecost, the special outpouring of the Holy Spirit that deepens and perfects baptismal grace, and the mission that accompanies reception of the Sacrament. Viewing guide and other resources at [SophiaSketchPad.org](http://SophiaSketchPad.org)

[\*Catholic Central: Confirmation\*](#) – A 6-minute video by Libby and Kai, hosts of Catholic Central explaining the why and what of Confirmation. This short video also gives a brief overview of the Rite of Confirmation and the Gifts of the Holy Spirit.

[\*It's NOT Graduation\*](#) – A 3-minute video looking at the common misconception that Confirmation is “Catholic Graduation”. Produced by OSB Films, a non-profit Catholic media agency.

[\*Real+True\*](#) – A series produced by Our Sunday Visitor in conjunction with the Pontifical Council for the New Evangelization. Short, accessible videos explaining the history of Confirmation and its scriptural roots. Each video has between a 3-6 minute run time. In particular, the video, [\*“What Happens at Confirmation”\*](#) would be very helpful to begin a conversation about the Holy Spirit and the connection between Baptism and Confirmation.

## OUTLINE OF A GROUP CATECHETICAL SESSION FOR CONFIRMATION PREPARATION

After an initial meeting between parish staff and the family, a group session may be offered that combines catechetical elements as well as a practical rehearsal in preparation for Confirmation. **For candidates enrolled in the Catholic Schools affiliated with the parish, it may be beneficial to host this gathering during the school day, with the support of the school staff. It is the parish's responsibility to liaise with the school administration about this possibility and ensure that scheduling is received early in the academic year. It is the full responsibility of the parish to organize all programming, supplies and lead these activities.**

If this session takes place outside of school hours, it is encouraged that parents and sponsors are given the opportunity to participate in the session as well.

Your meeting can be structured as a 75 – 90 minute session including the following priorities:

- 10 – 15 minutes:** Welcome and opening prayer
- 20 - 30 minutes:** Catechesis and liturgical preparation
- 10 - 15 minutes:** Reflection and prayer
- 20 - 30 minutes:** Rehearsal and important information for the celebration of the Sacrament
- 15 – 20 minutes:** Questions, announcements and closing prayer

Please note, it is recommended to share as much literature as possible with families and the parish school ahead of this gathering, so that all participants may come prepared with their questions.

<b>Welcome and Opening Prayer</b>	Choose a welcoming and inviting environment for this gathering.  Consider preparation that is necessary for any handouts, AV equipment and training for volunteer leaders.  Send regular reminders and updates to families and the parish school about meeting days and times.  Prepare an opening prayer to gather the group and set the tone for the conversation.
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<p><b>Catechesis on the Sacrament using printed or digital resource</b></p>	<p>Ensure that each participant has a copy of the materials you will be referring to. Be sure that all content is age appropriate and that accommodations are made for candidates with needs for adaptive catechesis. If you are utilizing digital content, sending the links along via email to the families or the classroom teachers ahead of time is helpful for follow-up.</p> <p>Catechesis for Confirmation may include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Reviewing the Gifts and Fruits of the Holy Spirit</li> <li>ii. An exploration of the Creed</li> <li>iii. An exploration of the link between Baptism and Confirmation</li> <li>iv. A reflection on the call to missionary discipleship</li> <li>v. A church tour to familiarize candidates with the parish</li> </ol> <p>The goal of this presentation is to ensure that the children feel confident about this important milestone in their faith life, and they know of the support of the parish that accompanies them.</p>
<p><b>Reflection and prayer</b></p>	<p>Take time for conversation with the candidates and their teachers, or parents/sponsors. Encourage the candidates to reflect on a question of importance together, sharing their collective wisdom.</p> <p>Questions for consideration may include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How am I being called to live as a disciple of Jesus?</li> <li>• What gifts have I been given to steward and share with the world?</li> <li>• How can I live in the Holy Spirit in my prayer, work and play?</li> <li>• How does it feel to be called an “adult in the faith”? What does that mean to me? How will I respond to that call?</li> </ul> <p>This is an appropriate time to share a creative prayer experience such as a Lectio/Visio Divina or a Guided Meditation to encourage a wide variety of prayer styles.</p>

<p><b>Rehearsal and important information for Confirmation day</b></p>	<p>Ideally, bring the candidates right into the Church and take time to walk through the Rite of Confirmation. This is an excellent time to practice responses, gestures, and participation required from the Candidates.</p> <p>Be sure to clearly express your expectations for arrival, seating, and any other important procedures for the celebration day so there is no confusion. A handout with these details is helpful, particularly if parents are not present for this rehearsal.</p>
<p><b>Questions, announcements and Closing Prayer</b></p>	<p>Gathering the group back together, take time for questions or concerns for the group, make any necessary announcements and close with prayer.</p> <p>At dismissal, ensure all parents, teachers and candidates have any necessary brochures or handouts to takeaway for future reference.</p>

**A Note about Volunteers:**

It is helpful to have the involvement of lay volunteers to support these group sessions. Preparation Teams should have the inclusion of the parish staff, trained screened volunteers, the parish catechist and/or youth ministry leaders. If this gathering takes place during the school day, it is essential to have the presence and full participation of the classroom teacher as well.