

Sacrament of Confirmation



Catechism 1316 Confirmation perfects Baptismal grace; it is the sacrament which gives the Holy Spirit in order to root us more deeply in the divine filiation, incorporate us more firmly into Christ, strengthen our bond with the Church, associate us more closely with her mission, and help us bear witness to the Christian faith in words accompanied by deeds.

Catechism 1317 Confirmation, like Baptism, imprints a spiritual mark or indelible character on the Christian's soul; for this reason one can receive this sacrament only once in one's life.

Protestant Objection: Confirmation is not in scripture. It is a man-made tradition.

Catholic Answer: Acts 2:1-4" On the day of Pentecost.....and there appeared to them tongues as of fire, distributed and rested on each one of them and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit...."

Ephesians 1:13: "In him you also, who have heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and have believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit."

Ephesians 4: 30; "And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, in whom you were sealed for the day of redemption."

2 Corinthians 1:21-22: "He has put his seal upon us and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee."

Protestant Objection: Those verses refer to belief. Just believe and trust in Jesus and you are sealed forever. Once sealed always sealed! Once in grace always in grace! Once saved always saved!

Catholic Answer: Actually those verses refer to Confirmation where we are sealed with the Holy Spirit when a bishop lays his hands upon us. In Acts of the Apostles Peter and John, who were bishops, were sent to Jerusalem where new Christians had been baptized but had not yet received the Holy Spirit so they received the sacrament of Confirmation when Peter and John laid their hands upon them.

"When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to Samaria. When they arrived, they prayed for the new believers there that they might receive the Holy Spirit, because the Holy Spirit had not yet come on any of them; they had simply been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit." Acts 8:14-17

Saint Paul



Another example of Confirmation is also in the Acts of the Apostles. Paul came upon some believers but they hadn't received the Holy Spirit. They had been baptized in the cleansing rite of John the Baptist. Paul gave them a Christian baptism and because he was a bishop he also confirmed them by laying his hands upon them and they received the Holy Spirit.

"While Apollos was at Corinth, Paul took the road through the interior and arrived at Ephesus. There he found some disciples and asked them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" They answered, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit."

So Paul asked, "Then what baptism did you receive?" "John's baptism," they replied. Paul said, "John's baptism was a baptism of repentance. He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in Jesus."

On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied. There were about twelve men in all."

Acts 19:1-7

Protestant Objection: These men weren't truly baptized. They were baptized in the "name of Jesus" not in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Catholic Answer: To be baptized in the "name of Jesus" is to be baptized as he commanded in Matthew 28:19: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

When scripture says they were baptized in the name of Jesus that means by His authority. Consider a man that steals from a store and as he is running away the policeman says, "Stop in the name of the law." The policeman doesn't need to cite the number of the violation the man has broken. He simply needs to say to stop in the name of the law, stop in the name of the authority that I have.

In the scriptural verse above, Paul was baptizing under the authority of Jesus and would have done as Jesus commanded and baptized the men in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. After being baptized the men were confirmed and they received the Holy Spirit through the laying on of the hands of Paul who was a bishop of the Church.

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Protestant Objection: Christians were never taught about sacraments like baptism and confirmation.

Catholic Answer: In the book of Hebrews 6:1-3 the inspired writer shows us that the early Christians were taught many aspects of the faith:

“Therefore let us leave the elementary doctrines of Christ and go on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, with instruction about baptisms, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead and eternal judgment.”

Catechism 1288: From that time on the apostles, in fulfillment of Christ's will, imparted to the newly baptized by the laying on of hands the gift of the Spirit that completes the grace of Baptism. For this reason in the *Letter to the Hebrews* the doctrine concerning Baptism and the laying on of hands is listed among the first elements of Christian instruction. The imposition of hands is rightly recognized by the Catholic tradition as the origin of the sacrament of Confirmation, which in a certain way perpetuates the grace of Pentecost in the Church."

Catechism 1295: By this anointing the confirmed receive the "mark," the *seal* of the Holy Spirit. A seal is a symbol of a person, a sign of personal authority, or ownership of an object. Hence soldiers were marked with their leader's seal and slaves with their master's. A seal authenticates a juridical act or document and occasionally makes it secret.

Catechism 1296 : Christ himself declared that he was marked with his Father's seal. Christians are also marked with a seal: "It is God who establishes us with you in Christ and has commissioned us; he has put his seal on us and given us his Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee." (2 Cor. 1:21-22) This seal of the Holy Spirit marks our total belonging to Christ, our enrollment in his service for ever, as well as the promise of divine protection in the great eschatological trial.

Sacrament of the Sick



Catechism 1511: The Church believes and confesses that among the seven sacraments there is one especially intended to strengthen those who are being tried by illness, the Anointing of the Sick: This sacred anointing of the sick was instituted by Christ our Lord as a true and proper sacrament of the New Testament. It is alluded to indeed by Mark, but is recommended to the faithful and promulgated by James the apostle and brother of the Lord

Protestant Objection: There is no such thing as a sacrament in the bible

Catholic Answer: You are right that the word “sacrament” is not in the bible but that is because it is derived from Latin. However in Greek the word used for sacrament is “μυστηρια”. We see that in 1 Corinthians 4: 1 where Paul says, “This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.”

For 2000 years the Eastern Rite of the Catholic Church as well as the Orthodox has called the seven sacraments “mysteries.”

Protestant Objection: The sacrament of the sick is not in the bible.

Catholic Answer: James 5:14: “Is any among you sick? Let him call for the priests of the Church and let them pray over him anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord and the prayer of faith will save the sick man and the Lord will raise him up and if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.”

Protestant Objection: My bible says “elders” not “priests”

Catholic Answer: That will be addressed when we talk about the Sacrament of Holy Orders and the Catholic priesthood. **Next topic:** The Sacrament of Marriage

Here is a link to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* that is searchable. Click [HERE](#)