



SCRIPTURE QUOTE FOR THE WEEK



“Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent to them Peter and John, who came down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit; for it had not yet fallen on any of them, but they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit.”
—Acts 8:14-17



OPENING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we pray for the Holy Spirit to descend upon us, just as He did in the early Church. Light us aflame with Your love, and empower us to go and make disciples of Jesus Christ in the world. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.



COMMIT

This week's commitment is to focus on one of the four practices that stoked the fire of the Holy Spirit in the early Church. Will you make an effort to improve your study, fellowship, sacraments, or prayer?



PRAY

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of Your faithful. And kindle in them the fire of Your love. Send forth Your Spirit, Lord, and they shall be created. And You shall renew the face of the earth.

Let us pray, O God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit did instruct the hearts of Your faithful; grant that in the same Spirit we may be truly wise and ever rejoice in His consolation. Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.



TIP FOR THE WEEK

In this session we discussed the signs within the Rite of Confirmation. We recommend learning more about this sacrament from the Lighthouse Catholic Media talk “Confirmation: The Sacrament of Evangelization and Martyrdom” by Dr. Brant Pitre.

lighthousecatholicmedia.org/store/title/confirmation-the-sacrament-of-evangelization-and-martyrdom

Scene 1: Is the Rite Simply a Nice Ceremony?

The Brothers Karamazov, by Fyodor Dostoyevsky, is considered to be one of the greatest philosophical novels of all time. Here is a quote from the book:

“You must know that there is nothing higher and stronger and more wholesome and good for life in the future than some good memory, especially a memory of childhood, of home. People talk to you a great deal about your education, but some good, sacred memory, preserved from childhood, is perhaps the best education.”

1. In what ways does this quote stress the importance of ceremonies in our lives?
2. As important as ceremonies are, why is Confirmation more than “a nice ceremony”?
3. Imagine you are talking to someone who left the Catholic Church for a mega-church. How would you respond to this comment: “In my church we don’t have dead ritual. We have awesome music, inspiring video, and a great message from our pastor.”
4. Everett stated, “If we don’t understand on the day of Confirmation what is happening in the Rite, we are selling ourselves short.” Why are we selling ourselves short?

Scene 2: What is Liturgy?

St. Augustine called a sacrament “a visible sign of invisible grace.” As Catholics, signs and symbols help us explain and understand how God is acting in our lives. For example, the baptismal candle flame is a symbol of the life of the Blessed Trinity now present within us as a result of the sacrament. The Sacrament of Confirmation is a sign of the Holy Spirit, already present within us, being fanned into flame through an increase of gifts within us.

1. How would you explain this statement: “All symbols are signs, but not all signs are symbols.”?
2. Not too long ago the words “spiritual” and “religious” were understood to be essentially the same thing. Today, however, the phrase “spiritual but not religious” is used by those who believe in God but reject organized religion. What would you say in a conversation with a friend who says he is “spiritual but not religious”?
3. If a sacrament makes visible an invisible reality—meaning that there is something spiritually happening that we cannot see—why is it so important to receive sacraments as often as possible?

Scene 3: A Walkthrough of the Rite

In this segment, Everett explains the empowerment of the Holy Spirit within the Rite of Confirmation.

There are six questions asked when renewing your baptismal promises, and after each question you respond, “I do.” When it comes to your Confirmation, you should believe so strongly in these promises that you would be willing to stake your life on them.

- 1) Do you reject Satan?
- 2) And all his works?
- 3) And all his empty promises?
- 4) Do you believe in God, the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth?
- 5) Do you believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary, was crucified, died, and was buried, rose from the dead, and is now seated at the right hand of the Father?
- 6) Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting?

1. Let’s take a deeper look at the questions. How do we practically reject Satan, his works, and his empty promises in our daily lives?
2. Are there any faith issues or moral issues where you would have difficulty saying, “I believe this because I am a disciple of Jesus Christ!”?
3. Why is it significant to have a bishop, or his appointed representative, lay hands on your head?
4. Why is it significant that in Confirmation we are anointed with Chrism oil?

Scene 4: How to Be Receptive to the Holy Spirit

Members of the early Church stoked the fire of the Holy Spirit in their lives by doing four things: “They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers” (Acts 2:42).

1. Where are these four practices—study, fellowship, sacraments, and prayer—in the H.A.B.I.T.S. acronym that we use?
2. Which of the four practices do you think you are doing well, and which of the four would you like to improve upon?