

What does desire for Confirmation look like?

1319 A candidate for Confirmation who has attained the age of reason must profess the faith, be in the state of grace, have the intention of receiving the sacrament, and be *prepared to assume the role of disciple and witness to Christ, both within the ecclesial community and in temporal affairs.*

The last section can be seen through the actions of Acts 2:42 “They devoted themselves to the teaching of the apostles and to the communal life, to the breaking of the bread and to the prayers.” Therefore, desire can be determined by evaluating growth in these four areas.

1. Teaching of the apostles (study)
 - a. Is the candidate actively engaging in study of scripture and the life of Jesus?
This can be in or out of traditional religious education or theology classes.
 - b. Does the candidate demonstrate a knowledge of and love for what the Church teaches?
2. Communal Life (community)
 - a. Is the candidate engaged in parish life, the family, and the community?
 - b. If so, what parish or community ministry is he or she actively participating in on a regular basis?
3. Breaking of the Bread (sacraments)
 - a. Does the candidate seek attendance of Sunday Mass with active participation?
 - b. Does he or she regularly attend confession?
4. Prayers
 - a. Does the candidate have an active prayer life? Does he or she lead grace, pray over or for family members, or pray with scripture on a regular basis?
 - b. Is he or she open to trying new forms of prayer?

Because one’s faith is actively growing throughout all of life, it is unlikely that candidates will be proficient in all four areas. In fact, their desire in one area might fluctuate as another grows. It is important that parents and sponsors encourage candidates to continue building desire in all four areas throughout the inquiry and formation periods.

The quotations from the Catechism on the back of this page may help parents and sponsors convey both the importance and the effects of Confirmation to candidates.

History of Confirmation

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."⁹⁹

Paul VI, *Divinae consortium naturae*, 659; cf. *Acts* 8:15-17; 19:5-6; *Heb* 6:2

Effects of Confirmation

1303 From this fact, Confirmation brings an increase and deepening of baptismal grace:

- it roots us more deeply in the divine filiation which makes us cry, "Abba! Father!";¹¹⁷
- it unites us more firmly to Christ;
- it increases the gifts of the Holy Spirit in us;
- it renders our bond with the Church more perfect;¹¹⁸
- it gives us a special strength of the Holy Spirit to spread and defend the faith by word and action as true witnesses of Christ, to confess the name of Christ boldly, and never to be ashamed of the Cross:¹¹⁹

Recall then that you have received the spiritual seal, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of right judgment and courage, the spirit of knowledge and reverence, the spirit of holy fear in God's presence. Guard what you have received. God the Father has marked you with his sign; Christ the Lord has confirmed you and has placed his pledge, the Spirit, in your hearts.

117 *Rom* 8:15.; 118 Cf. *LG* 11.; 119 Cf. Council Of Florence (1439): DS 1319; *LG* 11; 12.

1304 Like Baptism which it completes, Confirmation is given only once, for it too imprints on the soul an *indelible spiritual mark*, the "character," which is the sign that Jesus Christ has marked a Christian with the seal of his Spirit by clothing him with power from on high so that he may be his witness.¹²¹

121 Cf. Council Of Trent (1547): DS 1609; *Lk* 24:48-49.

1305 This "character" perfects the common priesthood of the faithful, received in Baptism, and "the confirmed person receives the power to profess faith in Christ publicly and as it were officially (*quasi Ex officio*)."¹²²

122 St. Thomas Aquinas, *STh* III,72,5, *ad* 2.