

IS CATHOLIC CONFIRMATION NECESSARY FOR SALVATION? DOES CATHOLIC CONFIRMATION CONFER THE HOLY SPIRIT?

*A Biblical Study of The Catechism of the Catholic Church:
Bible Answers to the Most Frequently Asked Questions about Catholic Beliefs and Practices*
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Passages of *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* to Consider:

- **“the sacrament of Confirmation is necessary for the completion of baptismal grace” (CCC 1285)**
- “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” (CCC 1288)
- “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.” (CCC 1288)
- “The term confirmation suggests that this sacrament both confirms baptism and strengthens baptismal grace” (CCC 1289)
- “the effect of the sacrament of Confirmation is the **special outpouring of the Holy Spirit** at once granted to the apostles on the day of Pentecost” (CCC 1302)
- “Confirmation brings an increase and deepening of the baptismal grace” (CCC 1303)
- “Confirmation ... roots us more deeply in the divine filiation which makes us cry, ‘Abba! Father!’” (CCC 1303)
- **“Confirmation ... unites us more firmly to Christ” (CCC 1303)**
- **“Confirmation ... increases the gifts of the Holy Spirit” (CCC 1303)**
- **“Baptism which it completes” (CCC 1304)**
- “without Confirmation and Eucharist, Baptism is certainly valid and efficacious, but **Christian initiation remains incomplete**” (CCC 1306)
- “One should receive the sacrament of Penance in order to be cleansed for the gift of the Holy Spirit” (CCC 1310)
- “in danger of death children should be confirmed even if they have not yet attained the age of discretion” (CCC 1307)
- “If a Christian is in danger of death, any priest can give him Confirmation. Indeed the Church desires that none of her children, even the youngest, should depart this world without having been perfected by the Holy Spirit with the gift of Christ’s fullness.” (CCC 1314)
- **“Confirmation perfects Baptismal grace; it is the sacrament which gives the Holy Spirit” (CCC 1316)**

Scriptures to Consider:

- 1 Corinthians 12:13 “For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.” (ESV)
- 2 Corinthians 5:17 “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.” (ESV)
- Acts 8:14–17 “Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent to them Peter and John, [15] who came down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit, [16] for he had not yet fallen on any of them, but they had only been

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baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. [17] Then they laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit.” (ESV)

- Acts 8:18–24 “Now when Simon saw that the Spirit was given through the laying on of the apostles’ hands, he offered them money, [19] saying, ‘Give me this power also, so that anyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit.’ [20] But Peter said to him, ‘May your silver perish with you, because you thought you could obtain the gift of God with money! [21] You have neither part nor lot in this matter, for your heart is not right before God. [22] Repent, therefore, of this wickedness of yours, and pray to the Lord that, if possible, the intent of your heart may be forgiven you. [23] For I see that you are in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity.’ [24] And Simon answered, ‘Pray for me to the Lord, that nothing of what you have said may come upon me.’” (ESV)
- Acts 19:4–6 “And Paul said, ‘John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, Jesus.’ [5] On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. [6] And when Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they began speaking in tongues and prophesying.” (ESV)
- **Ephesians 1:13–14 “In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, [14] who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.” (ESV)**
- Romans 8:9 “You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him.” (ESV)
- **Romans 8:38–39 “For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, [39] nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (ESV)**
- John 3:5–8 “Jesus answered, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. [6] That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. [7] Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’ [8] The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.’” (ESV)
- 1 Corinthians 6:19 “Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God?” (ESV)

Questions to Consider:

- If someone does not go through their confirmation, is their baptism incomplete?
- **If someone does not go through confirmation, do they ever receive the Holy Spirit?**
- In Acts 8:14-17 we read a description where the people of Samaria had heard and received the word of God and been baptized in the name of Jesus. The Holy Spirit doesn’t come until Peter and John arrive and lay hands on the believers. In this one unique situation, the Holy Spirit didn’t arrive until the apostles did. Why do you think that was so?
- Read Acts 8:18-24 to see what happens next. Could it be that in this one unique situation the Lord held back His Spirit to protect the people from the error of Simon the Magician? That the presence of the apostles was to protect the unity of the early church in explaining more fully the power of God’s Spirit? How is the “intent of the heart” connected with saving faith in Jesus?
- In Acts 19:1-7 at Ephesus we read of people who had not yet received the Holy Spirit. We Apollos and those dozen men in Ephesus following the baptism of John or a saving belief in the name of Jesus? What happened when they finally believed in Jesus (Acts 19:5-6)?
- When does someone receive the Holy Spirit according to the Bible? (1 Cor 12:13 & Eph 1:13-14)
- Is it possible to be a Christian and not have the Holy Spirit already? (Romans 8:9)
- Without confirmation are we less entitled to call God our Father?
- Without confirmation are we less united to Christ? What does Romans 8:38–39 say?

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- Without confirmation do Christians have the Holy Spirit? Do they have less gifts of the Holy Spirit?
- **Are Christians incomplete without Catholic Confirmation?**
- Why would children or adults in danger of death be rushed into Confirmation?
- What does it mean to be “perfected by the Holy Spirit with the gift of Christ’s fullness”?
- Where does the Bible describe God’s grace as needing to be “perfected”?