

Archdiocese of Baltimore Framework for Confirmation Preparation

The elements of this framework remain the same regardless of the age of preparation, although the implementation will vary according to the age group(s) participating in preparation.

Guiding Documents: 2022 Guidelines for Confirmation (particularly pages 6-8); Code of Canon Law and the Archdiocesan Policy for implementation on the local level; CCC; LBV 2.0; the NDC; the 2020 *Directory for Catechesis*, and Archbishop Lori's 2022 *Pastoral Note on Faith Formation*

Key catechetical components:

1. Foundational Nature of the Sacrament of Baptism: Establish understanding of the Sacraments of Initiation, with emphasis on the relationship between Baptism & Confirmation – Confirmation increases & deepens the grace of Baptism, imprinting an indelible character on the soul.
2. Theology of the Sacrament of Confirmation: Communicate that Confirmation strengthens the baptismal conferral of the Holy Spirit on those confirmed, in order to:
 - incorporate them more firmly in Christ
 - strengthen their bond with the Church
 - associate them more closely with the Church's mission (see point 5 below)
 - increase in them the gifts of the Holy spirit (see point 4 below)
 - help them to bear witness to the Christian faith in words & deeds (see point 5 below)
3. The Holy Spirit: Explain the identity and role of the Holy Spirit in daily life, including Gifts & Fruits
4. The Rite [Order] of Confirmation: Ensure understanding of the bishop as the ordinary minister of the Sacrament of Confirmation and the meaning of the Rite's basic symbols: the imposition of hands, the anointing with Sacred Chrism, and the words of the sacramental formula.
5. Mission & Mystagogy (missionary discipleship): Reiterate the theology of the Sacrament of Confirmation, applying it explicitly to the post-Confirmation lives of the candidates, with a special emphasis on mission and witness alluded to above.

Format: Maximum of 6-8 core immediate preparation sessions¹

Methodological Priorities:

- Emphasize proclaiming the kerygma early & often, to the candidates & those who accompany them
- Prioritize family participation and sponsor involvement in appropriate ways
- Respond to the developmental needs of those preparing, with a clear preference for experiential learning and "side-by-side" moments of encounter shared by parents & candidates
- Assess and cultivate readiness for the Sacrament in a relational, accompaniment style (vs. a programmatic, attendance-based, checklist-based, or testing-based model)
- Properly situate immediate preparation within an "ecosystem" of robust, ongoing formation² following the reception of the sacrament, of a distinctly kerygmatic, mystagogical character

¹ In certain cases, it may be prudent to add an additional or extended session as necessary (e.g., a session on the role of the sponsor, which has been identified as a particular need in some Hispanic contexts)

² It remains the norm that this ongoing formation must be distinct from immediate preparation, but by no means is it permitted, therefore, to be less intentional than immediate preparation. In fact, the methodological priorities outlined above are broad principles that apply to formation writ large.