

Gift

SESSION FOR CONFIRMATION PREPARATION

This session forms part of our Confirmation Retreat Day that we can run in your Parish. To book please email youth@dioceseofshrewsbury.org

Aims and objectives:

- For Confirmandi to have a greater knowledge of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit and to be able to recognise situations in their lives where the Gifts of the Holy Spirit are needed.
- For Confirmandi to reflect on their own blessings and gifts given by the Lord.

Time	Activity	Resources needed
	Opening Prayer	
0-5 mins	Icebreaker	
5-15 mins	Introduction to session	Large scripture card
15-25 mins	Gifts of the Holy Spirit – mix and match	Envelope collection of Gifts of the Holy Spirit and explanations Sweets
25-35 mins	Opening the gifts	Large scripture card
35-45 mins	Using the gifts	Paper and pens Clipboards
45-60 mins	Prayer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meditation - Action 	Tear off Gifts of the Holy Spirit sheets Calming music Music player Holy Spirit prayer cards

Opening prayer

Short opening prayer to begin.

Icebreaker

Discuss in pairs/small groups:

What is the best gift you've ever received?

Short time of feedback

5 minutes

Intro to session

Leader to introduce some questions and thoughts for the session.

- What is a gift?
- Why do we give gifts?

The definition of a gift as a noun is twofold:

- 1) a thing given willingly to someone without payment; a present.
- 2) natural ability or talent

10 minutes

It is also a verb... a doing word... you gift something. It is an action. In the story of Pentecost we see that lived out. We hear about the action of the gift...in the form of wind and fire. It's important to say that gifts need to be opened. Without opening a gift you cannot use it. It's not a half-

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hearted thing either, you're either in or out. There's no point in a half opened gift! It just becomes a waste.

We know that God is a giver of gifts. He **LOVES** to give! In the letter of St John we hear "Think of the love the Lord has **lavished** on us". That is what God does, He *lavishes* gifts on us. When we think of Jesus on earth, He didn't do things by halves. When he turned water into wine there was enough Six stone jars – each would have held at least about 100 litres of liquid – that's 50 full 2 litre coke bottles in each jar. Putting everything together there would've been about 700 litres of wine! And again at the Feeding of Five Thousand, He started with two loaves and five fish, fed five thousand men (only the men were counted but there would've been women and children present too) and finished with twelve baskets left over. What can we learn from this? We can learn that when it comes to Jesus' promises we can **EXPECT** massive things.

Let's take a look at one of His promises that relates to you and your Confirmation.

In the Gospel of John;

"Jesus said; if you love me, keep my commands. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever— **the Spirit of truth**.

The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you.¹

(read at least twice)

So we are promised an **advocate**, an advocate is someone who supports you. Another word that can be used is **champion**. When we think about a champion we think of strength, courage, protection, a defender, a guide and role model. So we are promised an advocate, a champion - we are promised the Holy Spirit. So all of those words we can use to describe a champion can be used to also describe the Holy Spirit. We know God is a giver of gifts; Jesus too is a giver of gifts, so as part of the Trinity the Holy Spirit too is a giver of gifts.

Gifts of the Holy Spirit quiz - Mix and match

10 minutes

Allow each small group to create a buzzer noise. Invite a champion from each small group to take part in the Gifts of the Holy Spirit quiz. Each of them will be given an envelope with the gifts of the Holy Spirit and an explanation of each gift. In their teams they have to match up the correct Gift to its definition. The fastest team will win eternal glory (and probably some sweets)

1. Wisdom: The ability to discern what is true, right, and lasting. Wisdom enables us to see life from God's perspective. It helps you to establish the right priorities in your life, and leads you to think and act in mature ways.

2. Understanding: Allows you to look beyond the shallowness of the world and see the lasting truth in every situation, by recognizing how God is working in our lives.

3. Right judgement: The right judgment that allows us to see what is right and what is wrong, and the prudence to act accordingly.

4. Courage: The ability to find strength of will to do what you know you should, even if that means personal loss or suffering.

5. Knowledge: The ability to see things from a faith viewpoint. In particular, to know what God is asking of you and your purpose.

6. Reverence: A loyalty to God that inspires in us to be generous with our love and to put God above all other things. This is the gift that allows you to love and worship God as he deserves to be loved and worshipped.

7. Wonder and awe: Helps us to grasp God's greatness and our dependence on him. As a result, we are filled with enormous respect for God and we dread above all offending him or being separated from him.

Opening the gifts

10 minutes

Use these next ten minutes to de-brief all of the gifts above. But start with some overview first.

Q: Where do we hear about the Gifts of the Holy Spirit?

A: From the Book of Isaiah 11:2-3

The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him—
the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding,
the Spirit of counsel and of might,
the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the Lord—
and he will delight in the fear of the Lord.
He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes,
or decide by what he hears with his ears;

Fear of the Lord is another way to describe Wonder and Awe and reverence.

Q: At Confirmation do we suddenly just receive these gifts?

A: In **baptism** the Spirit is poured into our hearts so that we are able to connect to a sense of God's presence and action in our lives. During your Confirmation the Bishop will pray that you are **FILLED** with the gifts.

Q: So why are we Confirmed?

A: At confirmation **YOU ARE** invited to remember that Baptism calls us to live like Jesus. At Confirmation we receive the Holy Spirit, afresh, to give us strength to carry out our **mission** as Christians to spread God's word and message of love and justice. These gifts will help you become the best version of yourself and live the life God created you to live.

Allow the young people to select a particular gift and then ask another young person to read out the explanation. After each explanation you may want to repeat a key aspect.

Using the gifts

10 minutes

In their smaller groups give out some paper and pens, ask the group to pick one of the Gifts. Try and ensure that all of the gifts are covered.

Ask the young people to think of some real life scenarios where the particular gift is needed and to write them down. Have the group pick one of these and then devise a scenario sketch to use during feedback.

Remind groups that every member should be involved in some way.

Leading into prayer - MEDITATION

15 minutes

Put on some instrumental music. Pass out the Prayer action sheets to each group. Ask the young people to find a position that is comfortable. If needed use some calming techniques. Ask the young people to close their eyes and relax.

Guided Meditation on Pentecost - Based on the Acts of the Apostles 2:1-9

Still your body... put your feet firmly on the floor...place your hands on your lap... as you listen to the music feel your breath coming in and out... and in... and out...and in...and out...and in and out...Free your mind of all thoughts and distractions...put aside those thoughts which may be worrying you... imagine you are in the upper room with the disciples ... imagine how this place looks...what scents are you getting...what are you hearing...while you sit there... ..who else is there with you ...are they... sad...inadequate...frightened... worried for the future and what will become of them... do they feel that they have let Jesus down... listen to what the people around you are saying... how are you feeling as you sit there... then you hear a loud noise...like a strong wind blowing through the whole house... you are now very afraid... the wind stops... and there is a great sense of calm... the others are looking around in wonder... wondering at what will happen next... then you feel the presence of the spirit on you... and in you...how do you feel...energised...full of hope... full of awe for the might of God...you are filled with renewed vigour... you now have the courage to be a true witness of the message which Jesus gave us...how are you going to be a true witness.... What can you do each day to bring the good news to those around you...how can you be an embodiment of the love of God... bit by bit the room empties out... finally you are there on your own... with your own thoughts...Again feel your breath coming in....and out... and in....and out...and in... and out... feel yourself coming back into the presence of the room that you are in...listen to the sounds in the room around you... listen the sounds outside... and when you are ready....open your eyes....

Prayer action

We all need the different gifts at different times. As a response to this time of prayer invite the young people to think about which of the gifts they feel they need the most. Respectfully (with music still playing) ask them to select which of the gifts they need and to tear that off the reflection sheets. These can be taken home with them.

Final prayer

(on prayer cards – to be kept by SYMT)

Come Holy Spirit

Fill the hearts of Your faithful

Enkindle in them the fire of Your love

Send forth Your Spirit and they shall be created

And You shall renew the race of the earth.

Amen.

Let us pray

O God, Who taught the hearts of the faithful by the light of the Holy Spirit,

Grant that, by the gift of the same Spirit, we may be always wise,

And ever rejoice in His consolation.

Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.