

Biblical Roots Of The Sacrament Of Confirmation

Confirmation—Is The Perpetuation And Fulfillment Of Pentecost



The Blessed Virgin Mary and the Apostles in The Upper Room on Pentecost¹

ACTS 2:1-4 1 When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. 2 And suddenly a sound came from heaven like the rush of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. 3 And there appeared to them tongues as of fire, distributed and resting on each one of them. 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Welcome to this study on the topic of a Scriptural analysis of the Sacrament of Confirmation and Pentecost. Confirmation is your “Personal Pentecost!”

As the Mass perpetuates Jesus’ Sacrifice on Calvary, so too, Confirmation perpetuates the graces of Pentecost.

Let’s open in prayer.

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of Your faithful;
And enkindle in them the fire of Your love.
Send forth Your Spirit 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 the faithful,
grant that by the gift of the same Spirit, we may always be truly wise and ever rejoice
in His consolation, through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

Hail Mary, Full of grace the Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou amongst women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

¹ Art work and artist unknown to me.

NOTES²

² All Bible passages in this study will be from the Revised Standard Edition, Catholic Edition unless otherwise stated. Catechism quotes are from the Catechism of the Catholic Church ("CCC") and/or the Roman Catechism. For these documents as well as historical statements, underlining, bold, and ALL CAPITAL type will be mine unless otherwise stated.

Introduction

- We'll begin by looking at a working definition of what Confirmation is and is not.
- We will follow that up with some very basic catechesis on the Sacrament of Confirmation, and see Confirmation as our "Personal Pentecost".
- Since Confirmation is our "Personal Pentecost", we will need to go to the Old Testament to learn about Pentecost and see it was a two-fold solemn remembrance of the **"Giving of the Law" from God to man** and the **"Giving of the First Fruits" from man to God**.
- We will see that Pentecost in its Old Covenant form, has been around since the days of Moses.
- At this point in the study, we will forward to the extreme fear the Apostles had PRE-Pentecost.
- Then we will study the first Christian Pentecost in the Book of Acts and see how the Apostles were immediately strengthened, courageous and transformed.
- We will also see Confirmation "lived out" in a New Covenant sense, the Holy Spirit now helping Christians bring in **Jews**, then **Samaritans**, then **Gentiles** into Covenant union with God.
- We will then close with any final discussion and a word of prayer.

Confirmation—Definition

Confirmation is the perpetuation or continuation of the graces of the original Christian Pentecost that we see in the Book of Acts. . . . but NOT the MANIFESTATIONS of that Pentecost (although don't put that past the Holy Spirit either as we will later see in Acts 10).

- **Confirmation = Your Personal Christian Pentecost**

CCC 1302 It is evident from its celebration that the effect of the sacrament of Confirmation is the special outpouring of the Holy Spirit as once granted to the apostles on the day of Pentecost.

The Bishop is the "ordinary minister" of the Sacrament of Confirmation.

A ministerial priest MAY act as the "extraordinary minister" of the Sacrament, but even then, the priest NEEDS oil that has been consecrated (consecrated = a special holy dedication) by a bishop.

Confirmation has a permanent effect on your soul.

CCC 1121 The three sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders confer, in addition to grace, a sacramental *character* or "seal" by which the Christian shares in Christ's priesthood and is made a member of the Church according to different states and functions. This configuration to Christ and to the Church, brought about by the Spirit, **is indelible,⁴⁰ it remains for ever in the Christian** as a positive disposition for grace, a promise and guarantee of divine protection, and as a vocation to divine worship and to the service of the Church. **Therefore these sacraments can never be repeated.**

Q: What is the purpose of Confirmation? Why be Confirmed?

A: To "increase," "deepen," and "perfect" many of the fruits and gifts you were given at Baptism. This helps you to be a soldier for Christ and ready to take-on harassment, persecution, and if necessary,

martyrdom in spreading the Gospel because of your love for Jesus Christ. These gifts help other people around you too by your life example AND your evangelical witness and sharing of Jesus Christ.

CCC 1303a 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

CCC 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

CCC 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

Who can receive this Sacrament?

CCC 1310 **To receive Confirmation one must be in a state of grace.** One should receive the sacrament of Penance in order to be cleansed for the gift of the Holy Spirit. More intense prayer should prepare one to receive the strength and graces of the Holy Spirit with docility and readiness to act. [126]

CCC 1306 **Every baptized person not yet confirmed can and should receive the sacrament of Confirmation.**¹²³ Since Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist form a unity, it follows that "the faithful are obliged to receive this sacrament at the appropriate time,"¹²⁴ for without Confirmation and Eucharist, Baptism is certainly valid and efficacious, but Christian initiation remains incomplete.

In the Catholic Church in America, we almost all belong to the "Latin Rite". But worldwide, we have many (twenty three³) Eastern Catholic (not the Eastern Orthodoxies but Catholic) Liturgical Rites too, all of them in full communion with the Church including the Syro-Malabar Church, the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, the Maronite Church, etc.

In the Eastern Rites children are typically Eucharisted (given first communion) and Confirmed as **infants**.

In the Latin Rite we wait until the age of reason for first Communion and Confirmation but a notable EXCEPTION to this is if an infant is sick and in danger of death. In those cases, the infants in the Latin Rite should be given Confirmation (they should be fully initiated into the Church before death).

³ <https://media.ascensionpress.com/2019/01/21the-other-23-catholic-churches-and-why-they-exist/>

CCC 1307 The Latin tradition gives "the age of discretion" as the reference point for receiving Confirmation. **But in danger of death children should be confirmed even if they have not yet attained the age of discretion.** [123]

CCC 1320a, c, e The essential rite of Confirmation is **anointing the forehead of the baptized with sacred chrism** (in the East other sense-organs as well), **together with the laying on of the minister's hand and the words: . . . (Be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit.)** in the Roman rite, or: . . . (the seal of the gift of the Holy Spirit) in the Byzantine rite.

Latin Rite Essentials To Confirmation

- **Anointing the forehead of the baptized with sacred oil (chrism)**
- **Together with the laying on of the minister's hand**
- **"Be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit"**

Q: Does Confirmation merely mean I am "Confirming my belief?"

A: No. Confirmation confers actual graces as we have seen. It is God's action in the "Confirmand".

CATECHISM OF THE COUNCIL OF TRENT⁴ (From the 1500's) For the word Confirmation **IS NOT** derived, **as some . . . have pretended**, from the circumstance that persons baptised . . . were . . . **brought to the Bishop, in order to confirm their faith in Christ**, which they had embraced. . . . **Of such a practice no reliable testimony can be adduced.**

On the contrary, the name has been derived from the fact that by virtue of this Sacrament **God confirms in us** the work He commenced in Baptism, leading us to the perfection of solid Christian virtue."

Q: When I was Baptized I received the Holy Trinity in me in a special way. What more could I lack?

A: Confirmation makes available to us many new graces that are within the Trinitarian life that we have at Baptism, **but at this point we could not access**, without this special Sacrament. In Baptism you get many "presents" under the proverbial tree. Many of these gifts are opened for you immediately. But some gifts/graces, the Holy Spirit chooses to "open-up" later through Confirmation.

The Apostles, who ALSO had the Trinitarian life within them and **some power**, could have asked the same question. "Would could I lack?" And if they would have asked that, Jesus could have answered...

ACTS 1:8 a,c 8 But **you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you**; and you shall be my **witnesses** (Greek = "martus") . . . to the end of the earth."

(See Table 1 to see the 12 Fruits of the Holy Spirit and Table 2 on the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit associated with confirmation.)

⁴ **The Catechism of the Council of Trent** (also called "**The Roman Catechism**") is a "first rank" source for catechesis.

CCC 9a "The ministry of catechesis draws ever fresh energy from the councils. The Council of Trent is a noteworthy example of this. It gave catechesis priority in its constitutions and decrees. It lies at the origin of the *Roman Catechism*, which is also known by the name of that council and which is a work of the first rank as a summary of Christian teaching. . . ." ¹² The Council of Trent initiated a remarkable organization of the Church's catechesis . . .

Pentecost In The Old Testament

Sometimes we tend to think of “Pentecost” as ONLY the event that took place in Acts 2. But did you know that “Pentecost” has been around since the time of Moses in the Old Testament?

Old Testament Pentecost has several other names including the “Feast of Harvest”, “Feast of Weeks”, “The Day of First Fruits,” “Shavuot,” “Bikkurim”, and others.

Q: Why call it “Pentecost”? **A:** Since Shavuot occurs 50 days after Passover, Greek-speaking or Hellenistic Jews gave it the name “Pentecost” (πεντηκοστή, “fiftieth day”).⁵

Old Testament Pentecost—A Two-Fold Solemn Remembrance

In the Old Testament, Pentecost was a two-fold solemn remembrance.

One, it had to do with recalling the “Giving of the Law at Mount Sinai” (Entering into the Covenant God made with Moses). And two; it had to do with offering God your agricultural harvest “First Fruits”.

Let's look at a brief excerpt from “myjewishlearning.com” here on these two aspects.

By associating an **ancient holiday of the grain harvest** with the exodus from Egypt, Jewish tradition has imbued Shavuot with religious significance derived from the foundational event in Jewish historical consciousness. In the specific case of Shavuot, this takes the form of the **entering into a covenant or formal agreement between God and Israel at Mount Sinai**.⁶ (Emphasis mine.)

Also from myjewishlearning⁷ . . .

Shavuot combines two major religious observances. First is the grain harvest of the early summer. Second is the giving of the Torah on Mount Sinai seven weeks after the exodus from Egypt.

First Fruits

The Israelites gave their First Fruits to God by giving them to God as a burnt offering and a portion to eat and drink, to the Levitical priests. This explicitly included **grain, wine, and oil**! (Prefiguring the Eucharist and anointing in Confirmation, etc.). We learn from Leviticus; they also gave **lambs** (Leviticus 23:14-18)

Let's go to Numbers 18⁸ and see some of this . . .

NUMBERS 18:11a, 12 11 This also is yours, the offering of their gift,. . . 12 **All the best of the oil, and all the best of the wine and of the grain, the first fruits** of what they give to the LORD, I give to you.

⁵ <https://religion.fandom.com/wiki/Shavuot>

⁶ <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/shavuot-101/>

⁷ <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/shavuot-101/>

⁸ Leviticus 23:14-18 emphasizes the grain (**bread**) and the **lambs** offered as **First Fruits** (prefiguring THE LAMB of God offered as THE sacrifice).

The Giving Of The Law At Mount Sinai

In the “Giving of The Law”, there were positives (from God), and negatives (from the people) too.

Recall God, through Moses, led the Israelites out of Egypt (steeped in superstitious pagan worship) to worship Him and Covenant with them. Almost immediately they felt drawn back to Egypt and rebelled.

EXODUS 24:6-8 6 And Moses took half of the blood and put it in basins, and half of the blood he threw against the altar. 7 Then he took the book of the covenant, and read it in the hearing of the people; and they said, "All that the LORD has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient." 8 **And Moses took the blood and threw it upon the people, and said, "Behold the blood of the covenant which the LORD has made with you in accordance with all these words."**

The Egyptians practiced animal worship (among other things). Before Moses went up on Sinai, he took and **KILLED one of the Egyptian gods**, oxen (**calves**—Hebrews 9:19), and sprinkled the blood of this Egyptian false god upon the people of Israel with . . . a hyssop branch (Hebrews 9:19) for this Covenanting.

This also served as a reminder of the FALSE nature of these false gods. But as Dr. Scott Hahn has said: “Moses can take the Israelites out of Egypt, but he can’t take “the Egypt” out of the Israelites⁹.”

You know the story. Moses went up on Mount Sinai to get the Law from God. While up there he fasted forty days and forty nights (eventually twice). God gave him the Ten Commandments on stone tablets.

Meanwhile: **The Israelites blasphemously “quasi-resurrected” the false god that Moses just killed** and idol worship (demons 1st Cor. 10:20) ensued with all that goes with it (“rose up to play”, “dancing”, and “breaking loose”) even enabled and encouraged by the “proto-church’s” top hierarchy (Aaron himself¹⁰)!

EXODUS 32:1, 6 1 When the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain, the people gathered themselves together to Aaron, and said to him, "Up, **make us gods**, who shall go before us; as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him." . . . 6 And they rose up early on the morrow, and **offered burnt offerings** and brought peace offerings; **and the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.**

God was angered and told Moses up on the Mountain to go down to **MY people??** No!

EXODUS 32:7 7 And the LORD said to Moses, "**Go down; for YOUR people**, whom you brought up out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves;

Moses came down from the Mountain and was also angered . . .

EXODUS 32:19-20, 25 19 And as soon as he came near the camp and **saw the calf and the dancing**, **Moses' anger burned hot, and he threw the tables out of his hands and broke them at the foot of the mountain.** 20 And he took the calf which they had made, and burnt it with fire, and **ground it to powder, and scattered it upon the water, and made the people of Israel drink it.** . . . 25 And when Moses saw that **the people had broken loose** (for **Aaron** had let them **break loose**, to their shame among their enemies) . . .

⁹ Only God could remove “the reproach of Egypt”. The lack of circumcision of the Israelites was a mere natural reflection of their hearts (see Joshua 5:1-9). **JOSHUA 5:9a** 9 And the LORD said to Joshua, "**This day I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you.**"

¹⁰ See Exodus 32:1-6. Note Moses did not kill God’s anointed (Aaron) here despite his guilt. See Matthew 13:24-30 for God’s vindication.

Moses was livid that the same people who recently were miraculously taken across the Red Sea were so quick to fall back to the demon-worshipping pagan desires from their Egyptian lands that they came out of **only** physically. Which leads us to a very mysterious passage concerning this great fall of Israel . . .

EXODUS 32:26-29 26 then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, "**Who is on the LORD's side? Come to me.**" **And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together to him.** 27 And he said to them, "Thus says the LORD God of Israel, 'Put every man his sword on his side, and go to and fro from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbor.'" 28 And **the sons of Levi did according to the word of Moses;** and **there fell of the people that day about three thousand men.** 29 And Moses said, "**Today you have ordained yourselves for the service of the LORD,** each one at the cost of his son and of his brother, that he may bestow a blessing upon you this day."

This was the beginning of the Levitical priesthood. Also remember this fact: . . . "there fell of the people that day **about three thousand men.**" Remember this "about three thousand men" number as we will come back to it in the Book of Acts at the first Christian Pentecost. But for now, let's "fast-forward" to the time where Jesus was betrayed and died on the Cross.

Jesus Dies On The Cross—And Now The Apostles Are Even MORE Afraid

Let's fast forward to the night Jesus was betrayed the Apostles pledged fearlessness and fidelity to Jesus. (Mt. 26:31-35)

MATTHEW 26:31a, 35b 31 Then Jesus said to them, "**You will all fall away** because of me this night; . . . 35 Peter said to him, "Even if I must die with you, **I will not deny you.**" **And so said all the disciples.**

But they did not yet have the power of the Holy Spirit that God was to gift them with. The Apostles would get that power later at the first Christian Pentecost.

The original fall took place in a **garden** with Adam and Eve. Now the night Jesus was betrayed the Apostles ALL abandoned Jesus; first some not praying with Him in the **garden** of Gethsemane (for want of sleep) AND eventually ALL running away after Jesus' enemies—Judas and his accomplices—arrived . . .

MARK 14:50 50 And **they ALL forsook him, and fled.**

And even AFTER Jesus died and ROSE, the Apostles were still scared stiff (they NEED supernatural courage if they are going to evangelize the world. They were "glad", but not "courageous".) . . .

JOHN 20:19-20 19 On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, **the doors being shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews,** Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." 20 When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples were **glad** when they saw the Lord.

Remember what Jesus warned them before He was Crucified.

LUKE 22:31-32 31 "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you (Gk. here = "you all"), that he might sift you like wheat, 32 but I have prayed for you (Greek = "you" singular to Simon) that your faith may not fail; and when you have turned again, strengthen your brethren."

So after the Resurrection, but BEFORE Pentecost, the Apostles are up in Galilee. The Apostles undoubtedly have this in the back of their minds and want SOME protection. St. Peter says he is going fishing. **What do you think the other Apostles (who are frightened also) are going to do?**

JOHN 21:3a 3 Simon Peter said to them, "**I am going fishing.**" They said to him, "**We will go with you.**"

After The Resurrection, But Before Pentecost Jesus Tells The Apostles That He, Jesus Himself, Will Send Them The Holy Spirit ("I Send The Promise Of My Father Upon You")

Jesus will "send the promise". He sends POWER from on High—The Holy Spirit—in a special way. By the way, God **the Father ALSO sends that** promise (that's what "another Counselor" is—the Holy Spirit) also. See John 14:26-27.¹¹ We as Catholic Christians believe BOTH sets of verses. "The Holy Spirit proceeds from both the Father AND the Son¹²."

When this occurs the Apostles will receive power Jesus reveals to them in Luke 24 and Acts 1¹³ . . .

LUKE 24:47b-49 . . . repentance and forgiveness of sins should be **preached in his name to all nations**, beginning from Jerusalem. 48 You are witnesses (Gk = "martus") of these things. 49 And behold, **I SEND the promise of my Father upon you;** but stay in the city, **until you are clothed with power from on high.**"

In this passage in Luke 24, Jesus is referring to Pentecost AND the Sacrament of Confirmation at least in part. We KNOW this as CCC 1304 references this passage in the context of Pentecost and Confirmation.

CCC 1304 a, c Like Baptism which it completes, **Confirmation** is given only once, . . . 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 (My addition: Footnote 121 here cites several things including Luke 24:48-49)

The Ascension of Jesus into Heaven took place forty days after Passover (see Luke 24:50-51).

The Apostles were told to remain in Jerusalem. That meant they were not yet to go out to the known world to share Christ. . . until they received this POWER Jesus was sending them¹⁴. This didn't mean they couldn't leave town. After all, the Angel from Heaven (Mt 28:7) instructed the Apostles (via the women) to go to Galilee to see Jesus too (and Jesus Himself said the same thing in Matthew 28:10).

¹¹ **JOHN 14:26-27** 26 But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom **the Father will send** in my name, he will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you. 27 Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, **neither let them be afraid.**

¹² Excerpt from the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed.

¹³ **ACTS 1:5b, 8** before many days you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit." . . . 8 But **you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you;** and you shall be my **witnesses** (Greek = "martus") in **Jerusalem and in all Judea** and **Samaria** and **to the end of the earth.**"

¹⁴ You can deduce this from believing Matthew 28 AND Luke 24.

When Empowered, the Apostles will go out to ALL the world to bring people into Christ

- To the Jews in Jerusalem and Judea
- To the spiritual “half-breeds” in Samaria (The Samaritans)
- And to the pagans or “the Nations” or “goyim” or “cattle” (“to the end of the earth”)

ACTS 1:8 8 But **you shall receive power** when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my **witnesses** (Greek root = “**martus**” – think “**martyr**”) **in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth.**"

After the Ascension of Jesus, there will be a nine-day prayer (and presumably fasting) period of preparation. Nine Days of intense spiritual preparation (“**novena**”), and on the tenth-day, conclusion¹⁵.

After the Ascension, the Apostles returned from Mount Olivet to the Upper Room in Jerusalem. We find out the Blessed Virgin Mary was there (Acts 1:14) and the Apostles and others, about 120 of the “brothers” or “brethren” (Remember. These 120 brethren, are some of the same people who were called Jesus’ “brothers”¹⁶).

ACTS 1:12a, 13b, 14-15 12 Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, . . . they went up to the upper room, where they were staying, Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip . . . 14 All these with one accord devoted themselves to prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers. 15 In those days Peter stood up among **the brethren** (the company of persons was **in all about a hundred and twenty**)

The First Christian Pentecost Event

ACTS 2:1-4 1 When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. 2 And suddenly a sound came from heaven like the rush of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. 3 And there appeared to them tongues as of fire, distributed and resting on each one of them. 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

At this point the Apostles were now fearless, transformed, and took to the crowded streets of Jerusalem to share Jesus Christ with many other Jews who were in town for the feast day of Pentecost.

ACTS 2:5-6, 12 5 Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven.

This surprised these people from many other countries who could all hear and understand the Apostles in their own tongue/language (Acts 2:6, 12)!

The Apostles reminded their hearers this time period (and there will be more to come) was prophesied by the Prophet Joel (Acts 2:16-20 and Joel 2:28-32). Then he goes on to say this fulfills King David’s prophecy too . . .

¹⁵ The “tenth-day” plus the forty days leading up to the Ascension, is FIFTY-DAYS total. That’s a reflection of where we get Pentecost (pent = five or fifty) as we saw earlier from the Greek speaking Jews.

¹⁶ It would be ridiculous to pretend that these 120 “brothers” are all biological children of the Blessed Virgin Mary. As we will see in our Perpetual Virginity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Bible study, NONE of them are Mary’s biological children.

ACTS 2:25a, 30-32 25 For David . . . 30 Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would set one of his descendants upon his throne, 31 he foresaw and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption. 32 **This Jesus God raised up, and of that we all are witnesses.**

Then after more bold preaching, St. Peter convicts them for crucifying Jesus

ACTS 2:36-37 36 Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly that God has made him both Lord and Christ, **this Jesus whom you crucified.**" 37 Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do?"

The hearers want to know the remedy for themselves and St. Peter gives them the cure. The Promise of the New Covenant, the Holy Spirit, which they receive in Baptism and again in a deeper way in Confirmation (which completes your one Baptism –see CCC 1288 and 1304).

Here is the remedy (and notice "The Promise" of the Holy Spirit is for them AND for their children!)

ACTS 2:38-40 38 And Peter said to them, "Repent, and **be baptized** every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive **the gift of the Holy Spirit.** 39 **For the promise is to you and to your children** and to all that are far off, every one whom the Lord our God calls to him." 40 And he testified with many other words and exhorted them, saying, "Save yourselves from this crooked generation."

Now remember back at Pentecost on Mount Sinai how many were killed that day.

"About three thousand" (Ex 32:28). In the fulfilling of Pentecost, how many people would you EXPECT to have new LIFE in the Holy Spirit and in the "breaking of the bread" (Mass)? Let's read on . . .

ACTS 2:41-42 41 So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day **about three thousand souls.** 42 And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to **the breaking of bread and the prayers.**

This is NOT mere coincidence! (There are other clues to Pentecost fulfillment too. i.e. see Numbers 11:25-29 for Old Covenant gifts prefiguring charismatic New Covenant gifts.)

So we see fulfilling of the first mandate, the sharing of Jesus with the Jews.

And the Lord multiplied their efforts. We see Christian communities (and perhaps even monasteries and convents) being formed (this is voluntary charity, not government-imposed Marxism¹⁷). . . .

ACTS 2:43b, 46-47 43b . . . many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. . . 46 And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they partook of food with glad and generous hearts, 47 praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.

¹⁷ Marxism would be: **NOT ACTS 2:45** 45 and the GOVERNMENT TOOK their possessions and goods and re-distributed them to all (taking off a great share of these belongings for THEMSELVES for those IN POWER).

As we go on, we will see the Sanhedrin capture St. Peter and put him on trial. How do Peter and John react? Frightened? Scared? Ready to deny Jesus? No! St. Peter now puts the Sanhedrin on trial!

ACTS 4:8-12 8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders, 9 if we are being examined today concerning a good deed done to a cripple, by what means this man has been healed, 10 be it known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, **whom you crucified**, whom God raised from the dead, by him this man is standing before you well. 11 This is the stone which was rejected by you builders, but which has become the head of the corner. 12 And **there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.**"

The Jewish leaders (the Sanhedrin) didn't know what to do. The healing miracle was obvious to all. The Sanhedrin ordered the Apostles NOT to teach/preach Jesus (Acts 4:18-21) which they rightly ignored.

Later in Acts 5 (vs. 27-33) "Peter and the Apostles" got dragged in front of the Sanhedrin again and put on trial again. Peter refuses their orders saying "We must obey God rather than men." The revered Rabbi Gamaliel urged his fellow Sanhedrin members to let them go¹⁸ which they did after a beating.

In Acts 7 St. Stephen was martyred ("witnesses") by the Jews after courageously putting them on trial.

Acts 8—The Samaritans Now Come Into Christianity

Recall earlier in the study we saw Jesus telling the Apostles they will go to Jerusalem and all Judea to share Jesus Christ. And then Samaria. And then to the Gentiles ("the end of the earth")

ACTS 1:8 8 But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my **witnesses** (Greek root = "**martus**" – think "**martyr**") **in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the end of the earth.**"

By Acts 8 Samaritans were being brought into Christianity (the New Covenant) by Baptism and a persecution against the Christians was underway by the Jews (the Jewish leadership).

ACTS 8:1 1 And Saul was consenting to his death.
And on that day **a great persecution arose against the church in Jerusalem; and they were all scattered throughout the region of Judea and Samaria**, except the apostles.

But the Samaritan Christians have not yet been Confirmed. So what do the Apostles at Jerusalem do? Send Bishops St. Peter and St. John to **Confirm them**.

ACTS 8:14-17 14 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 **it had not yet fallen on any of them**, but they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.
17 Then they laid their hands on them and they received the Holy Spirit.

¹⁸ **ACTS 5:34-35, 39-42** 34 But a Pharisee in the council named Gamali-el, a teacher of the law, held in honor by all the people, stood up and ordered the men to be put outside for a while. 35 And he said to them, "Men of Israel, take care what you do with these men. . . . 39 You might even be found opposing God!" 40 So they took his advice, and when they had called in the apostles, they beat them and charged them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. 41 Then they left the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name. 42 And every day in the temple and at home they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.

As soon as people from **outside Judaism** are being incorporated into Christ, the Bible is already hinting its catholicity in Acts 9:31 (Greek = “katholica” meaning “throughout all”).

ACTS 9:31 31 So **the church throughout all** (Greek here = “katholica”) Judea and Galilee and Samaria had peace and was built up; and walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit it was multiplied.

Acts 10—Now Even The Gentiles (!) Are Coming Into Christianity

Samaritans and their Jewish relatives had an adversarial relationship. It is still antagonistic to this day (there are only a few hundred Samaritans left in Israel).

But bringing GENTILES into the Church is going to be a lot HARDER for the Apostles to accept.

St. Peter was now staying at Joppa at Simon the Tanner’s home (Acts 10:5-6). Nearby was the town of Caesarea (Caesarea by the Sea, not to be confused with Caesarea Philippi which is in a different location) where a Roman Gentile man named Cornelius lived.

Cornelius was a Roman military centurion with authority. Scripture describes this Gentile man Cornelius as “devout man who feared God with all his household, gave alms liberally to the people, and prayed constantly to God” (Acts 10:2). Cornelius had an angel appear to him at the hour of Divine Mercy (about 3:00 PM or “the ninth hour”—Acts 10:3) and told him to send men for Peter at Joppa about a day’s journey away.

Meanwhile the next day about Noon, St. Peter was on the rooftop praying. He had a vision of “unclean” animals coming down on a sheet from Heaven and was told to kill and eat (Acts 10:13). Peter refused, saying he has never eaten anything unclean. God and Peter had this back and forth **three times**. God told him, “What God has cleansed, you must not call common” (Acts 10:15). Keep this in mind because **it not only had to do with “unclean foods” but a secondary meaning of “unclean” or Gentile converts.**

God wanted Cornelius and his household and then more Gentiles brought into Christianity. St. Peter, a Jewish person, is going to be repulsed by bringing unclean “goyim” into the New Covenant with God.

The Holy Spirit told Peter there were **three men** there to meet him downstairs and he and his associates were to go with them to Cornelius¹⁹.

Cornelius tried to worship Peter and was rebuked immediately by him. Then Peter said . . .

ACTS 10:27-28 27 And as he talked with him, he went in and found many persons gathered; 28 and he said to them, "You yourselves know **how unlawful it is for a Jew to associate with or to visit any one of another nation; but God has shown me that I should not call any man common or unclean.**

St. Peter preached Christ and His Resurrection to Cornelius and his household. Then this happened . . .

ACTS 10:44-48a 44 While Peter was still saying this, **the Holy Spirit fell on all who heard the word.** 45 And the believers from among the circumcised who came with Peter were amazed,

¹⁹ The Jews even allowed the Gentiles to stay overnight at their home before their trip the next day!!

because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles. 46 For they heard them **speaking in tongues and extolling God**. Then Peter declared, 47 "Can any one forbid water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" 48 And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.

When St. Peter got back to Jerusalem this happened . . .

ACTS 11:2-3 2 So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcision party criticized him, 3 saying, "Why did you go to uncircumcised men and eat with them?"

St. Peter explained how God intervened on behalf of Cornelius. And how this was another layer of fulfillment of St. John the Baptist's prophecy in Matthew 3:11.²⁰

ACTS 11:15-18 15 As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them just as on us at the beginning. 16 And **I remembered** the word of the Lord, how he said, '**John baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit.**' 17 If then God gave the same gift to them as he gave to us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could withstand God?" 18 When they heard this they were silenced. And they glorified God, saying, "Then to the Gentiles also God has granted repentance unto life."

Objection: How can Cornelius get graces of Pentecost BEFORE Baptism?

Answer: Jewish Christians were so repelled by Gentiles being allowed into the Covenant, that it was necessary that God Himself begin the process of Gentiles coming into Christianity. Not only for St. Peter's sake, but probably also for the Jewish witnesses that were there with St. Peter.

The Fathers taught this too.²¹ But God is not bound by His Sacraments (CCC 1257). But for those of us that are not God (all of us), we must administer Baptism first. More Confirmations in Acts . . .

ACTS 19:1-6 1 While Apollos was at Corinth, Paul passed through the upper country and came to Ephesus. There he found some disciples. 2 And he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" And they said, "No, we have never even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." 3 And he said, "Into what then were you baptized?" They said, "Into John's baptism." 4 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 upon them, the Holy Spirit came on them**; and they spoke with tongues and prophesied.

²⁰ **MATTHEW 3:11** 11 "I baptize you with water for repentance, but he who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry; he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

²¹ **ST. GREGORY OF NAZIENZEN** Will you not reverence even **the authority of the Spirit** . . . He comes upon Cornelius and his companions before Baptism, **to others after Baptism** . . .

ST. AUGUSTINE "For the Church was not as yet among the Gentiles . . . and the very Jews who believed thought that THEY ONLY belonged to Christ . . . For Peter might hesitate whether he might baptize the uncircumcised: the Holy Spirit came . . .

For more and extended quotes and sources, please see Table 3.

CCC 1257 b, d . . . God . . . is not bound by his sacraments.

Fulfilled First Fruits Too

Pentecost is a remembrance of Sinai. And we have seen that. But what about those “First Fruits”? In 1st Corinthians 15:20-23 we see Jesus is the “First Fruits”. In Romans 8:23 and 11:16 we see Christians have a participation in being the “First Fruits” too—by giving of our gifts and ourselves to God.

ROMANS 8:23 23 and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

Again see the Fruits of the Spirit discussed in Galatians 5:22-23 (TABLE 1).

In Conclusion

- We reviewed what Confirmation was and was not.
- We did an overview of some basic catechesis on the Sacrament of Confirmation including the fact that Confirmation is our “Personal Pentecost”.
- We saw the Biblical historical roots of Pentecost in the Old Testament was a two-fold Sacred solemn remembrance of **“Giving of the Law” from God to man AND the “Giving of the First Fruits” from man to God.**
- At this point in the study, we looked at the extreme fear the Apostles had as Jesus approached death, died and even after He rose (their fear was PRE-Pentecost).
- Then we studied the first Christian Pentecost in the Book of Acts and saw how the Apostles were immediately transformed, strengthened, and now courageous even in the face of death threats.
- We saw Confirmation “lived out” in a New Covenant sense bringing in Jews, then Samaritans, then Gentiles into full Covenant union with God completing the start of the Church’s “katholika” mission.

We will now close with a couple more relevant Scripture passages.
Then any final discussion, and a word of prayer.

2nd TIMOTHY 1:6-8a 6 Hence I remind you to rekindle **the gift of God that is within you through the laying on of my hands**; 7 for God did not give us a spirit of timidity but **a spirit of power and love and self-control**. 8 **Do not be ashamed then of testifying to our Lord**

PSALM 104:1,3 a, c 4b, 30 (DRV²²) 1 Bless the Lord, O my soul: O Lord my God, thou art exceedingly great. Thou . . . 4 Who makest . . . thy ministers a burning fire. 30 **Thou shalt send forth thy spirit, and they shall be created: and thou shalt renew the face of the earth.**

²² I used RSV numbering here for the exact same passage due to most people these days using the RSVCE. But the DRV is a better translation in my opinion. The DRV numbering system for this passage is PSALM 103:1b,4b, 29

Table 1

The Twelve Fruits of the Holy Spirit

These gifts “perfect” or “give you the correct interior INTENTION” for carrying out these things.

You do them for the Love of God primarily. The love of others secondarily, and the love of yourself last (you put others before you).

For example, instead of being just merely being charitable, you are now even more **charitable** and charitable BECAUSE you LOVE God.

GALATIANS 5:22-23 (RSV) 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control; against such there is no law.

GALATIANS 5:22-23 (DRV) 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is, charity, joy, peace, patience, benignity, goodness, longanimity, 23 Mildness, faith, modesty, continency, chastity. Against such there is no law.²³

The Twelve Fruits of the Holy Spirit
Charity (sometimes called “love”)
Joy
Peace
Patience
Kindness (sometimes called “benignity”)
Goodness
Generosity (sometimes called “longanimity”)
Gentleness (sometimes called “mildness”)
Faithfulness
Modesty
Self-control (sometimes called “continency”)
Chastity

CCC 1832 The *fruits* of the Spirit are **perfections** that the Holy Spirit forms in us as the first fruits of eternal glory. **The tradition of the Church lists twelve of them:** "charity, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, generosity, gentleness, faithfulness, modesty, self-control, chastity."¹¹²

²³ Some of the ancient manuscripts of Scripture are slightly different one from another. Galatians 5:23 is one of those examples apparently.

Table 2

The Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit

The prophecies in Isaiah 11:1-3a concern primarily Jesus. But also secondarily those who are IN-Jesus (us) awakened or opened-up by the gifts of Pentecost/Confirmation.

ISAIAH 11:1-3a (DRV)²⁴ And there shall come forth a rod out of the root of Jesse, and a flower shall rise up out of his root. And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him: the spirit of **wisdom**, and of **understanding**, the spirit of **counsel**, and of **fortitude**, the spirit of **knowledge**, and of **godliness**. And he shall be filled with the spirit of the fear of the Lord.

The Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit

- **Wisdom**
- **Understanding**
- **Counsel**
- **Fortitude (might or courage)**
- **Knowledge**
- **Piety (pious behavior or godliness)**
- **Fear of the Lord**

CCC 1831 The seven *gifts* of the Holy Spirit are wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord. They belong in their fullness to Christ, Son of David.¹⁰⁹ They **complete and perfect the virtues** of those who receive them. They make the faithful docile in readily obeying divine inspirations.

CCC 1845 The seven gifts of the Holy Spirit bestowed upon Christians are wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord.

Perfecting the virtues has at least in part to do with the **proper reasons and interior dispositions**. Not necessarily the "quality" of somebody's virtue practiced²⁵. . . .

CCC 1744 Freedom is the power to act or not to act, and so to perform deliberate acts of one's own. Freedom attains **perfection** in its acts **when directed toward God**, the sovereign Good.

CCC 1775 The perfection of the moral good consists in man's being moved to the good not only by his will but also by his "heart."

²⁴ **ISAIAH 11:1-3a (RSVCE)** 1 There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. 2 And the Spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of **wisdom** and **understanding**, the spirit of **counsel** and **might**, the spirit of **knowledge** and the **fear of the LORD**. 3 And his delight shall be in the fear of the LORD.

²⁵ **CCC 1452** When it arises from a love by which God is loved above all else, contrition is called "perfect" (contrition of charity). Such contrition remits venial sins; it also obtains forgiveness of mortal sins if it includes the firm resolution to have recourse to sacramental confession as soon as possible.⁵¹

CCC 1492 Repentance (also called contrition) must be inspired by motives that arise from faith. If repentance arises from love of charity for God, it is called "**perfect**" contrition; if it is founded on other motives, it is called "imperfect."

CCC 2545 All Christ's faithful are to "direct their affections rightly, lest they be hindered in their pursuit of perfect charity by the use of worldly things and by an adherence to riches which is contrary to the spirit of evangelical poverty."³³⁷

CCC 1770 Moral perfection consists in man's being moved to the good not by his will alone, but also by his sensitive appetite, as in the words of the psalm: "My heart and flesh sing for joy to the living God."⁴⁶

TABLE 3

Patristics On Cornelius Getting The Holy Spirit On Him BEFORE Baptism

ST. AUGUSTINE "For the Church was not as yet among the Gentiles; in Judaea the Jews had some of them believed, and the very Jews who believed thought that THEY ONLY belonged to Christ: the Apostles were sent to the Gentiles, . . . The Angel was sent to Cornelius: the Angel sent Cornelius to Peter; Peter came to Cornelius. And because Cornelius and his household were Gentiles, and uncircumcised: lest they might hesitate to give the Gospel to the uncircumcised . . . Now the Holy Spirit had not fallen upon any one who had not been baptized: but upon these it fell before baptism. For Peter might hesitate whether he might baptize the uncircumcised: the Holy Spirit came, they began to speak with tongues; the invisible gift was given, and took away all doubt about the visible Sacrament; they were all baptized.

-- From St. Augustine on the Psalms - PSALM XCVII – Section 11

Q: But how can St. Peter reverse this order?

A: St. Peter does NOT reverse this order. God, who is not bound (like we are) does this.

CCC 1257 b God has bound salvation to the sacrament of Baptism, but he himself is not bound by his sacraments.

ST. GREGORY OF NAZIENZEN Will you not reverence even **the authority of the Spirit** Who breathes upon whom, and when, and as He wills? He comes upon Cornelius and his companions before Baptism, to others after Baptism, by the hands of the Apostles; so that from both sides, both from the fact that He comes in the guise of a Master and not of a Servant, and from the fact of His being sought to make perfect, the Godhead of the Spirit is testified.

-- St Gregory of Nazienzen Oration XIV Preached at Constantinople in 380 A.D.

Also [here](#) is Pope St. Gregory the Great from the 500's A.D. on Acts 10.

POPE ST. GREGORY THE GREAT For certainly Peter had received power in the heavenly kingdom, so that whatever he should bind or loose on earth should be bound or loosed in heaven; he walked on the sea, he healed the sick with his shadow, he slew sinners with his word, he raised the dead by his prayer. And because by the admonition of the Spirit he had gone in to Cornelius the Gentile, a question was raised against him by the believers as to why he had gone in among Gentiles and eaten with them, and why he had received them in baptism.

And yet this first of the apostles, filled with such gifts of grace, supported by such power of miracles, replied to the complaint of the believers, not by power but by reason, and explained . . . how three men came to him calling him to Cornelius; how the Holy Spirit bade him go with them; how the same Holy Spirit who had been wont to come on those baptized in Judea after baptism, came on the Gentiles before baptism. For if, when he was blamed by the believers, he had paid regard to the authority which he had received in Holy Church, he might have replied that the sheep should not dare to find fault with the shepherd to whom they had been committed. But, had he said anything of his own power in answer to the complaint of the believers, he would not have been truly a teacher of gentleness. He pacified them, therefore, by giving a reason humbly, and even produced witnesses to defend him from blame, saying, Moreover these six brethren accompanied me (Acts xi. 12).

-- The Great Epistles Book XI. EPISTLE XLV: TO THEOCTISTA, PATRICIAN