

CONFIRMATION



SAINTS AMONG US



TEACHER BOOK 3 English



ARCHDIOCESE
OF
DENVER

SAMPLE

SAINTS AMONG US

Restored Order Curriculum

Teacher Book

BOOK 3: CONFIRMATION



ARCHDIOCESE
OF
DENVER

'Saints Among Us' originally developed by Hanna Muldowney, PhD
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Book 3: Confirmation

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INTRODUCTION



Saints Among Us

Saints Among Us, a two-year curriculum, prepares second graders for First Reconciliation and third graders for Confirmation and First Communion. This curriculum arose to support the implementation of the restored order of the sacraments of initiation in the Archdiocese of Denver. In his pastoral letter, *Saints Among Us*, Archbishop Samuel Aquila explains the importance of the restored order of the sacraments:

The world needs saints. Even as our society becomes more distant from faith and more forgetful of God, it still hungers for joyful witnesses who have been transformed by Christ. At the same time, new generations of Catholics need grace to sustain them in a non-Christian environment.

To answer these needs, I have decided to restore the Sacraments of Initiation to their original order, that is, Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist. This will make available every sacramental grace the Church has to offer to children who have reached the age of reason.

*When I was Bishop of Fargo, I restored Confirmation to its original place in 2002 by issuing the pastoral letter *Send Forth Your Spirit*. I was convinced of the theological and pastoral reasons for doing this, but I was further convinced by hearing from parents and children about the effects of the graces they received.*

Grace, the Catechism teaches us, is the free gift that “God makes to us of his own life, infused by the Holy Spirit into our soul to heal it of sin and to sanctify it” (Catechism of the Catholic Church [CCC], paragraph 1999).

Many people today live as if God does not exist, or if he does, then only as a remote ruler who rarely intervenes in human affairs. Instead of seeking God's grace and an intimate relationship with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, our society turns to technology, science, and selfreliance to solve its problems.

The last century has made it clear that innovations do not save humanity. We still have wars, sickness, corruption and injustice. What will save us is not the next "thing," but rather, the flood of grace and love that the Holy Trinity desires to pour out upon us.

This is what restoring the sacraments of Christian initiation to their original order is all about. The ancient order begins with life in Christ through Baptism. This is followed by Confirmation, which perfects the grace of Baptism, fills us with the gifts of the Holy Spirit, prepares us to receive Jesus in the Eucharist, and helps us commit ourselves to be his lifelong disciples.

As the Catechism explains, "The holy Eucharist completes Christian initiation. Those who have been raised to the dignity of the royal priesthood by Baptism and configured more deeply to Christ by Confirmation participate with the whole community in the Lord's own sacrifice by means of the Eucharist" (CCC, 1321).

It also beautifully teaches that the other sacraments "are bound up with the Eucharist and are oriented toward it. For in the blessed Eucharist is contained the whole spiritual good of the Church, namely Christ himself" (CCC, 1324).

This curriculum is designed not only to impart the necessary content of the faith to second and third graders, but also seeks to form their hearts as they prepare for the sacraments. It does so by drawing students to the divine Persons of the Holy Trinity, especially Jesus, the Son of God who became Incarnate to save us. The students meet Jesus in the curriculum by listening to the Word of God, learning to pray with the Bible, learning other forms of prayer, and by relating the content to their lives both in the classroom and with follow up at homes. The goal of this curriculum is to help students to encounter God more fully when they receive the sacraments.

The curriculum is structured in four books. Book One places the students and the sacraments they will receive within the story of Salvation History. This story shows God's plan of salvation from Creation, through the Old and New Testaments, to the life of the Church. Book Two focuses specifically on preparation for First Reconciliation. Book Three focuses on the sacrament of Confirmation and the gifts of the Spirit that are increased by the reception of the sacrament. Book Four focuses on the Eucharist as the culmination of the sacraments of initiation and the source and summit of the Catholic faith. Throughout the four books, the curriculum shows the links between these three sacraments and how they complete the initiation begun at Baptism.

The catechist provides an essential service in making this curriculum come alive. Whether for use in the school, parish, or home, the teacher helps the student to understand, apply, and pray through the content of the curriculum. The teacher follows the call of Christ to proclaim the good news and provides personal witness to the importance of the content and the sacraments for which the students are preparing. The curriculum provides additional content and ideas for catechists to help with preparation and instruction. *Saints Among Us* can be used in multiple settings with little need for adaptation. Each book provides content for twelve class sessions, with flexibility to expand or contract activities based on the exact length of the class session.

One important disposition is necessary to prepare for and to receive the sacraments well: docility to the Holy Spirit. The sacraments of initiation are gifts from God, who invites us to enter more fully into His life. We must respond to this invitation with humility, obedience, and love. It is important to recognize that the sacraments of initiation, including Confirmation, are not primarily concerned with having everything figured out or deciding for ourselves that we want to receive them. While we need to cooperate fully and freely with God in the sacraments, the sacraments are about letting God's grace transform us so that we can become more like Him. Jesus told us: "You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide; so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you" (Jn 15:16). Throughout this curriculum we should keep in mind that our preparation for the sacraments consists ultimately in Christ's own choice and gift of Himself, which we should receive lovingly with open hearts.

The Office of Evangelization and Family Life Ministries of the Archdiocese of Denver will offer accompanying resources on its website to supplement this curriculum for both teachers and parents. Please visit saintsdenver.com for more information.



STRUCTURE PER LESSON

Book 1 Lesson #: Lesson Name

I. 2-4 Objectives

II. List of Materials needed per class

III. Praying with the Bible or with the Saints.

Modified Lectio Divina for young children.

1. PREPARATION: General directions and context of the passage

2. PRAYER

- Read
- Meditate
- Pray
- Listen

3. Closing prayer

IV. Content of the Lesson

1. CATECHIST BACKGROUND – Parallel to the content of the class, information and resources for Catechists to prepare their classes.

2. STUDENT DIRECTION

- Recap from last lesson
- Reading the Story / Read the Scripture passage
- Story Discussion – Main points
- Content of the Class
- Activity (sometimes done parallel to the Content of the Class)

3. WRAP UP

4. FINAL PRAYER

IV. At Home

- Activity or prayer to do at home with their parents



PRAYING WITH THE BIBLE



At the beginning of most classes there will be a time to pray a simple version of Lectio Divina with the children. This will be the opening prayer for the lesson. The goal is to help the children to be familiar with Sacred Scripture.

GENERAL SUGGESTIONS FOR PRAYING WITH THE BIBLE

1. You may read from an adult Bible, which usually is more precise in translation, or use a children's Bible. If you use the adult Bible, you may have to explain some of the words.
2. In order to help focus, encourage the children to close their eyes while listening to the reading, follow the reading in their own Bibles (if everyone has the same Bible), or use the image provided for some of the lessons.
3. When "reviewing the elements of the text" utilize a question and answer format or just address the key ideas.
4. Journaling and group sharing: you may or may not have time. If you decide to journal you will need:
 - At least 15 minutes.
 - If you have a large group, make sure that there are not too many people who want to talk. You could split into smaller groups for discussion.



STRUCTURE OF PRAYER



PREPARATION

Explain that you are praying with the Word of God in the Bible, so God will be talking to the children directly.

CONTEXT OF THE PASSAGE: DIFFERENT PER LESSON.

Tip for concentration: while listening to the reading, encourage them to close their eyes or follow the story in their own Bibles.

In the name of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

READ

Read the following passage slowly one time, all students should be quiet at this point.

BIBLE PASSAGE: DIFFERENT PER LESSON.

Review some important elements of the text:

Leader: Answer the following questions:

(Ask the questions and receive quick answers or answer them quickly.) Different per lesson.

Leader: I'm going to read the passage again, pay attention and see if something stands out or draws your attention, it can be a word or phrase that speaks to your heart. Read the passage one more time.

MEDITATE:

Leader: Was there a word or phrase that stood out to you, drew your attention, or that you liked the most? Is God telling you something through it? You can suggest that they journal in their workbooks to answer this question. Give students time (1 minute) to meditate or reflect on the passage. Remind them to be silent.

PRAY:

Leader: Lead the children in the following prayer or any other you find adequate. You can suggest that they write silently in their workbooks:

1. A prayer related to the reading.
2. Tell God what is on your heart and ask Him for what you need.

Give students time (1 minute) to speak to God silently in their hearts.

LISTEN:

Leader: Now that we have prayed to God about this story, let's be quiet so we can hear what God might be saying back to us, inside our hearts. (1 minute in silence).

Optional: If time allows, this is a good time for sharing. Have the students share as a class, with other students in pairs, or as a family. Remind them that this is still a time of prayer.

Close with a prayer.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

PRAYING WITH THE SAINTS



As students prepare for Confirmation this year, we will introduce the saints. Our hope is that they will become familiar with the concept, and be able to pick a patron saint or a Confirmation name (they can choose their baptismal name). Parishes have the freedom to determine this last piece.

To accomplish this, we have chosen to “Pray with the Saints” as a way to introduce some saints and explain how their lives and teachings can be helpful for us today. Below is the structure suggested to pray with the saints.

PREPARATION:

Introduce the saint with the short biography and highlight the heroic virtue or heroic act that characterizes the saint.

CONTEXT OF THE PASSAGE:

Explain the context of the life of the saint and their circumstances or what was the saint talking about when writing this passage.

Begin with the Sign of The Cross.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

QUOTE: Meditation of the saint

Review some important elements of the text:

Leader: in this part ask the following questions or give a simple explanation of what the saint is talking about in the quotation.

QUESTIONS

TEACHING:

Leader: ask the following questions or any other you find adequate. You can suggest that they write their answers silently in their workbooks:

- What did you like the most about what Saint _____ said?
- Do you know why?
- Is there anything you can learn from this saint?

Give students time to answer these questions.

RESPOND:

How are you going to respond to what you learned from this saint?
Make a concrete resolution that will help you to grow.
Close with a prayer of gratitude.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

SACRAMENTAL PREP OBJECTIVES

These are the topics that a third grader should be familiar with before he/she is confirmed:

1. Know what is a sacrament.
2. Have an awareness of Baptism and our true identity in Jesus Christ.
3. Know that we receive the Holy Spirit in Baptism and are strengthened through Confirmation.
4. Know the 7 gifts of the Holy Spirit.
5. Know that we need to be faithful to God's commandments.
6. Should have a sense of prayer and a need for God.
7. Should desire to build a relationship with Jesus Christ.
8. Should have experience with Lectio Divina.

OBJECTIVES PER LESSON

Book 3 Lessons	Lesson Objectives
Lesson 1 Baptism and the Father's Plan	Students will... state the effects of Baptism. identify that God has a plan for their life. be introduced to the Apostle's Creed.
Lesson 2 What is Confirmation	Students will... state that Confirmation is the completion of baptismal grace. identify the requirements for receiving Confirmation. be introduced to more prayers they should learn this semester.
Lesson 3 The Holy Trinity	Students will... identify the Trinity as three Persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—in one God. recognize God the Father as the Creator. recognize God the Son as Jesus, Redeemer of the World.
Lesson 4 Receiving the Holy Spirit	Students will... identify the Holy Spirit as the third Person of the Blessed Trinity. recognize symbols of the Holy Spirit. understand the connection between the Holy Spirit and Confirmation.
Lesson 5 Prayer and Sin	Students will... learn the importance of prayer in preparation for Confirmation. recognize that sin is an obstacle to Confirmation that must be rejected. understand that the gifts received in Confirmation bring the help of the Holy Spirit.
Lesson 6 The Gifts of Wisdom, Understanding and Knowledge	Students will... recognize the gifts as the means by which we come to know and love God. recognize that the gifts are freely given by the Holy Spirit. define the Gifts of Wisdom, Understanding, and Knowledge.
Lesson 7 The Gifts of Counsel and Fortitude	Students will... define the Gift of Counsel. define the Gift of Fortitude. recognize how the Gifts of Counsel and Fortitude act in their lives.
Lesson 8 The Gifts of Piety and Fear of the Lord	Students will... define the gift of Piety. define the gift of Fear of the Lord. state that they should pray for and desire the gifts of the Holy Spirit.
Lesson 9 The Fruits of the Holy Spirit	Students will... identify the twelve Fruits of the Holy Spirit. recognize that the Fruits flow from the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives and actions.
Lesson 10 The Rite of Confirmation	Students will... identify the word Rite. know the major parts of the Rite of Confirmation.
Lesson 11 Laying on of Hands and Anointing	Students will... identify the "Laying on of Hands" with the gifts of the Holy Spirit. identify the purpose of Chrism is for anointing and associate the anointing during Confirmation as being sealed with the Holy Spirit. practice the actions and words of anointing that occurs during the Rite of Confirmation.
Lesson 12 Life in the Spirit	Students will... identify what it means to be a disciple of Jesus. learn about their life in the Church. identify their patron saint.

SAINTS AMONG US

CONFIRMATION



BAPTISM AND THE FATHER'S PLAN



Objectives:

- Students will state the effects of Baptism.
- Students will identify that God has a plan for their life.
- Students will be introduced to the Apostle's Creed.

Materials:

- Paper for handouts with segments of the Apostles' Creed or markers to write these segments on the board.

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CATECHIST BACKGROUND



Salvation History

This lesson provides a foundation for understanding the Sacrament of Confirmation, the focus of Book 3 of *Saints Among Us*. We will learn more about Confirmation next week, but because Confirmation is a completion and strengthening of the grace of Baptism, we will start with Baptism.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC) provides us with a short definition of Baptism:

“Holy Baptism is the basis of the whole Christian life, the gateway to life in the Spirit (*vitae spiritualis ianua*), and the door which gives access to the other sacraments. Through Baptism we are freed from sin and reborn as sons of God; we become members of Christ, are incorporated into the Church and made sharers in her mission: ‘Baptism is the sacrament of regeneration through water in the word’” (1213).

The entire Christian life is founded upon the graces received at Baptism. Without Baptism, you cannot receive any other of the sacraments. Baptism is necessary for salvation (though the Church teaches that Baptism can be given by God in hidden ways to those who do not otherwise have access to it). Why? It is through this sacrament that our sins are forgiven. Original sin (the fact that we are born without God’s saving grace) is taken away. We are given God’s sanctifying grace, the grace we need to reach Heaven and to be united with God. A permanent, indelible mark is placed upon the soul, which enables us to worship God as His children. We are adopted as children of God through the saving action of God’s only Son.

CATECHIST BACKGROUND



Jesus came into the world so that we could share His relationship as the Son of the Father. Although we are not born into this relationship, we are made in God's image and likeness. When we receive God's grace in Baptism we are then able to relate to God in a personal way. God is not material or limited in any way. We can't find Him in the universe. He is outside of the universe and is infinitely perfect, unlimited, unchanging, and eternal. God raises us up to His divine and perfect life through the gift of His life. His ultimate plan for all of us is to enter into His eternal life, living as one with Him and sharing His perfect happiness.

Book 1 of *Saints Among Us* focuses on God's roadmap, the story of Salvation History. This lesson provides a short review of this content or an introduction of it for the first time if the students are new to the curriculum this year. The goal is to show how the reception of the sacraments of Baptism, Reconciliation, Confirmation and the Eucharist come to us as part of God's plan and enable us to enter into God's story. Salvation History is a series of six covenants, the first of which happened at the creation of Adam and Eve. God offered them friendship, even though they turned away from Him. The next four covenants are God's response to the Fall of Adam and Eve in the first sin, as God formed His holy people in preparation for the Savior from sin. These four additional covenants in the Old Testament are: God's promise to Noah that he would not flood the world again; His promise to Abraham to give him many descendants who would live in the land He would provide; the Ten Commandments and other laws God gave to Moses; and the promises of an everlasting kingship to David.

Jesus gives us the sixth covenant, the new and everlasting covenant in His blood. This covenant fulfills all of the others. The effects of this covenant are the forgiveness of sins and the call to everlasting life. Jesus established the Kingdom of God. We enter into this Kingdom on earth through faith and the sacraments as we enter into God's life and live in union with Him. Through the sacraments God's wants to guide us through the many difficulties of this life so that we can fully enter into His Kingdom in Heaven.

Optional Saint Project for the Semester

Each student should have a patron saint. It is customary to give a Christian name for Baptism, which is usually the name of a saint or virtue. The Christian name can be the middle name as well. You can help each student to determine their patron saint based on their first and middle name if they do not know. You can have a saint book on hand to help with this. It is sometimes customary to take a saint's name for Confirmation as well. Ask your Director of Religious Education or Pastor about this practice for your parish. If the student does not have a saint's name already then it is especially important for them to choose one for Confirmation.

You can have the students do a project on their patron saint, which they can present during the last lesson of Book 3, which will cover patron saints. They can create a poster or write a couple of paragraphs on their saint and present it to the class at that time.

STUDENT DIRECTION



Introduction

Today, you are beginning your preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation. Confirmation is the second Sacrament of Initiation, following Baptism. We will be looking back to your Baptism and how it was the beginning of God's plan for your life.

What is Baptism?

Some of you probably do not remember your Baptism as you were baptized as babies, but maybe you have seen another Baptism. **What happens at Baptism?** (After questions, leave some time for a response.) **Water is poured over your head. The priest anoints you with oil.** Those are the actions that we see happening, but other things happen inside of you as well. **Does anyone know what happens to your soul at Baptism?** **Original sin is washed away. You are given God's grace, which will lead you to Heaven. You are made God's son or daughter.** Baptism made you close to God, a part of His family. It is the beginning of a friendship that will last forever. Baptism is the first of many steps you will take in your life with God.

Last year you received your First Reconciliation. What does this sacrament do? It forgives sin and gives us God's grace. When we sin, we turn away from God. If we commit a serious sin (mortal sin), we lose God's life in us. Reconciliation brings us back to God and into His life. It strengthens us to be able to avoid sin.

You are getting ready to receive two more sacraments this year: Confirmation and the Eucharist. These sacraments will grow the life of God in you that began with Baptism. They are the next steps of God's plan for your life.



STUDENT DIRECTION



The Father's Plan for Your Life

In Baptism you became a child of God the Father. God is eternal—He has always existed and will always exist. You did not always exist. God created you and chose you to live with Him forever in Heaven. If you follow God's plan for your life, by believing His Word, praying, and obeying His commands, you will be happy with Him forever.

We call the story of God's plan for the world and for our lives Salvation History. We are a part of this story.

The story has a few major parts.

- In the beginning, God made the universe out of nothing and made the first man and woman in the Garden of Eden to live in friendship with Him. Adam and Eve sinned against God, by eating the fruit that God had forbidden, and lost God's life in their soul. Because of this first sin, we are all born with original sin, without God's grace, and we need Baptism to receive God's friendship again.
- God had a plan for bringing the human race back into His friendship. He formed a holy people, Israel, from whom would be born the Savior of the World. The Old Testament tells us the story of God's chosen people.



Do you know some of the most important people in the Old Testament?

- Abraham was the father of all who believed.
- Moses led the people out of slavery in Egypt and received the Ten Commandments from God.
- David was the king who killed the giant Goliath. God promised that one of his descendants (someone born into His royal family) would sit on his throne forever.

Do you know the main character of God's story?

- Jesus! Jesus is the Son of God who came into the world to save us from our sins and to bring us to Heaven. He is the King who will reign forever.
 - We are living in the last part of the story. Jesus created His Church to teach all people about Him and to give His Body and Blood to those who believe at Mass. We became a part of God's people in Baptism and entered into the story of Salvation History.
-

INTRODUCTION TO THE SAINTS



A saint is a person (just like you and me) who loved God very much, had a very close relationship with Him and who tried to live according to God's Will in her/his life. Saints are holy people because they lived like Jesus and grew in virtue. They were always open to the graces of the Holy Spirit and they imitated Christ very closely.

Some saints dedicated their lives to teaching others about God. Others showed their love for God by caring for people in need. Some saints spent their lives sharing the Good News about Jesus. Others lived ordinary lives but with great love for God and their brothers and sisters.

To all of them God gave many graces so that they could become saints. To some of them God gave special graces to do miraculous things.

The saints are all in heaven rejoicing in God's love.

The Church celebrates many saints for two reasons:

1. To be our models: they have dedicated their lives to God and have loved their brothers and sisters very much. By learning about them, we can learn how to be saints ourselves.
2. To intercede for us: since they are so close to God in Heaven they can ask Him to respond to our needs and intentions. The saints love us and care about us and they will always be willing to intercede for us.

This semester in some of our lessons we are going to learn about some saints, and we are going to ask for their help and wisdom to help us to pray.

STUDENT DIRECTION



Activity

- **Divide the Creed into parts and print out. You should have as many parts as groups of students.**

At Baptism, your parents and godparents recited the baptismal vows for you. These vows rejected evil and accepted God's teaching about Himself and our salvation. The Apostle's Creed is a prayer which gives us a short overview of what we believe and helps us to live out our faith we received in Baptism.

We will divide into small groups and each group will memorize one part of the Apostles' Creed. Talk about what your part of the Creed means. Feel free to ask any questions about it. Recite it out loud together until you have it memorized.



Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and earth;
and in Jesus Christ, His only Son Our Lord,

Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended into Hell; the third day He rose again from the dead;

He ascended into Heaven, and sits at the right hand of God, the Father almighty;
from there He shall come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic Church,

the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and life everlasting. Amen.

STUDENT DIRECTION



WRAP UP

(5 mins)

1. **What happened to you at Baptism?** Original sin was forgiven, I received God's grace, and became a child of God.
2. **What does Reconciliation do?** It forgives sin.
3. **For what sacraments are you preparing this year?** Confirmation and Eucharist.
4. **How are you living as part of God's plan?** At Baptism I became a part of God's family. I am following Him and becoming close to Him by receiving the sacraments.

FINAL PRAYER

Apostles Creed

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ, His only Son Our Lord, Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into Hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into Heaven, and sits at the right hand of God, the Father almighty; from there He shall come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and life everlasting. Amen.



AT HOME

- Ask your parents about the date of your Baptism. You can find it by looking on your baptismal certificate. (You can call your parish to find out as well). Remember it and try to celebrate it every year with a special prayer and something fun. Your Baptism day is a second birthday, when you were born a second time by being adopted as a child of God.
- Practice saying the Apostle's Creed with your family.