

Virtual Confirmation Retreat Resource Pack



FOR THE TEACHER/PARISH TEAM MEMBER/SACRAMENTAL COORDINATOR

THE VIRTUAL RETREAT

The Virtual Retreat is available on <https://www.icatholic.ie/kandle-confirmation-retreat-2022/>.

The following offers a brief overview of the content and outlines what you will need to do so that the Confirmation candidates can participate in this Virtual Retreat. The diocese is offering this virtual retreat to

- help candidates prepare for Confirmation
- or*
- to re-engage with candidates, post Confirmation.

Please feel free to add some of your own ideas or activities to enhance the candidate's experience.

THE BEST EXPERIENCE PARISH/SCHOOL WORKING TOGETHER

Organise a meeting between the parish team members/sacramental coordinator & the teacher/s of the Confirmation Class.

Consider how the parish and school can work together to facilitate the retreat day.

The parish team/sacramental coordinator might

- Lead a prayer time or meditation during the day
- Be present for a part of the retreat
- Meet the candidates at the church for prayer/to show them the Oil of Chrism/offer an opportunity to talk about what will happen on the day of Confirmation or how they might stay involved in the parish after Confirmation
- Accompany the candidates on a prayer walk/visit to a local sacred place
- Facilitate conversation about the questions posed by Bishop Denis in the video.

HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE?

The recorded material lasts for 1 hour. This includes time to complete the activities in the classroom although you may decide to give the candidates longer than the time suggested in the video.

To give the candidates an experience of 'retreat' it is suggested that a school day be set aside to engage with the recorded material and also to offer the candidates an experience of taking time to reflect on what it means to be confirmed in their faith. The recorded material can be interspersed with time as outlined above and also to

- share food
- create a piece of artwork

OUTLINE OF RECORDED ACTIVITIES

- 1) **Introduction and Opening Prayer** *led by Bishop Denis on the Video*
The following prayer is used during the Opening Prayer and will be displayed on the screen:
**Come Holy Spirit,
fill the hearts of your faithful
and kindle 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.**

If the parish team is involved in the retreat the Opening Prayer might be preceded by the candidates attending Mass in the local church or via webcam.

- | | | |
|----------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------|
| 2) Activity 1 | Gifts of the Spirit | Video & Classroom |
| 3) Activity 2 | Fruits of the Spirit | Video & Classroom |
| 4) Activity 3: | Affirmations | Video & Classroom |
| 5) Activity 4: | Staying Connected after Confirmation | Video & Classroom |

The Retreat ends with a Prayer Service which could take place in the space designated for the retreat or in the local church. The text for this Prayer Service can be found on pages 15-17

PREPARATION

- Decide how best to organise the retreat space so that the candidates can see the IWB and participate in the activities as required: a circle of chairs that allows the candidates to break into pairs/groups might be best:
- Set up a simple Prayer Space where it can be seen by all candidates:
 - Red cloth
 - Candle (*Lit during the Opening Prayer*)
 - Bible, open at Acts 2
 - Basket/Bag with the symbols of the Holy Spirit (*see page 3*)
- Read through the explanatory notes for Activities 1 -3 and ensure you have the necessary resources: (*pages 3 -13*)
 - Basket/Bag with the symbols of the Holy Spirit (*see page 3*)
 - A copy of Activity Sheet 1 for each pair/group (*page 5*)
 - Flashcards of the Fruits & Gifts of the Spirit enough for each pair/group of candidates to choose 1 each (*template pages 8-9*)
Bag/basket to put each set of flash cards in. Copy of Activity Sheet for each pair/group. (page 10)
 - An envelope for each candidate with their names written on it.
Copy of activity sheet for each candidate (page 12)
 - Scissors/pencils/pens/markers

Activity 1

Connect the Gifts & the Symbols

PURPOSE

The purpose of this activity is to teach/reinforce the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

OBJECTIVE

The objective of this activity is to enable the Confirmation candidates to know, name and be able to describe the gifts of the Holy Spirit and how they connect to the symbols.

YOU WILL NEED

- ✓ A basket/bag with samples of each of the following items
 1. Smarties
 2. Pretzels
 3. Card with "AHA" written on it
 4. Packet of Chewing Gum
 5. A Cracker
 6. Starburst Sweets
 7. Lollipop
- ✓ A copy of Activity Sheet 1 for each Pod/Pair
- ✓ Slide 1 (Gifts of the Holy Spirit)

IN THE CLASSROOM

- Watch the Video where Hazel explains the activity.
- Using the items from the bag/basket remind the candidates of the symbols that they can match to the gifts of the Holy Spirit.
- Tell them they have 5 minutes (*or the whatever amount of time you consider necessary*) to complete the task in their pairs/groups using the Activity Sheet on page 5. The explanation on page 4 will help you to guide the candidates if they get stuck:
- Return to the video to check their answers as they complete the activity with Hazel, Charlotte and David.
- There is a consolidating activity on page 6 which would provide a useful opportunity to have a break outside.



Knowledge is the gift that helps us to know ourselves and the world around us. It helps us to know where our faith is leading us and what our church is about. *Knowledge* is the gift that makes us smart about ourselves.



In Confirmation we receive the gift of **Understanding**. This helps us to untie the knots, to straighten out our lives, to deal with our problems. *Understanding* is letting the Word of God have room in our lives.



Wisdom is the gift of the Holy Spirit that helps us to see and understand God's plan in our lives and in the world. It helps us to say, '*Aha, I finally understand.*'



Courage is the gift of the Holy Spirit that helps us walk out into the world and feel prepared. It gives us the courage to stick with it and to stand up for what we believe.



Reverence is the gift of the Holy Spirit that helps us to see God in everything around us. It teaches us to treat our fragile world gently.



Wonder & Awe is the gift of the Holy Spirit that keeps us awestruck by the power and beauty of God in our lives. *Wonder and Awe* explode like a starburst when we let the Holy Spirit into our lives.



Right Judgment is the gift of the Holy Spirit that encourages us to talk things over so that we can make choices that let us feel comfortable with ourselves afterwards. *Right Judgment* keeps us from feeling like suckers.

Activity 1

Connect the Gifts & the Symbols

Symbol	Gift of the Holy Spirit
Smarties	
Pretzel	
Lollipop	
AHA! Card	
Cracker	
Chewing Gum	
Starburst	

CONSOLIDATING ACTIVITY

You will Need

- A Soft Ball

Whoever throws the ball says either Smarties/Knowledge while throwing it and the person receiving it should respond with Knowledge/Smarties and so on.



Smarties/Knowledge

Pretzels / Understanding

AHA! / Wisdom

Chewing Gum / Courage

Cracker / Reverence

Starburst / Wonder and Awe

Lollipop / Right Judgement

Activity 2

Connect the Gifts & the Fruits of the Spirit

PURPOSE

The purpose of this activity is to help the Confirmation candidates to be able to name the fruits of the Holy Spirit and to make connections between the gifts and the fruits of the Holy Spirit.

OBJECTIVE

The objective of this activity is to enable the Confirmation candidates to articulate how the Gifts of the Holy Spirit can bear fruit in their everyday lives.

YOU WILL NEED

- ✓ Flashcards of the Fruits & Gifts of the Spirit. You will need enough for each pair/group of candidates to choose at least 1 each (*template pages 8-9*)
- ✓ *Bag/basket to put each set of flash cards in.*
- ✓ Copy of Activity Sheet for each pair/group (*page 10*)
- ✓ Slide 2 (Fruits of the Holy Spirit)

IN THE CLASSROOM

- ✓ Watch the Video where Hazel explains the activity.
- ✓ Using the PowerPoint Slide remind the candidates that the gifts of the Holy Spirit are the roots from which the fruits grow.
- ✓ Invite them in their pairs/groups to choose a flashcard of one gift and one fruit and using the activity sheet on page 10 to write a scenario describing how the two connect in a real-life situation.
- ✓ Give each pair/group the opportunity to report back on the connection they made and to give the example that they have chosen.

Activity 2

Connect the Gifts & the Fruits of the Spirit

Patience	Goodness
Gentleness	Kindness
Self-Control	Faithfulness
Peace	Goodness
Joy	

Activity 2

Connect the Gifts & the Fruits of the Spirit

Knowledge	Reverence
Understanding	Wonder & Awe
Wisdom	Right Judgement
Courage	



Gift: _____

Fruit

Scenario

This image shows a full page of blank white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, providing a template for writing or drawing. There are no margins, text, or other markings present.

Activity 3

Affirmations

PURPOSE

The purpose of this activity is to help the Confirmation candidates to identify, name and affirm some of the gifts/fruits/qualities that they can see in each of their classmates.

OBJECTIVE

The objective of this activity is for the Confirmation candidates to affirm one another's giftedness and to encourage each other to be open to using the gifts that the Holy Spirit brings as they continue on their journey of faith.

YOU WILL NEED

- ✓ An Envelope for each candidate with their name written on the outside.
- ✓ A Copy of Activity Sheet 3 for each candidate (*pages 12-13*)
- ✓ Pens/Pencils/Markers/Scissors for each candidate

IN THE CLASSROOM

- ✓ Watch the Video where Hazel explains the activity.
- ✓ Remind the candidates of the task telling them that each time you call out a name of one of their classmates they are to write down the '**most amazing gift or quality that they see in that person**' on one of the squares on their paper. They are then to cut out that square and place it in the envelope with that person's name on it when you ask them to do so. You will seal each envelope as soon as it is full.
- ✓ The envelopes will be placed in the Prayer Space at the beginning of the Closing Prayer Service. You will need to choose someone from the class to do this.
- ✓ During the Closing Prayer Service each candidate will be presented with their envelope. They can then open them and take some time to read what their classmates have written about them.

Activity 3

Affirmations



The most amazing gift or quality that I
can see in is.....

Activity 4 Staying Connected

PURPOSE

The purpose of this activity is to facilitate discussion and offer an opportunity for the candidates to consider how they can stay connected to their faith and to their church after Confirmation.

OBJECTIVE

The objective of this activity is for the Confirmation candidates to identify activities or ways that they can stay connected after Confirmation. It also offers an opportunity to the candidates to respond to Bishop Denis' questions.

IN THE CLASSROOM

- ✓ Watch the conversation between Bishop Denis, Charlotte, David and Hazel.
- ✓ Facilitate a discussion about the conversation.
- ✓ Consider the questions posed by Bishop Denis on **Slide 3**. If the candidates haven't already written a Confirmation Letter to Bishop Denis, they could be encouraged to do so at home in the next few days alternatively the class could write a collective response to Bishop Denis and send it to him at bishopdenis@kandle.ie.

- 1) Do you know of any opportunities for you to be involved in your local parish community after Confirmation?
- 2) What could your local parish do to help you be more involved?
- 3) What would you say to him about how the church in Kildare & Leighlin could help you and other young people stay involved?

CLOSING PRAYER SERVICE

The text for the Closing Prayer Service is on the following two pages. This text is intended as a guide. A suggested reading, Prayer of Intercession and Reflection on the Retreat are included for ease of preparation only and all of these may be changed to better reflect your own local context.

PRAYER SERVICE



OPENING SONG: *Spirit Filled Day or other appropriate song*

OPENING WORDS

LEADER: *Today we've taken time out, time away from the normal school day, time to think, discuss, wonder, learn, celebrate and affirm one another as we continue the journey of faith that our parents began for us at baptism. We really enjoyed our retreat time with Hazel, Charlotte and Fr David and we enjoyed the time we spent with one another. We especially enjoyed writing our affirmations for one another. I am now going to invite xxxx to come forward and place the Basket of Affirmation Envelopes in our Prayer Space.*

Let us begin our time together by marking ourselves with the sign of our faith:

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit

AMEN

LEADER: Let us bless the Lord

RESPONSE: **Thanks be to God**

OPENING PRAYER:

Ever loving God, today we gather together
with our young people who are preparing to
celebrate Confirmation and the gifts of the
Holy Spirit that this sacrament brings/to reflect
on how best to use the gifts of the Holy Spirit as they
try to live the promise made at Confirmation.
Help them to be willing to use
these wonderful gifts as they
continue to grow in friendship with you.
May all of us to be open to listening to the
voice of the Holy Spirit
in all that we do and say in our lives today and always.
We make this prayer through Christ our Lord

RESPONSE: **AMEN**

LEADER: Let us sit and listen to God's Word for us today:

A READING FROM THE PROPHET JEREMIAH

The Lord God has this to say to you today: I have loved you with an everlasting love and I am constant in my affection for you. I will build you up and I will protect you in good times and in bad. So be happy and go forth in the dancing of the merry-makers. I have plans in my heart for you: plans for peace, not disaster, plan to give you a future and a reason to hope. And remember, when you call upon me and come and pray to me I will hear you. You will seek me and find me: when you seek me with all your heart, I will be found by you.
The Word of the Lord

RESPONSE: **Thanks be to God**



PSALM:

Send forth your Spirit, O Lord

(Lawton)

Send forth your Spirit, O Lord and renew, renew the face of the earth.

REFLECTION ON THE RETREAT:

*The words of the prophet Jeremiah from the reading that we have just heard 'when you seek me with all your heart, I will be found by you' are really powerful ones and they echo what you have been doing this morning in your classrooms. You have been seeking God in prayer, that's what a retreat is for and like Jeremiah you got a sense that God's has a plan for you and maybe you got a glimpse of what that plan is. I think I prefer the word 'dream' to 'plan.' I know that God has a dream for each one of us, a dream that we can all help to create with God. Think of the conversation that Hazel had with Charlotte and David. Do you think that they are living God's dream for them? I think that they are and I know that you can do the same. It was really clear to me listening to Charlotte and David that one of the reasons that they are living God's dream for them is because they are using the gifts of the Spirit every day in their lives. You can do the same. Your retreat will have helped you to understand the gifts of the Spirit better and in our Prayer Space we have all the items that remind us of how those gifts can help us to live God's dream for us. I wonder can I remember what some of them stand for. **Chewing gum;** oh, I remember this one, it's **courage** so that I can stick with what I believe in and stand up for it. That's a really important thing to be able to do particularly when a lot of people no longer think that it's cool to believe in God. **Pretzel,** hm, what is this, **knowledge,** helps us to untie the knots, straighten out our lives and deal with problems. If we really use this in our lives we would be living just like Jesus wants us to. I think I will try one more; **Lollipop:** this is a strange one, what do we do with a lollipop, I wonder if it's right judgement because that helps us to make the best choices and difficult decisions and stops us being a sucker! I think this is a really useful way to remember how these gifts, that the Holy Spirit brings, help us to live God's dream for us and I pray that each one of you here in the Cathedral and watching in your classroom or at home will accept these gifts, open them and use them to help God create the best dream ever for you now and in the future.*

PRAYER OF INTERCESSION:

We bring our prayers before the Lord:

FOR THE CHURCH:

We all belong to the Church which is a family of families. Today we give thanks that as members of this family we can come together in our school and in our parish. We pray that the Holy Spirit will help us to always seek God as we continue our journey to Confirmation.

We pray to the Lord

ALL: Lord, hear our prayer

FOR BISHOP DENIS:

that God's Holy Spirit will continue to strengthen, protect and inspire him as he leads our diocesan family.

We pray to the Lord

ALL: Lord, hear our prayer

FOR THE CANDIDATES: that they are open to the gifts that the Holy Spirit will lavish on them and to using these gifts to help them live the dream that God has for them.

We pray to the Lord **ALL: Lord, hear our prayer**

FOR PEACE: in our world and for all those who have had to leave their homes, their country and their families because of war.

We pray to the Lord **ALL: Lord, hear our prayer**

For our parents, guardians and sponsors:

that they will be the best teachers in the ways of faith for us both now and in the future.

We pray to the Lord **ALL: Lord, hear our prayer**

LEADER: We gather all the prayers that have been spoken here today and the ones that we hold in the silence of our hearts as we pray together in the words that Jesus taught us

Our Father.....

FINAL BLESSING:

LEADER: Loving God, as we come to the end of our retreat and our time of prayer together, we ask your blessing on each one of us and on all who help us on our Confirmation journey. May we have the courage to continue to always seek God, confident that the Holy Spirit is our helper and guide, and rains down the gifts of Wisdom and Understanding, of Right Judgement and Courage, of Knowledge and Reverence upon us so that we might live our lives in wonder and awe of your presence in those we meet and in the world around us. We ask this through Christ our Lord, Amen.

LEADER: Let us bless the Lord

RESPONSE: **Thanks be to God**

PRESENTATION OF THE AFFIRMATIONS

Call each candidate forward to receive their envelope and allow them time to read the affirmations.