

## A Catholic VIP



**St. Francis Xavier**  
(1506–1552)

When Francis Xavier from Spain studied at the University of Paris, he was ambitious. He was a good athlete focused on his career. Then a fellow student, St. Ignatius of Loyola, posed to him a question Jesus had asked: "What does it profit a man if he gains the whole world but loses his soul?" (cf. Mt 16:26). So Francis gave up his life of fame and pleasure and joined Ignatius as a Jesuit. Francis became a priest who was very enthusiastic about spreading the Gospel. He sailed to India where he baptized thousands. Then he worked in Malaysia and Japan. But his dream was to bring the Gospel to China. On the way there he became ill. Francis was taken off the ship and left on an island, where he died in sight of China. This missionary is known as the Apostle of the Indies. His feast day is December 3.

### Who Receives Confirmation?

All people who are baptized can and should receive Confirmation. We prepare by studying the faith more and by praying more intensely. We learn about Jesus, the Holy Spirit, and what it means to belong to the Church as a whole and as a parish. This preparation makes us better able to carry out our responsibilities as Christians. To be confirmed, people must be in the state of grace. For this reason, candidates prepare for this sacrament by receiving the sacrament of Penance in which sins are forgiven.

BTU  
The Eastern Churches call Confirmation "Chrismation."

### The Rite of Confirmation

Except when Confirmation occurs right after Baptism, it begins with a renewal of baptismal promises and a profession of faith. Then the bishop extends his hands over the group to be confirmed and prays. He asks the Father to send the Holy Spirit upon them to be their helper and guide. He asks that they be given the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit. Then the bishop confers the sacrament by anointing each person with chrism on the forehead (the laying on of hands). He says, "Be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit." The Rite ends with the sign of peace.

BTU

In Latin Rite churches, bishops are the ordinary ministers of Confirmation. If necessary, a bishop may ask a priest to administer it. A priest may also confirm someone in danger of death.

### The Mark of Confirmation

A seal makes a document official. Long ago soldiers were marked with their leader's seal. The anointing with chrism marks us with the seal of the Holy Spirit. It means we belong to Christ and share in his mission. Like Baptism, Confirmation gives us an indelible spiritual mark, or character. So it, too, can only be received once.

### The Gifts of the Holy Spirit (cf. no. 1303)

*Wisdom* – I know God's plan, put God first, and see things from his point of view.

*Understanding* – I have insight into what God revealed.

*Counsel* – I seek and am open to good advice. I possess right judgment.

*Fortitude* – I have strength and courage to do what is right even when it's difficult.

*Knowledge* – I know God and what he expects of me.

*Piety* – I love and worship God and respect all that God created.

*Fear of the Lord (Wonder and awe)* – I respond to God's holiness with wonder, humility, and holy respect that keeps me from sinning.

Did You Know?

A Confirmation sponsor is a practicing Catholic who will be a guide and model for the one to be confirmed. It's recommended that the sponsor be one of the person's godparents.