



Programme Outline

The structure of *You Shall Be My Witnesses* is based on the sections of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*:

- What we believe!
- What we celebrate!
- What we live!
- What we pray!

There are Five Sessions

Session 1	Belonging
	How do I belong?
Session 2	Believing
	What do I believe?
Session 3	Being a Christian
	How can I be a Christian?
Session 4	Becoming a Witness
	How do I share the Good News?
Session 5	Beginning Again
	What happens next?

Note:

This programme is usually delivered in a parish setting with volunteers who facilitate the programme. Parents are encouraged to join in at the end of each session for prayer. Children are asked to complete some tasks and worksheets at home and these activities provide a conversation for both the parents and children around the topics discussed in each session. In the light of the current situation I would like to encourage all members of the family to provide the support and encouragement needed to prepare your child/ children for the sacrament of confirmation.

Acknowledgement:

I would like to offer my sincere gratitude to Maeve Mahon, who developed the *You Shall Be My Witnesses* programme for parishes and for giving us permission to use this wonderful resource in a new way to help our Confirmation candidates prepare for the Sacrament of Confirmation



Providing a Sacred Space

In order to deliver each session, I invite you to create a sacred space in your home. This sacred space will also serve as a focus of prayer at the end of each session.

You will need:

A candle (battery is safe)

A white or red cloth

A cross or Bible (or both)

(insert image of a sacred space)



Session 3

Being a Christian: How Can I Be a Christian?

Start the session by lighting the candle and saying the opening prayer together.

Opening Prayer

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God pour out Your Holy Spirit upon us, especially upon _____ (child's/children's name (s)) as he/ she/they prepare for the sacrament of confirmation. Amen

If we are going to take Confirmation seriously, we have to believe that it will make a difference in our lives; that it will have an effect on the way we live; that it will influence the kinds of decisions we make. But the most important thing to remember is that we don't have to do this on our own, that there is help and support for us.

THE HOLY SPIRIT AS HELPER

Do you remember how the Apostles felt when Jesus was crucified?

They were scared

They felt alone

Some of them left Jerusalem

Some of them hid away.

But Jesus had promised them that he would not leave them alone, that he would send them a helper, someone who would give them the strength to continue the work that he had begun.

Jesus sent us His Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit came to the Apostles when they were most frightened. They Were all hiding in a room because they were afraid to go outside. They were afraid that they would be recognised as friends of Jesus and that they would be arrested and put to death.

The story of Pentecost tells us what happen wthey the Apostles were given the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Read the story carefully with your parents, read it slowly and read it twice.



Acts 2:1-6 International Children's Bible (ICB)

The Coming of the Holy Spirit

When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a noise came from heaven. It sounded like a strong wind blowing. This noise filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw something that looked like flames of fire. The flames were separated and stood over each person there. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they began to speak different languages. The Holy Spirit was giving them the power to speak these languages.

There were some religious Jews staying in Jerusalem who were from every country in the world. When they heard this noise, a crowd came together. They were all surprised, because each one heard them speaking in his own language.

The Holy Spirit helped the Apostles to have the courage to go out among the people of Jerusalem and tell them about Jesus. Later on, in the Acts of the Apostles we are told that:

Acts 2:41-42 International Children's Bible (ICB)

Then those people who accepted what Peter said were baptized. About 3,000 people were added to the number of believers that day. They spent their time learning the apostles' teaching. And they continued to share, to break bread, and to pray together.

On the day of your Confirmation you too, will be gifted with the Holy Spirit, the same Holy Spirit that came to you in Baptism. This time the Gifts of the Holy Spirit will be given to you and these gifts will help you to live like followers of Jesus. The bishop or priest will say the following prayer. Read it with your family.

Send you Holy Spirit upon them to be their helper and guide. Give them the Spirit of Wisdom and Understanding, the Spirit of Right Judgement and Courage, the Spirit of Knowledge and Reference. Fill them with the Spirit of Wonder and Awe in Your presence. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen

RITE OF CONFIRMATION

Did you notice that this pray asks God to send the Holy Spirit to do two things?

To be their helper and guide.

Which gift do you think is the most important?



(Discuss these questions with your family)

The Gifts of The Holy Spirit

- **Wisdom**

The gift of wisdom helps us to look at things from God's point of view. When we look at things from God's point of view it is easier to make the right decision about how to treat others and how best to live our lives.

- **Understanding**

The gift of understanding asks us to look at the world we live in through the eyes of faith. This will encourage us to create a just world, where all are treated equally and fairly.

- **Right Judgement**

The gift of right judgement asks us to be open to other gifts of the Spirit, wisdom, knowledge and understanding, so that we may always act in a way that will make the world a better place.

- **Courage**

The gift of courage helps us to accept the challenge of being a person of faith- it is not an easy choice to make. We must be in the service of God, dare to stand out from the crowd, be proud to be a child of God.

- **Knowledge**

The gift of knowledge lets us see God in everything – the people around us and the world in which we live. This will cause us to think and act differently.



- **Reverence**

The gift of reverence asks us to honour, respect and give thanks and praise to God. If we do this then we will also honour and respect all people because they are created in the image and likeness of God

- **Wonder and Awe in God's Presence**

These are the gifts that help us be aware of the greatness of God. They encourage us to take time to reflect on the glory of God, which can be seen all around us and in each one of us. They remind us in a special way to take great care of the environment and to work to keep it safe from destruction.

It is important to remember that these gifts are not like birthday or Christmas gifts. These gifts do not break, you cannot lose them, they don't go out of date. You can however, forget about them and of course you might choose not to use them and that would be a real shame.

These kinds of gifts live in you, in your heart and in your mind; they help you to be the best person you can be. But you must choose to use them; no one else can do that for you.

(Insert image of the Holy Spirit with tongues of fire)



Activity

Look at the following situations and choose which gifts might be most useful to us.

What would you do?

1. You received a text on your phone from one of your friends. The text says some really nasty things about someone else in your class. You are supposed to pass it on to the people in your phonebook. The person is not really one of your friends but something doesn't feel right about forwarding such a horrible text. You imagine how you would feel if it was about you. What do you do?

Which gift (s) of the Holy Spirit might help you in your decision?

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2. There is a new girl in your class. She comes from another country and doesn't speak very much English. Her clothes are very different from the other children in the class. The teacher puts her sitting beside you and asks you to help her settle in. Some of your friends laugh at her in the playground; make fun of her accent and her clothes. They won't let her join in any of your games. When you try to tell them that this isn't fair, they laugh at you and call you 'teacher's pet'. What do you do?

Which gift (s) of the Holy Spirit might help you in your decision?

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3. The priest comes into the class looking for people to volunteer to read at Mass. You would really like to do it but you know that some of your friends will laugh at you because they don't think it's cool to go to Mass. What do you do?

Which gift (s) of the Holy Spirit might help you in your decision?

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4. You know that one of your friends has started to drink alcohol. They are in your house after school and take some beer from the fridge. Your parent (s) discover the beer is gone and ask you if you know what happened to it. If you tell the truth your friend will be in serious trouble, but you are also worried about what will happen if they keep drinking. What do you do?

Which gift (s) of the Holy Spirit might help you in your decision?

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Gifts of the Holy Spirit Word Search

T K K E L C C C G R L E W G G
I N H N R J D V E X W I I N H
R K E D O M Z V P A N D H I O
I A O M O W E F D D N C R D E
P H I D E R L N M G K Z V N P
S P S T E G A E D D B F H A E
V I M N N R D S D O R T S T N
W C C O E W K U E G V G T S T
N E C D M X O R J M E E U R E
G C N N D T B K P T A L G E C
J O G E G A R U O C H L W D O
W R Z W D C F S F S O G F N S
H O L Y T R I N I T Y S I U T
S E V E N F R B S S X A X R H
A Q S F J H E T H Z C P F D I

COURAGE

RIGHTJUDGEMENT

SEVEN

FIRE

SPIRIT

FLAMES

UNDERSTANDING

HOLYTRINITY

WIND

KNOWLEDGE

WISDOM

PENTECOST

WONDERANDAWE

REVERENCE

DOVE



Closing Prayer

Send your Holy Spirit upon us to be our helper and guide.

Give us the Spirit of Wisdom and Understanding,

the Spirit of Right Judgement and Courage,

the Spirit of Knowledge and Reverence.

Fill us with the Spirit of Wonder and Awe in Your presence.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.