

# The Confirmation Challenge

## The Purpose:

The primary purpose of the 30-Day Confirmation Countdown is to prepare Confirmands to make an informed, confident reaffirmation of their baptismal vows. (We cannot reaffirm something we have not fully explored or understand.) The secondary purpose is to witness to and engage the parish in a public project of preparation for the renewal of baptismal vows.

## The Pedagogy:

The “30-Day Confirmation Countdown” is an example of **micro-formation** and **catechumenal metabolism**.

**Micro-formation** is a limited and intentional formation experience/immersion for individuals or communities with clear formation goals and thoughtful assessment of whether or not these goals were met at the conclusion of the experience. Micro-formation experiences can be one hour, one day, one week or one month. What makes a formation experience “micro-formation” is the heightened intentionality and relentless focus on the learning process and learning outcomes from a fixed beginning and fixed ending of the experience.

Experiences of “micro-formation” have the greatest impact in faith communities that have consistent and committed rituals and rhythms of spiritual growth based in intergenerational engagement of liturgy, scripture, fellowship, teaching, preaching, service and mentoring. “Micro-formation” is most effective as a means to intensify ongoing spiritual teaching, learning, and practice in a Christian community. “Micro-formation” can catalyze but not create a formation culture in a faith community. In the best-case scenario, once a micro-formation event has happened in a faith community, it generates joy, curiosity and community in ways that deepen the understanding of and the longing for greater spiritual growth within the existing ecology of the parish. A week of summer camp (for campers and adult volunteers), a pilgrimage, a mission trip, a seasonal bible study, Vacation Bible School: all these are examples of micro-formation that can, with the Holy Spirit, awaken and the deepen an individual’s desire for knowing God in that faith community.

An experience that demonstrates **catechumenal metabolism** is one that follows the four stages of the ancient Catechumenate, offering liturgical experiences for the entire community to mark thresholds throughout the process.

**Inquiry Stage** (ends with the Rite of Admission)

For the Confirmation Challenge: *Dinner/meal with Rector and Confirmands/Sponsors, For the parish, August preaching/emails*

**Catechumenate Stage** (ends with the Rite of Enrollment)

For the Confirmation Challenge: *Sunday sermon prior to Sept. 13<sup>th</sup>*

**Intense Preparation Stage** (ends with Baptism)

For the Confirmation Challenge: *30-Day Confirmation Challenge*

**Mystagogy Stage** (continues in baptismal living, optional Rite of Vocational Affirmation)

For the Confirmation Challenge: *Rector meal with confirmands and sponsors, Sunday preaching/discussing after Confirmation*

### **Learning Outcomes**

Participants will:

Form and deepen relationships with other adult Christians at St. Clement's (in the sponsor-Confirmand relationship, the Rector-Confirmand relationship, the Confirmand-Confirmand relationship, etc.).

Commit to daily spiritual practices designated by the daily prompt and reflect on their experience along the way and in a meal with other Confirmands and the Rector after Confirmation.

Expand their knowledge of the Bible.

Learn new ways to pray.

Demonstrate increased confidence articulating their doubts and convictions about faith.

Build and own a brief personal testimony of one's faith story with God.

Explore the Baptismal Covenant and write a personal statement of faith.

### Outline of the 30-Days of Prompts

The 30 days will contain 5 stages of spiritual development toward renewal of vows:

Day 1 - 10	INWARD	Where is God in your life?
Day 11-15	LOOK AROUND	Where is God already moving?
Day 16-20	RENUCIATION	Where are the forces holding back God's grace?
Day 21-25	COMMITMENT	What truths do you embrace and desire to vow to God?
Day 26-30	OUTWARD	Where is God calling you to proclaim and perform your vows?

- Day 1 Think about the last 24 hours. What has given you joy? Name it, and give thanks.
- Day 2 Reflect on your experience of going to church. Where in the church or during worship do you feel God's presence?
- Day 3 Who introduced you to Jesus? How did they introduce you to Jesus?
- Day 4 Think of your life. When did you feel close to God? When did you feel far away? What brought you home?
- Day 5 What is your favorite piece of scripture? Why do you love it?
- Day 6 Write a thank you post, note or email to someone who's been influential in your faith life.
- Day 7 On this Feast Day (Feast of the Holy Cross) in which we honor the Cross of Jesus, what do you feel or think about when you see a Cross?
- Day 8 Read 1 Corinthians 12. What are your spiritual gifts? What part of the Body are you?
- Day 9 Is there someone in your life that shares your faith? Ask them a question today about their faith.
- Day 10 Is there a piece of music, art or film where you see or experience God? Have you ever shared that fact with anyone?
- Day 11 Take a five-minute walk around your neighborhood or work location. What do you see? Who do you see?
- Day 12 If you were to "proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ," in your neighborhood, where would it be and why? What is stopping you from doing it now?

- Day 13 Social Media exercise: scroll through your Facebook or Twitter feed. What are the themes of joy or concern? Where do you see God in your feed?
- Day 14 Visit (in person or online) a forum on an issue in your community. What do you hear there? What needs healing?
- Day 15 Reflect on your immediate and extended family. Where are the wounds? Where is there healing? Where do you see God moving?
- Day 16 Reflect on what you love about your neighborhood. What forces threaten what you love about where you live?
- Day 17 Reflect on what you love about your workplace or workspace. What realities suck joy out of that space?
- Day 18 Think of your friendships. What habits of yours or theirs undermine trust and love?
- Day 19 What causes you to feel selfish or act in selfishness? How do you turn away from these desires?  
How do you “repent and turn to the Lord” when you act selfishly or destructively?
- Day 20 Read over the Baptismal Covenant (found on page 3 of the Confirmation Challenge booklet and page 304-305 in the Book of Common Prayer). In what areas do you need to grow, with the help from the Holy Spirit?
- Day 21 Reflect on your core values. What two or three values would you end a friendship over?
- Day 22 Reflect on a time when you made a sacrifice to stand up for something or someone you believed in or felt called to defend? Has someone ever done this for you?
- Day 23 Reflect on a time when you made a public commitment. Have you remained faithful to it? How has it changed your life?
- Day 24 Have you ever made a commitment that you now regret? What has changed in you that causes regret?
- Day 25 In your Baptismal Covenant, you promised to “seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself.” In what ways are you serving others in your circle of influence, i.e. family, work, school, etc.?
- Day 26 In the Baptismal Covenant, you promised to “respect the dignity of every human being.” Today, try to give your undivided attention to

- everyone you meet. How does it feel?
- Day 27 Perform a simple act of intentional love today. If asked why, answer authentically and share your faith and how it motivates you.
- Day 28 Tomorrow is your Confirmation, Reception or Renewal of Baptismal Vows. Read and pray through the section on the Holy Spirit in the Book of Common Prayer, p. 852 and in the Challenge Booklet. What resonates with you?
- Day 29 TODAY is Confirmation and Reaffirmation! Reflect on the last 29 days. How do you feel different
- Day 30 Reflect on the liturgy yesterday. What was the most inspirational part of the Confirmation, Renewal of Vows or Reception service for you? Where did you see or feel God?

Here is a sample of the daily social media posts:

THE 30-DAY  
CONFIRMATION CHALLENGE

**Think about the last 24 hours. What has God given you that has brought you joy? Name it, and give thanks.**

**DAY 1  
SEPTEMBER 15**

Church of Saint Clement