



Confirmation Discernment Interview Questions

There is no accurate set of questions or test that will fully show the movement of an individual's heart and mind toward Christ. The only true way to determine conversion comes within the context of a conversation steeped in a trusted relationship between the interviewer and the candidate. In addition to this conversation, Pope Francis reminds us that conversion lasts a life time, is not a one time only event and can be seen in the gradual change of a person's actions and how they live their life. The following pages are a compilation of discernment questions that have been collected from different organizations and programs. These questions can be used as is or be used as a road map for simply having an intentional conversation with the young people in your small group.

Remember an Interview = a Conversation

Learn how to have a mentoring conversation:

(Ask your parish leader for the instructions on how to create your free accounts)

Franciscan Catechetical Institute: [Mentor Formation Track](#)

YDisciple: [Introductory Leader Training](#)

Christian Initiation of Adults

Discernment

TeamRCIA.com

"Receive the sign of the cross on your ears,
that you may hear the voice of the Lord."
Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, 56

Listening to God's Voice

Hearing and Responding

A big part of becoming and being Catholic is learning to hear God's voice and responding. Our Scriptures tell us many stories of people hearing God and responding.

Abraham heard God's voice from an angel, a "messenger" of God, asking him to sacrifice his only son, Isaac. Confused and probably afraid, Abraham responds by trusting God's voice (Gn 22). Moses heard God's voice coming from a surprising and unusual source—a burning bush. He responded to this unexpected encounter with the Divine by taking off his shoes and accepting God's call to set his people free (Ex 3). The Samaritan woman at the well heard God's voice in the midst of her everyday chores, in an ordinary conversation with a stranger. She responded to Jesus by becoming the first evangelist proclaiming the Good News to her village (Jn 4). And Mary heard God's voice in an angel with unbelievable and perhaps terrifying news for one so young—she would bear God's child. She responded in faith with amen, "let it be done" (Lk 1).

Perhaps Adam and Eve's sin was not just disobeying God but not responding when he called, for when they heard his voice after eating the apple, they hid themselves (Gn 3).

We pray for these your servants who have opened their ears and hearts to your word. Grant that they may grasp your moment of grace (RCIA, 102).

Voices in My Head?

Unlike some of the Scripture stories, however, we will probably hear God's voice in much more ordinary ways. Most of us will never have an angel appear to us with a divine message from God. Nor will many of us encounter a burning bush or other supernatural revelation of God. More than likely, we'll hear God the way the woman at the well did—in a simple conversation with another person while doing the simple things we do everyday—or the way Mary did—in an unexpected turn of events.

As Catholics, we believe that God is constantly trying to reveal God's self to each person, using the ordinary things we experience in our lives to be the "messengers" for God's

word. In our family, friends, and the familiar events of our life, through the stranger and the new experience, and most especially in

the poor, the outcast, and those events that shake us to the core, God is trying to say, "Here I am. Listen."

At critical moments in our lives, God's voice may be very strong: at the birth of a new family member or at the death of a loved one; when we fall in love, or when we break up; when tragedy happens or when we are overwhelmed by goodness; when we are deciding on a career, a vocation, a life-long partner; when we are hurt, or when we cannot forgive; when we need to choose a new way of life.

When we hear God's voice, we might feel unsettled or out of sorts. We might feel that we need to do *something*, to make a change or be more resolved. Discovering who God intends us to be (our truest self), what God is asking of us at this moment in our life, and making a decision to act is called discernment.

Words to know

assembly: the baptized and catechumens gathered together in prayer, especially for the sacraments

catechumen: Greek, meaning "one in whom word echoes"; one who celebrated the Rite of Acceptance

discernment: from Latin, *discernere*, meaning "to cut away"; a lifelong process for listening and responding to God and being the person God intends us to be

conversion: a lifelong process of seeing and choosing a new path in light of God's call; an internal process revealed in external practice

dismissal: a sending; catechumens are sent after homily to reflect on God's Word; the baptized are sent at Mass to "go, love and serve the Lord;" not meant to separate but to enable one's mission

RCIA: stands for "Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults;" process for becoming Christian

sponsor: a person given as a gift from the Church to catechumens, to serve as their companions who help them discern God's will for them, share their own faith and discernment, and support them with prayer, guidance, and presence at the rites

Do you remember a time when you heard God's voice and knew it was God speaking? Where or who did it come from? What did you feel when you heard God's message for you? How did you respond?

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(continued on next page)

When was the last time something critical or significant happened in your life? What was God communicating to you at that moment?

Discerning God's Call

For Catholics, there are four honored places we listen for God's voice: in Scripture, in our Catholic tradition and teaching, in the Church community, and in our own conscience. Those who are preparing to become Catholics—the catechumens—participate in an on-going process of discernment throughout their preparation, learning to listen for God's voice in these four principle ways. They do this to continue growing in their new faith in Christ and to know when they are ready to take the next step toward initiation into the Church. We who are already baptized serve as models for the catechumens, teaching them by our example how to listen for God's voice each day, especially when we need to make an important decision.

Scripture

The Scriptures reveal who God is and how God relates with his people. The Scriptures project God's voice most clearly when it is proclaimed in the assembly within the liturgy and connected to the real-life stories of that assembly in the homily. In the Gospel, especially, we believe that Christ is speaking directly to us, calling us again to listen and respond.

In a special way, the catechumens listen and respond to God in the Scriptures by "breaking open" the Word. They are dismissed from the Mass with a catechist to "feast" on the Scriptures and homily they just heard—to chew on them, in a sense—and to discover together what God is calling them to do at that moment in their faith journey.

Church Tradition and Teaching

You can't find answers in the Scriptures to every one of life's problems. But you can find Jesus' promise that the Holy Spirit will remain with us always, guiding us, instructing us in everything (Jn 14:26). That Spirit has led our Church through the ages, inspiring saints and holy women and men to hear and

respond to God's voice in their own time and situation. Church tradition is the collective wisdom and presence of that Spirit, showing us how our ancestors interpreted not only Scripture but also the signs of the times through which God was acting.

Church Community

The apostles didn't receive the Spirit as individuals but as a community. We believe that in the faithful, there is a "sense" of what God is calling us to be. When two or three are gathered, God is there. And so learning to hear God's voice is a group exercise. Together we listen for God with those we trust and who know us best—our companions, literally, those we share bread with. Our companions help us to hear and see the things we may be missing. They do this not just by what they say but also by how they live. Catechumens are given special companions called sponsors to help them discern God's voice throughout their journey to initiation.

Who are your companions? Who is looking to you be their companion in faith? How can your own actions model for the catechumens a life of listening and responding to God?

Our Conscience

For those with faith, God's word is not far from them—"it is something very near to you, already in your mouths and in your hearts" (Dt 30:14). God's Spirit is in us, guiding our conscience into knowing the path God wants us to take. If after consulting all the other areas of discernment, we still feel uneasy, it may be because our conscience, God's Spirit in us, knows it is not satisfied. But if after true discernment, we feel at peace, even with a hard decision, we can trust that we have listened and responded well to God's voice.

Helped by the example and support of sponsors...and the entire Christian community, the catechumens learn to turn more readily to God (RCIA, 75).

A Process for Discernment

When faced with a difficult decision or turning-point in your life, or you just need to know better where God is leading you at this time, try this process.

Pray daily

Praying is less about saying things to God and more about being still to listen to God. Find a quiet place, and just be still and open to what God is trying to reveal to you. Making the sign of the cross, reading the Bible, or praying the Lord's Prayer may help you focus on being attentive to God.

Participate at Mass

Keep your eyes, ears, mouth, and hands open to encountering God when you participate at Sunday Mass. Read the Sunday readings before you come to Mass. Be present to those around you, especially the stranger. Bring your concerns to prayer in the community. Reflect with others after Mass.

Look to the saints and other holy people

Read about the saints and their writings. Read Scripture stories about our ancestors in faith. Pay attention to people in your church or in your life whom you admire because of their life of faith. Share your faith with them, and let them be your companion and sounding board.

Return to prayer

Be still again in prayer, and listen to the small voice within you. Imagine making your decision, and notice your feelings. Journal about them if it helps. Which decision gives you a sense of peace? Which choice feels right with who God intends you to be? When this peace comes, give thanks to God.



PRE-CONFIRMATION INTERVIEW

These interview questions are designed to assess your candidates' understanding and readiness to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. This "Pre-Confirmation Interview" will also provide you with an opportunity to answer candidates' questions and encourage them as they make their final preparations to receive the sacrament.

1. How would you describe your journey toward Confirmation? What have you enjoyed about the *Chosen* program? What have you found challenging?
2. How have you grown during these months of preparation?
3. Have you experienced any changes in your relationships with those around you?
4. Has your relationship with God changed? In what ways?
5. If you were to meet someone who had never heard of Jesus, who would you say he is? How would you describe your relationship with him?
6. What are some things you like about being Catholic? Are there things about the Church that you find challenging or difficult? Are there things you find inspiring?
7. What is prayer? How do you pray?
8. What is the Bible? What role does Scripture play in your life?
9. What is sin? What are some things you can do to avoid it?
10. Can you name the sacraments? How do the sacraments help you live out your faith?
11. What is the Eucharist? Has your understanding of and participation in the Mass changed in any way?
12. What is Confirmation? Why do you want to receive this sacrament?
13. How will you live out your faith as a confirmed, adult member of the Church? What talents or gifts has God given you that will help to build his kingdom?
14. What are the Gifts of the Holy Spirit? Can you name the Fruits of the Holy Spirit? How are they related? Why are they important?
15. What saint name did you choose? Why?
16. Who is your Confirmation sponsor? Why did you choose him or her?
17. What are some ways you can discern God's will for your life?
18. What are some things you can do to continue to grow in your faith?
19. If someone asked you how to get to heaven, what would you say?
20. Do you have any questions before receiving Confirmation?

Final Interview Questions & Information: Discerning Readiness for Confirmation

"To receive Confirmation one must be in a state of grace. One should receive the sacrament of Penance in order to be cleansed for the gift of the Holy Spirit. More intense prayer should prepare one to receive the strength and graces of the Holy Spirit with docility and readiness to act."
(CCC 1310)

Overview & purpose of the final interview

This final interview is to come back together and ask/discuss any questions or concerns that may have come up during the pre-interview or preparation process. It is also the time to ask the candidates to make a choice to receive the sacrament. There needs to be an understanding that there is a distinct difference between committing to the preparation process and deciding to receive the sacrament. By agreeing to be fully initiated into the Catholic Church and committing to life in light of this sacrament. The focus of this interview is discerning readiness for Confirmation. In one respect it is the priest/delegate finding if the candidate has gone through any conversion through the process of preparation, but also, **and more importantly**, the conversation will help the candidate to make an informed decision to receive the sacrament of Confirmation. This interview should be done one-on-one with the candidate to ensure there are no outside pressures.

Questions

Here are some questions for the candidates to ask themselves in preparation for the interview and then for the interviewer (whether it be the priest or the delegate) to follow up on. It may be helpful to have them journal or spend some time in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament with these questions.

- Is it your desire to receive the sacrament of Confirmation?
- What has been the most important thing you have learned about God and his Church these last few months?
- How have you seen God working in your life throughout the preparation process?
- What is your prayer like?
- Do you embrace the teachings of Jesus Christ and the demands of discipleship?
- Do you believe in God? How has your belief deepened these last few months? Or is there still some doubt in your heart? Can you name where that doubt came from?
- What are some teachings of the Catholic faith that you struggle with? How do you deal with uncertainty and doubt?
- Does your life in the Church impact you moment by moment or do you still separate what you do in church from what you do in school or at home?

Confirmation Final Interview Notes

To be used by the interviewer to keep a simple record that can be shared with the pastor.

Name of Interviewer:**Location of Interviews:****Date of Interviews:**

Confirmandi Name: _____ **Time of Interview:** _____**Circle One:** No Concerns Minor Concerns Major Concerns**Notes:** *(notes required for major/minor concerns)*

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Discernment Conversation

Teen meeting with Sponsor/Parent of Teen

Sponsor: Please talk with your teen about his or her growth in faith. Please also take time to share what your faith means to you, what doubts you've had, and how you have seen yourself grow. **Begin with prayer.**

Discuss with teen: Do you remember the first day you came to RCIA? What were you thinking? What were you feeling? Do you think / feel differently now? Explain.

Faith companion / sponsor share:

- Tell a little about your own faith journey. Did you have "ups and downs" when you were a teen?
- *** What does Jesus Christ mean to you in your life now?
- Why are you a practicing Catholic today?

Sponsor: ask and discuss with teen the following questions. Make notes about the answers.

What does Jesus Christ mean to you in your life now? _____

Besides coming to church on Sunday, what difference does being a "real" Christian make in you --- at school? at home? with friends? on dates?

Have you seen yourself change in the last few months? Explain.

(for example)

- Do you pray each day?
- Do you read the Bible?
- Do you think about God more than you did last year?
- Are you more kind, honest, fair, respectful, etc. to family, friends and teachers? (Tell how.)

Make a list of some of the things that you have learned about God and the Catholic Church. _____

What do you still want to know? _____

Are you going to Mass every Sunday? _____ Why or why not? _____

What prayers do you know? _____

One or two of the most important things I have learned:

To me, Jesus Christ is _____

To me, being Catholic means _____

☐ I believe that I am ready yet to be confirmed and to receive
(circle the sacraments you are preparing for) Baptism / First Communion / Confirmation
because _____

☐ I want to wait to celebrate sacraments because _____

Teen Name _____ Date _____
Teen Signature _____



*Share in the
gospel's blessings.*



Discernment Interview Prior to the Rite of Acceptance or the Rite of Welcoming

Interviewer: Before beginning, read RCIA 42 and 43. This meeting should be preceded by a discussion with any members of the RCIA community (clergy, team members, godparents, sponsors, etc.) who have assisted in the formation of the individual regarding the person's readiness to take this step.

Use the following questions as a guide for a conversation with the inquirer. As you talk, let the inquirer know how you have seen God at work in his or her life during the inquiry period. Be sure to explain that, while some individuals may be ready to go through this Rite at this point, others may not, and that if someone needs more time to discern, learn about, and decide to follow the Catholic way of life, that is fine. If the individual is interested in celebrating these Rites, and you or others with whom you have spoken have concerns about his or her readiness, explain your concerns and that it might be in the inquirer's best interest to continue to discern for a period of time. At the conclusion of your conversation, unless you or the inquirer needs more time to come to a decision, let him or her know whether or not he or she will participate in the Rite of Acceptance or Welcoming. Notes on the conversation should be taken as needed.

Name: _____

Seeking admission as a ☐ catechumen (unbaptized) ☐ candidate (baptized)

Godparent(s)/Sponsor(s), if determined: _____

- 1) What has been your experience of the sessions up to this point? What has affected you the most? What have you enjoyed the most? What has challenged you the most?
- 2) What changes have occurred in your relationship with God or with your family or friends during this time?
- 3) What kind of changes do you see in yourself?
- 4) How has your relationship with your godparent/sponsor (if established) been working out?
- 5) What experiences have you had in this parish community up to this point? Are you beginning to have a sense of belonging to this parish community?
- 6) What experiences have you had in reading the Scriptures?
- 7) Tell me about how you pray.
- 8) How would you describe your relationship with Jesus Christ?
- 9) To what degree do you see yourself turning away from sin and developing a desire for virtue?
- 10) Do you feel that you have a good grasp of the gospel (the good news) that Jesus Christ came to reveal? What do you most desire to learn more about?
- 11) How would you describe what being a Catholic/living a Catholic life means? What does it mean to you that a Catholic is called to live a life of charity?
- 12) What does it mean to be a member of the Body of Christ? A member of the Roman Catholic Church?

After explaining the importance of the Rite of Acceptance or the Rite of Welcoming, and the questions that will be asked of the inquirer during the Rite, then ask:

- 13) Do you understand what is being asked of you in the Rite of Acceptance or the Rite of Welcoming?
- 14) Do you feel that you are prepared to take this step in the initiation process?



Discernment Interview Prior to the Rite of Election or the Rite of the Call to Continuing Conversion

Interviewer: Before beginning, read RCIA 120 and the questions that are asked of the catechumens and candidates during the Rite of Sending (RCIA 537-542) and the Rites of Election and the Call to Continuing Conversion (RCIA 551-557). This meeting should be preceded by a discussion with any members of the RCIA community (clergy, team members, godparents, sponsors, etc.) who have assisted in the formation of the individual regarding the person's readiness to take this step.

Use the following questions as a guide for a conversation with the catechumen or candidate. As you talk, let him or her know how you have seen God at work in his or her life during the initiation process. Be sure to explain that, while some individuals may be ready to celebrate the sacraments at this time, others may not, and that if someone needs more time to learn about and decide to live the Catholic way of life, that is fine. If the individual is interested in celebrating these Rites, and you or others with whom you have spoken have concerns about his or her readiness, explain your concerns and say that it might be in the person's best interest to delay celebrating the sacraments for a period of time. At the conclusion of your conversation, unless you or the catechumen/candidate needs more time to come to a decision, let the person know whether or not he or she will participate in the Rite of Sending and Rite of Election or the Rite of the Call to Continuing Conversion. Notes on the conversation should be taken as needed.

Name: _____

☐ Catechumen ☐ Candidate for full communion ☐ Candidate for completion of initiation

Godparent(s)/Sponsor(s): _____

- 1) What has been your experience during the initiation process? What has affected you the most? What have you enjoyed the most? What has challenged you the most?
 - 2) How has your life changed in the time that you have been in the catechumenal process?
 - 3) What changes have occurred in your relationship with God or with your family or friends during this time?
 - 4) How has your relationship with your godparent/sponsor been working out?
 - 5) Tell me about some of the people in the parish whom you have come to know or experiences in the parish you have had during the initiation process.
 - 6) How comfortable are you reading the Scriptures?
 - 7) Tell me about how you pray.
 - 8) How would you describe your relationship with Jesus Christ?
 - 9) Do you find yourself relating to the Blessed Virgin Mary and the saints?
 - 10) Do you understand what it means to be faithful to the teachings and magisterium of the Church?
 - 11) Do you feel that you have a good grasp of the teachings of the Church? Do you have questions about any of them? What areas do you wish to learn more about?
 - 12) Do you understand what becoming a member of the Catholic Church entails? How would you describe what being a Catholic/living a Catholic life means?
 - 13) To what degree do you see yourself turning away from sin and developing a desire for virtue?
 - 14) How do you understand the call to holiness? What does it mean to you that a Catholic is called to live a life of charity?
 - 15) Do you desire the sacraments? Specifically the Eucharist?
- Explain to the initiate what will take place at the Rite of Sending (RCIA 537-542) and the Rite of Election or the Rite of the Call to Continuing Conversion (RCIA 551-557), then ask:
- 16) Do you understand what is being asked of you in these Rites? Are you prepared to take this step?
 - 17) Do you wish to be baptized/be received into full communion/complete the sacraments of initiation?