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## A Teacher's Guide to Lutheran Confirmation

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### Lesson 5: Conducting the Confirmation Class

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#### How do I conduct the Confirmation class?

The following instructions are not rigid rules that must be followed. They are offered as good advice. Your particular congregation, parents, and students may make it necessary to adjust the program.

It is very important for you to **prepare** for each class with prayer and study of the parts of the catechism, along with the Bible passages for each section. Think carefully about what you want your students to learn and remember from the class. See "**What are my teaching goals?**" above.

For best results, confirmation classes should be held weekly, and at a set time. Sometimes it is convenient for parents if the class is held before or after the Sunday worship service. Perhaps the pastor can teach the confirmation students while members are teaching the younger children in Sunday school.

A good amount of time for the class is 90 minutes. It is helpful for both students and the teacher if there is a short break (about 10 minutes) in the middle. Here is a suggested step-by-step procedure for teaching the class:

1. Open with prayer.
2. Ask the students to recite the memory work which you assigned previously.
3. Review the main ideas from the previous class by asking questions of the students.
4. Open to the current section of the Catechism. There will be questions, answers, and supporting Bible passages. Read the question, then begin to discuss the Bible passages. Explain the meaning of the passages to the students, then ask them questions. Your goal is to lead the students to understand God's Word, and to arrive at the answers to the questions for themselves.
5. Boredom and inattention are your enemies. You can fight them in these ways:
  - a. Make it clear that you expect the students to give you their full attention. They should be sitting up straight and not slouched over. The students should have only their class materials, with no distractions such as electronic devices.
  - b. Keep eye contact with your students. They will not pay attention if you have your eyes on your book all the time.

- c. Use the questioning method so that the students themselves are participating and arriving at the answers themselves.
  - d. Use stories from the Bible or your own experiences to teach the point which is being discussed.
6. As time is ending, make a note of the place in the catechism where you should start next time.
  7. Assign memory work for the next class. From the passages discussed that day, select two or three from your Catechism book. If the students have the same book, have them mark the passages to memorize. If they do not have the book, have them write down the memory assignment in their exercise book. **Be sure to read the passages together and explain the meaning of each one** so that the students understand what they are memorizing. It is also helpful for students to memorize the parts of the Small Catechism.

For example, here is a memory work assignment having to do with the Fifth Commandment:

- a. The Fifth Commandment: **You shall not murder.**

*What does this mean?* We should fear and love God that we do not hurt nor harm our neighbor's body; but we should help and be a friend to him in every bodily need.

\* Passages:

- **Genesis 9:6** - "Whoever sheds man's blood, by man his blood shall be shed; for in the image of God He made man."
- **1 John 3:15** -- "Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him."
- **Ephesians 4:32** - And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God for Christ's sake also forgave you.

**It is also very helpful** for the students to learn, over time, to recite the list of the books of the Bible.

It can be difficult to lead your students to memorize key Bible passages, but it is worth the effort!

*"I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you. Blessed are you, O LORD; teach me your statutes!" (Psalm 119:11-12)*

8. Close with prayer. You may wish to close each class with "Luther's Evening Prayer," which you will find in your larger Catechism book. Over time the students will come to know this prayer by heart and can use it as their own evening prayer for years to come.

### **Short Answer Study Questions:**

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1. How should a teacher prepare for confirmation class?
2. Why is it helpful to hold classes on a regular weekly schedule?
3. How long should a confirmation class be?
4. List four ways to fight boredom and inattention in class.
5. According to Psalm 119:11-12, what is the benefit of memorizing God's Word?