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| GUEST KAI: | Hi there. I have a room booked for tonight. Top-floor suite. |
| HOTEL CLERK LIBBY: | Wonderful. Top-floor suite. That comes with perks -- the seven gifts in your name. |
| GUEST KAI: | Chesterton. That's my traveling pseudonym. You know, avoid the paparazzi. |
| HOTEL CLERK LIBBY: | Did you confirm? |
| GUEST KAI: | No, but I did book the room over a year ago. |
| HOTEL CLERK LIBBY: | But we sent you an email, and we require confirmation. |
| GUEST KAI: | Why? |
| HOTEL CLERK LIBBY: | To remind you of your commitment and for the sake of other guests who want to be here. |
| GUEST KAI: | But I need a place to sleep. |
| HOTEL CLERK LIBBY: | Do you wanna book a room right now? |
| GUEST KAI: | Yes, that's obviously what I want. |
| HOTEL CLERK LIBBY: | All right, top-floor suite, you are all booked. |
| GUEST KAI: | Thank you. |
| HOTEL CLERK LIBBY: | Oh, I'm sorry. Those seven gifts are for confirmed guests only. |
| GUEST KAI: | Wait a minute. This episode must be about … confirmation. |
| LIBBY: | Hi. Welcome to Catholic Central. I'm Libby. |
| KAI: | And I'm Kai. Today we're talking about Confirmation, one of the seven Sacraments of the Catholic Church. |
| LIBBY: | A Sacrament is an outward sign of an inward grace. |
| KAI: | Using physical things like water, oil, bread, and gestures, Catholics can counter God in both a physical and metaphysical way in our journey as disciples. |
| LIBBY: | The Sacrament of Confirmation is one of the three rites of initiation that are required for someone to become a member of the Catholic Church. |
| KAI: | And those three rites are arriving late, kneeling at the wrong time, and cursing in the parking lot when leaving. |
| LIBBY: | Those are personal issues and not sacraments. |
| KAI: | We're actually talking about Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Communion… |
| LIBBY: | …the three primary Sacraments on which the rest of one's life as a Christian depends. They initiate Catholics into Christian life. |
| KAI: | We'll start with the biblical origins of Confirmation, then talk about the ritual itself: the four symbols, and the seven gifts of the Spirit, and then the energy that this Sacrament brings to the spiritual journey. |
| LIBBY: | Like all seven Sacraments, Confirmation was instituted by Jesus himself. |
| KAI: | At the Last Supper, Jesus promised to send his disciples the Holy Spirit. |
| LIBBY: | Ten days after Jesus ascended into heaven, the Apostles and Mary gathered together for Pentecost, a Jewish feast day. |
| KAI: | And suddenly the Holy Spirit rushed upon them, sounding like a strong, driving wind. |
| LIBBY: | Then tongues of fire burst apart and floated above each person's head. From that time on, the Apostles preached with a new level of spiritual power. |
| KAI: | Confirmation is often called a personal Pentecost. In Acts 1, Jesus told the Apostles, "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you." |
| LIBBY: | Yeah, and the Apostles went to the believers in Samaria and prayed for them to receive the Holy Spirit, because, as it was described in Acts 8, they had only been baptized. |
| KAI: | So let's talk about the actual ritual and what happens. |
| LIBBY: | Well, first when you are a candidate for Confirmation or Confirmand, you pick a sponsor. |
| KAI: | Like a soft drink or a shoe company. |
| LIBBY: | Not that kind of sponsor. You choose a person who will serve as a guide and model during the process. It can be anyone who is a Catholic and willing to guide you as a spiritual mentor. Often it can be a godparent. |
| KAI: | The sponsor also serves as a witness during the ceremony. |
| LIBBY: | Also in some diocese, those about to be confirmed take a favorite saint's name as their own. |
| KAI: | Yeah, like a special sign of spiritual identity. You can choose a saint whose qualities you relate to and wanna emulate. And this helps you own the Sacrament, make it personal, and connect it to the community of saints. My confirmation saint, for instance, is St. Louis de Montfort. I like him because he showed such bravery in serving people who persecuted him, and his devotion to Mary. Who was your confirmation saint? |
| LIBBY: | Oh, St. Nonna. She's the patron saint of grandmothers and I really love her because she converted her whole entire family. I thought that was pretty cool. |
| KAI: | That's pretty cool. |
| LIBBY: | Let's talk about what happens during the ceremony. |
| KAI: | Yeah, there are four main parts or symbols to the sacrament. First, the Confirmandi speak their baptismal vows, renewing, or if I may be Captain Obvious, confirming their rejection of evil and their embrace of the faith. |
| LIBBY: | Second, the bishop. |
| KAI: | A diocesan bishop governs both practically and spiritual his local diocese (district of churches), working with the parish priests and deacons. |
| LIBBY: | The bishop stretches out his hand over the Confirmand and calls down the power of the Holy Spirit. The laying on of hands is how the Apostles conferred this gift. |
| KAI: | Next is the anointing with chrism, which is oil that has been blessed by the bishop on Holy Thursday. |
| LIBBY: | The bishop anoints the forehead with the chrism, saying, "Be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit." |
| KAI: | The doves are optional. |
| LIBBY: | The doves are not a thing. |
| KAI: | Next the bishop says, " Peace be with you," to show the Church is one people of God and these gifts of the Spirit are to be used for building peace, love, and unity with God's people. |
| LIBBY: | And that brings us to what Catholics call the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit. |
| KAI: | Wisdom to know what's truly important. |
| LIBBY: | Understanding to know why it's important. |
| KAI: | Counsel or right judgment to judge between right and wrong, and to choose what's right. |
| LIBBY: | Fortitude to persist in doing the right thing with courage no matter what. |
| KAI: | Knowledge to know God and God's plan of salvation. |
| LIBBY: | Piety or reverence to know that the God who created the universe deserves love and praise. |
| KAI: | Fear of the Lord, having a right perspective of God's almighty power and love, and our place in his creation. |
| LIBBY: | Sounds like Confirmation makes us unstoppable, but why do I often feel so very stoppable? |
| KAI: | The gifts of the Spirit are not powers that take over the person. They are gifts for each of us to unwrap and dive into and learn how to develop. |
| LIBBY: | The preacher Billy Graham was once praised for how much patience he had, and he said, "I don't have any more patience than anyone else. I just use mine." |
| KAI: | Well played, Billy Graham. The Christian journey has also been compared to a boat. The faithful row hard with their natural virtues and abilities, but put a sail on that boat -- that's the seven gifts -- and the Holy Spirit fills it with the wind of Pentecost. A lot faster. |
| LIBBY: | Although Catholics believe they receive the seven gifts in Baptism, the gifts were planted like seeds. Through Confirmation, their yes actively invites the Holy Spirit to grow these gifts in a more dynamic way. |
| KAI: | Yeah, and ideally, as they use the gifts to grow spiritually, they're drawn to service and to sharing their experience with others. |
| LIBBY: | They become natural witnesses, bringing good to others from a place of truth and grace. |
| KAI: | Yeah, like how the Apostles, after they receive the Holy Spirit, changed history with their radical message of self-giving love. |
| LIBBY: | So to sum up, Confirmation in the Catholic Church is a public, deeper yes to the Holy Spirit. |
| KAI: | It's also a deeper yes to the Church, and through saying yes to the Holy Spirit and the Church, it blesses the individuals and the community in general. |
| LIBBY: | And it allows each person to use their newly unleashed gifts to benefit the whole world. |
| KAI: | I'm Kai. |
| LIBBY: | And I'm Libby. |
| KAI: | Looks like we're done. |
| LIBBY: | Confirmed. |

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