



Road to Confirmation – Checkpoint conversation guide for:

Youth Leader

The decision to make the Confirmation vow and to receive the Confirmation blessing is a very important milestone in a youth's journey of faith. The Road to Confirmation process is to ensure a youth is well-equipped and prepared to make their Confirmation vow.

The purposes of the checkpoint conversations are to:

- Ensure the students have an understanding of the material
- Allow a space for the student to ask any questions
- Clarify and correct any misunderstandings that the students may have
- Support the students during their ongoing spiritual development
- Strengthen relationships

This guide is not intended to be a script, but rather has been prepared to help the youth leader have a meaningful conversation with their student and to check in with them as they pursue Confirmation. Using the content within this guide, prayerfully allow the Holy Spirit to work with you to shape and direct your checkpoint conversation.

Scheduling the checkpoint conversations

- The order of the checkpoint conversations is outlined in the sequence of courses on the next page.
- Periodically check in with the student so that you know what stage of the Road to Confirmation they are on. Once they have completed the course prior to the designated checkpoint conversation you are responsible for having, please schedule the checkpoint conversation with the student.
 - The student should also have a checkpoint conversation guide (available on NDI) that indicates when the checkpoint conversations happen in the sequence of the courses, and what the discussion questions for the checkpoint conversations are.
- If you have more than one student that is eligible for Confirmation, ideally each conversation happens individually, rather than as a group, since the students eligible for Confirmation will likely be going through the self-paced online video courses at various times. This also helps emphasize the importance of building and strengthening discipling relationships.
- It is important that the student, parent(s)/guardian(s), rector, and youth leader know ahead of time that the conversation will take place. This reduces the student from feeling surprised or pressured to answer any questions or have a discussion.
- The conversation may be anytime and anywhere, as long as those involved know ahead of time that it is happening. However, the place should be comfortable for the student. Consider having the checkpoint conversation around a meal, or going out for ice cream. The checkpoint conversations aren't intended to be intimidating encounters, but rather comfortable conversations discussing faith.
- The student and checkpoint conversation facilitator (parent(s)/guardian(s), youth leader, rector) should have a Bible (strongly recommended) and Catechism Q&A (recommended) on hand during the checkpoint conversations for easy reference.
 - The Catechism Q&A is available electronically on the [NAC USA website](#)

Road to Confirmation sequence

All courses can be accessed on NDI (NAC-USA Development Institute) using this menu order: Resources—Faith Arc—Youth—Road to Confirmation. ndi.nac-usa.org

Course Topic	Estimated completion time	Notes
Confirmation	15-20 minutes	This course should be taken with a parent or guardian
The Basics	20-25 minutes	Checkpoint Conversation 1 with parent(s)/guardian(s)
The gospel	20 -25 minutes	This course can be taken with a youth leader
Articles of Faith	25-30 minutes	Checkpoint Conversation 2 with youth leader
The Apostolate	20-25 minutes	
Service for the departed	15-20 minutes	Checkpoint Conversation 3 with rector, or other ordained minister
		Final Conversation with student and some combination of support team (rector, youth leader, parent(s)/guardian(s))

How to use this guide

The checkpoint conversation guide has the following sections (**F** and **S** indicate if the feature is on the Facilitator guide and/or the **S**tudent guide):

- Discussion Questions (**FS**)
 - These are questions that are designed to encourage discussion and interaction around the given topics. The facilitator isn't there to just listen to the student talk, nor is the student there to just listen to the facilitator. The encounter should be a conversation where both the student and facilitator are able to discuss the questions openly.
 - **Questions in blue** are verbatim from the online video courses.
 - **Italicized notes** are ideal and possible answers to the discussion questions (**F**)
- Big Idea (**F**)
 - The discussion questions should eventually lead to the Big Idea points. These are the main takeaways for those given topics. The student should have a solid understanding of the Big Idea points and be able to restate and explain them in their own words.
- Prayer Focus (**FS**)
 - Each checkpoint conversation will have a suggested prayer focus tailored to that stage of the Road to Confirmation process.
- Next Steps (**FS**)
 - Next steps are the student's opportunity to take what they've learned and put it into practice. They are practical, attainable, and potentially challenging actions that students can take to grow in their relationship with God. The facilitator may support the student by also committing to the suggested next steps.
- Common Questions (**FS**)
 - The Road to Confirmation is to ensure a youth is well-equipped and prepared to make their Confirmation vow. As the student explores and processes their faith, common questions may arise. This feature includes some of the common questions and suggested answers.

Youth Leader

In 1 Timothy, Apostle Paul writes to Timothy to encourage him and provide guidance on how to make a difference for the kingdom. One of the most well-known verses from these letters addresses Timothy's youth.

"Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity." 1 Timothy 4:12

You are ministering to teenagers in a very critical season of their lives. While a youth leader cannot replace the influence or role of a parent, you are there to provide an additional and intentional space and time for the students to learn about God and process life together in community.

As a youth minister, you have the opportunity to share life with students and their families. Let them see how you live and make decisions. Your example can teach a great deal of lessons that no curriculum can take on effectively. As students see how you go about your daily life and how you overcome relatable struggles, they can learn to reapply those positive images in their own journey.

The three goals* of the NAC USA Youth Ministry, as outlined with the introduction of the Faith Arc in 2016, are:

- Deepen spiritual maturity
- Expand missional reach
- Strengthen relationships

Thank you for investing in the spiritual development of these young Christians and for responding to the call to serve Christ in such a way.

Checkpoint Conversation 2

This checkpoint conversation is to take place after the student has completed "The Gospel" and "The Articles of Faith" online video courses on NDI.

Before discussing "The Gospel" and "The Articles of Faith" courses, ask the student if they have any questions or additional thoughts on any of the topics from the previous checkpoint conversation.

*Additional information on the NAC USA Youth Ministry goals is available in the "Youth Program Goals" course of the Youth Leader training available on NDI.

The Gospel

- Discussion Questions - Confirmation

- **The phrase “Gospel of Jesus Christ” appears in both the New Apostolic Church Vision and Mission statements. Part of our responsibility as Christians, and included in the THRIVE Membership Expectations, is our need to help spread the gospel. How would you describe the gospel to someone that asks about it?**
 - *God created a perfect world and mankind was in perfect fellowship with Him. Because of the fall into sin (original sin by Adam and Eve), that perfect fellowship with God was broken. God sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to reconcile the broken relationship, and through His sinless life and sacrificial death, made a way back to God. The gospel message is for all people because we are all in need of the saving power of Jesus Christ. Paul wrote that “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). We are a broken, sinful people, but the good news of salvation is for all of us. It is a message for all of us to proclaim because “all are justified freely by His grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus” (Romans 3:24).*
- **Talk about a time someone shared their faith with you and told you about Jesus. What can you learn from how they did it? How would you go about sharing your faith with someone else?**
 - *Tell them who Jesus Christ is and what He’s done for your life. Share the hope you have as a result of God’s plan of salvation.*
 - *Read, or ask the student to look up and read, 1 Peter 3:15.*
 - *“But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you.”*
 - *Consider watching the video “[What is the Gospel?](#)” available on the NAC USA YouTube page and also in the NAC USA mobile app, to see an example of how the Gospel is shared conversationally.*
- **What makes the gospel worth sharing? Why is the gospel important to you?**
 - *The gospel is the core of our faith. Without the sacrifice and resurrection of Jesus Christ, we would all be hopeless, but because of Him, we have the promise of eternal life.*
- **What could keep you from sharing the story of the gospel?**
- **What are some key Bible verses that help explain the gospel?**
 - *Read, or ask the student to look up and read:*
 - Isaiah 53:5
 - Matthew 28:19-20
 - John 3:16
 - John 14:6
 - Romans 1:16
 - Romans 3:23
 - Romans 5:8
 - Romans 6:23
 - Romans 10:9-13
 - 1 Corinthians 15:1-4
 - *This could be an opportunity to ask the student why the Bible is important. The Bible was one of the topics discussed in their first checkpoint conversation.*

- Big Idea – The Gospel

- *God created Creation, including man and woman, who were in perfect fellowship with God.*
- *Sin broke that perfect fellowship and made a separation between humankind and God.*
- *Jesus Christ came to earth as true Man and true God to clearly verbalize and demonstrate the will and demeanor of the Father. Jesus did not give in to temptation and sin, and thus lived a perfect life, just as God intended. He died a brutal death as*

a criminal and took the punishment for our sins, thus removing our remoteness from God.

- *Jesus promised to return again, as part of God's plan of salvation, and claim His bride. After the last judgement, God will make a new heaven and a new earth, and those who choose to follow God will live in perfect and eternal fellowship with Him once again. Everything will be restored.*

The Articles of Faith

- **Discussion Questions – Articles of Faith**
 - **How would you describe a creed?**
 - *A creed summarizes the essential content of a doctrine of faith. Creeds help create consistency and define what a church, or group of people, believe. The Articles of Faith in the New Apostolic Church are our creed.*
 - **How many Articles of Faith does the New Apostolic Church have?**
 - *The New Apostolic Church has 10 Articles of Faith.*
 - *The Articles of Faith can be found on page 251 of the Catechism Q&A book.*
 - **How can the Articles of Faith be categorized or 'themed' together?**
 - *Articles 1-3 describe the Trinity, God, the Father, God, the Son, God, the Holy Spirit.*
 - *Articles 4-5 describe the Apostolate and other ministries of the church.*
 - *Articles 6-8 describe the sacraments of Holy Baptism, Holy Communion, and Holy Sealing.*
 - *Article 9 describes the future events of Jesus' return.*
 - *Article 10 describes the believer's responsibility to the state and society.*
 - **The first three Articles of Faith are based on the "Apostle's Creed" or "Apostolicum." Most Christian churches believe in and subscribe to the foundations of faith defined by the Apostle's Creed and also the Creed of Nicaea-Constantinople. Why is it important to know that?**
 - *The foundation of Christian faith that describes who God is (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) helps create reliable stability for believers around the world and across denominations. Belief in and profession of these statements connect all Christians together.*
 - *These creeds are centuries old and rooted in deep Christian understanding and tradition.*
 - **Are there any statements in the Articles of Faith that are confusing or unclear?**
 - **Recite, or read, the 10 Articles of Faith together (found on page 251 of the Catechism Q&A).**

- **Big Idea – The Articles of Faith**
 - *Creeds summarize the essential content of a doctrine of faith.*
 - *The New Apostolic Creed (the 10 Articles of Faith) are based on Holy Scripture and the early church creeds (Apostle's Creed and Creed of Nicaea-Constantinople).*
 - *When someone professes their faith in a certain denomination, they are indicating that they believe the denomination's creed.*
 - *When the student makes a profession at the time of their Confirmation, they are declaring they believe the statements of the 10 Articles of Faith.*
 - *Because of this, it is important to know the Articles of Faith and have an understanding of their meaning.*

- Prayer Focus – Checkpoint Conversation 2
 - Close your time together in prayer. Consider including a combination of the following suggested points:
 - Thank God for the good news of the gospel.
 - Ask God to reveal opportunities for you to share the good news of Jesus Christ with someone, and to provide courage in that moment.

- Next Steps – Checkpoint Conversation 2
 - Study the Articles of Faith and find someone, or multiple people, to speak them out loud to.
 - Write out, or type in the notes of your phone, why Jesus is important to you. Carry this message with you wherever you go.

Notes

After the conversation

- Remind the student to be in contact with the rector regarding when they finish the next 2 online courses, “The Apostolate” and “Service for the Departed,” so that they can schedule the next checkpoint conversation.
- Inform the parent and rector that your checkpoint conversation took place. Share any points of concern, without breaking any confidences that the student may have shared with you. If a particular point seems questionable, ask their permission to share it with the parent and/or minister.
- Continue to include the student and their family in your prayers.

Common Questions for the Road to Confirmation

1. How can God be three Persons at one time?

God is Father, Son, and Spirit. This is one of the great mysteries of the faith. We know that it's true because the Bible makes it clear over and over again, but we can't fully understand how it works. One of the greatest proofs of the reality of God is that there's much about Him we can't understand. Isaiah 55:8 tells us that, "His thoughts are not our thoughts, and His ways are not our ways."

2. How can I trust God if I don't fully understand Him?

There are lots of things in life that we trust but don't completely understand. To trust God is to have faith in God. Faith is defined as "trust or confidence in something or someone." When you sit in a chair for the first time, you are showing faith that the chair will hold you. Until you sit, you really don't know if the chair will stay together. We trust God based on His history, character, and promises. Over time, as you grow closer to God, trusting Him will become more natural.

3. Why does God love us so much?

He chooses to - He freely loves us. More than a feeling, love is a choice. The Word tells us in 1 John 4:8 that God is love, so He is really the embodiment of that choice in action. It's even more beautiful when we understand that God isn't forced to love us because of a feeling. He chooses to love us, unconditionally and always, out of His own free will.

4. Does God still love us when we mess up?

Yes! Romans 5:8 says that, "God shows His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us." Think about that for a moment. God loves us so much that even while we were doing wrong, He sent His only Son to die on a cross so that we could be forgiven and free. That's how much He still loves us when we mess up. His love is unconditional!

5. I want to do right, but I keep sinning. Is being a "good Christian" supposed to be this hard?

None of us are perfect. Jesus lived the only perfect life that the world has ever seen. We should always strive to be like Jesus, but it's a process, and we will fall short. Every Christian struggles and is faced with temptation and difficulty, but there are practical steps we can take to help us. Find an accountability partner, make spending time in the Word a habit, and pray regularly. As you grow, you'll find your walk with the Lord feels more and more natural as you move forward on your journey of faith. Keep going!

6. What can I do to earn God's love and approval?

Nothing. You don't have to earn it and you wouldn't be able to even if you tried. Fortunately, you can just receive it. Ephesians 2:8 tells us that, "by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God." You don't have to do anything except put your faith in Jesus to receive God's love and approval.

7. What happens if sharing my faith doesn't work?

The truth is that our responsibility is to share our faith and trust God to take care of the results. Ideally, you want the person to accept Jesus and enter into a vibrant relationship with Him. That may not happen right away every time. Whenever you share your faith, you move the ball down the field some. You plant a seed. Someone else may come along later and water it. You may never see that person come to Christ, but you played a role.

8. Do I have to share my faith?

Yes. God expects us to talk about Him. It can sound intimidating, but it's really just telling your own story. Tell them about what God has done in your life and share the hope you have as a result. 1 Peter 3:15 instructs believers to, "...sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you..."

9. How do I know if I am hearing from God?

We can try to answer this in two parts. First, one of the best ways to discern whether or not you are hearing from God is to dive into His Word. God will not contradict Himself, so if you feel like the Spirit is telling you something, check it with God's Word. On top of that, you can know that the Holy Spirit always offers hope, while the enemy beats down. The Holy Spirit calms, comforts, convicts, leads, and encourages, while the enemy obsesses, worries, condemns, and confuses.

On an even more practical note, you can ask yourself these 4 questions:

- Does what I'm hearing line up with Scripture?
- Is it consistent with God's character?
- Is it being confirmed through messages I'm hearing at church in the preached word or studying in my quiet times?
- Would it please God?

10. Is Jesus the only way to Heaven?

In John 14:6, Jesus says, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." Jesus is the only way to Heaven. He lived, died, and rose again so that everyone could have a path to freedom and salvation through Him.

11. What is the Bible?

The Bible is the living Word of God, and is our guidebook to life. 2 Timothy 3:16-17 says it best, "The whole Bible was given to us by inspiration from God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives; it straightens us out and helps us do what is right. It is God's way of making us well prepared at every point, fully equipped to do good to everyone."

12. How do I get more from my Bible?

There are three great steps to take towards getting the most out of your Bible. First, accept its authority by receiving God's Word with an open heart and respond to His Word with obedience. Second, absorb its truths by hearing, reading, studying, memorizing, and meditating on God's Word. Third, apply its principles. James 1:22 tells us plainly, "Do not merely listen to the Word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says."

13. Why are there different translations/versions of the Bible?

The Bible was originally written in ancient Greek and Hebrew. Different translations exist because language is alive, constantly developing and changing. The truths in God's Word stay the same, but the words we use to communicate them effectively change along with the language. Overall, we believe that the Holy Spirit is that author of the Bible.

14. What is the difference between the Old Testament and New Testament?

The Old Testament is the foundation. The New Testament is the fulfilment. God made promises in the Old Testament and keeps His promises in the New Testament. The Old Testament is about God making the world. The New Testament is about God saving the world. God's people in the Old Testament was Israel. God's people in the New Testament is the Church. And yet, God desires all men to be saved, as indicated in 1 Timothy 2:3-6, "*For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all...*"