



Road to Confirmation – Checkpoint conversation guide for:

Rector

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 rector have a meaningful conversation with the 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.

*Ideally, this conversation is facilitated by the rector. However, it is understood that may not be possible everywhere. The feature that makes Checkpoint Conversation 3 unique is, this Checkpoint Conversation is had with an ordained minister.

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 [online](#).

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.

Rector

In 1 Peter, Apostle Peter provides instruction to the church leaders.

“Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock...” 1 Peter 5:2-3

Those called to ordained ministry have felt the inspiration of the Holy Spirit to respond to this call. While all Christians are expected to be examples of Jesus, ordained ministers have vowed to serve the souls entrusted to them and live up to certain requirements in their conduct. Ordained ministers are aware that they are servants and instruments in the hand of God.

In conjunction with the Vision and Mission statements of the New Apostolic Church International, every minister has the duty to proclaim the gospel of Christ and provide soul care for those members in the congregation.

Thank you for your dedication to love and serve the souls of all ages.

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Checkpoint Conversation 3

This checkpoint conversation is to take place after the student has completed “The Apostolate” and “Service for the Departed” online video courses on NDI.

Before discussing “The Apostolate” and “Service for the Departed” courses, ask the student if they have any questions or additional thoughts on any of the topics from the previous checkpoint conversations.

The Apostolate

- **Discussion Questions - Apostolate**
 - **What does the word “apostle” mean?**
 - *The word “apostle” derives from the Greek apostolos, which means “ambassador” in the New Testament.*
 - **What is the role of an ambassador?**
 - *An ambassador is a person who acts as a representative or promoter of a specified activity or purpose.*
 - *The Apostles are ambassadors of Jesus Christ*
 - **The Apostle ministry is the only ministry that Jesus established. Why did Jesus establish the Apostle ministry?**
 - *There is work to be done and a message to spread.*
 - *The Apostle ministry was established by Jesus Christ in order to grant human beings access to the sacrifice brought by Him and the salvation resulting from it.*
 - *As indicated in the 4th Article of Faith, Jesus rules His church and thereto sent His Apostles, and until His return still sends them with the commission to teach, to forgive sins in His name, and to baptize with water and Holy Spirit.*
 - **What do the Apostles teach?**
 - *They teach about Jesus Christ and proclaim the gospel message.*
 - *Ask the student to summarize the gospel.*
 - *The “Big Idea – Gospel” from Checkpoint Conversation 2*
 - *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.*
- **On what authority do the Apostles exercise their responsibilities?**
 - *Read, or have the student look up and read, Matthew 28:18-20.*
 - *"And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, 'All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you' and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.' Amen."*
 - *This passage is referred to as the Great Commission, and is foundational for the purpose of the church.*
- **What does it mean to be a disciple of Jesus Christ?**
 - *A disciple aligns their life to the gospel of Jesus Christ. A disciple decides daily to follow Jesus and His teachings, and encourages others to do the same.*
- **Did the Apostle ministry cease to exist after the death of the early Apostles?**
 - *The Apostle ministry continued to exist despite the fact that the Apostles died. This ministry has been instituted by Jesus Christ for His church. Even during the time when there were no bearers of this ministry on earth, the ministry established by Him was still present.*
 - *The Apostles are to be witnesses of Christ until the end of the age (cf. Matthew 28: 19-20). In order to fulfil this comprehensive task in view of His return, Jesus Christ also sends Apostles today. (Catechism Q&A question 447)*
- **How long did this interruption in the activity of Apostles last?**
 - *According to extra-biblical sources, John was the last of the early Christian Apostles to die, and he did so near the end of the first century. The activity of the Apostles was thus interrupted until the renewed occupation of the Apostle ministry in the nineteenth century. (Catechism Q&A question 448)*
- **Why was the activity of the Apostles interrupted?**
 - *This interruption in the activity of the Apostles has its source in the will of God. For human beings, this remains a mystery. Nevertheless, the Holy Spirit remained active even in the time without Apostles, and assured the preservation and development of the gospel. (Catechism Q&A question 449)*
- **How was the Apostle ministry re-occupied after the death of the first Apostles?**
 - *Believers of various confessions prayed and hoped that the Holy Spirit would once again become active. As of 1832, the Apostle ministry was once again personally occupied in accordance with God's will, for the preparation of the bridal congregation. The re-occupation of the Apostle ministry was a gift to the church of Christ – the new Apostles did not intend to start a new denomination. (Catechism Q&A questions 400, 403, 452)*
- **Who is your current Apostle?**

- **Big Idea – Apostolate**

- *Jesus Christ established the Apostle ministry and gave the Apostles specific tasks.*
- *The fourth Article of Faith: I believe that the Lord Jesus rules His church and thereto sent His Apostles, and until His return still sends them with the commission to teach, to forgive sins in His name, and to baptize with water and Holy Spirit.*
- *The Apostles work in accordance with the will of their sender, Jesus Christ, and are completely dependent on Him.*

Service for the Departed

- Discussion Questions – Service for the Departed
 - **What happens when someone dies?**
 - *Physical death is the end of a person's earthly existence and is when the soul and spirit leave the body.*
 - *A fundamental belief of the Christian faith is that man lives on after physical death. Human beings are both a physical and spiritual being.*
 - **How do we know that help is available for the souls that have departed?**
 - *Jesus is Lord of the living and the dead.*
 - *Read, or have the student look up and read Romans 14:8-9.*
 - *"For if we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ died and rose and lived again, that He might be Lord of both the dead and the living."*
 - *Jesus preached to those in the realms of the departed.*
 - *Read, or have the student look up and read 1 Peter 3:19-20.*
 - *"...by whom also He (Jesus) went and preached to the spirits in prison, who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared..."*
 - *Read, or have the student look up and read 1 Peter 4:6.*
 - *"For this reason the gospel was preached also to those who are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit."*
 - **Holy Scripture promotes the belief in life after death, and gives us knowledge about the realms of the departed. This topic effects each person differently. Discuss your feelings about life after death. When you hear "life after death," "eternity," or "realms of the departed," what do you visualize?**
 - **What happens in a service for the departed?**
 - *Three times a year, namely the first Sundays in March, July, and November, special divine services are celebrated in which the Chief Apostle and the District Apostles or Apostles commissioned by them dispense all three sacraments to the departed. These acts are likewise performed on two ministers who serve as proxies. (Catechism Q&A question 659)*
 - **How do we know sacraments are available to the dead?**
 - *In Apostle Paul's letter to the Corinthians, he addresses baptism for the dead.*
 - *Read, or have the student look up and read 1 Corinthians 15:29:*
 - *"Otherwise, what will they do who are baptized for the dead, if the dead do not rise at all? Why then are they baptized for the dead?"*
 - **What is our role in the service for the departed?**
 - *Prior to the service for the departed, we can pray for the unredeemed souls in eternity. We pray to God that they may have the strength to overcome what separates them from God, and that they can accept Jesus as their Redeemer.*

- Big Idea – Service for the Departed
 - Jesus Christ is Lord of the living and the dead.
 - A fundamental Christian belief is that the spiritual being lives on after physical death.
 - Scripture indicates that salvation is available to the dead and the living.
 - We can help the souls in the departed by praying for them, that they receive Jesus Christ as their Redeemer.

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- Prayer Focus – Checkpoint Conversation 3
 - Close your time together in prayer. Consider including a combination of the following suggested points:
 - Thank God for establishing the Apostle ministry.
 - Praise God for His omnipotence and for being God of the living and the dead.
 - Ask God to strengthen us in our striving to remain faithful to Him.
 - Next Steps – Checkpoint Conversation 3
 - Memorize the Great Commission found in Matthew 28:18-20
 - Memorize the fourth Article of Faith.

Notes

After the conversation

- Remind the student there will be one final conversation right before their confirmation in order to ensure they have an understanding of the core competencies of the Christian faith and New Apostolic Church doctrine.
 - Inform the parent and youth leader 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 youth leader.
 - Continue to include the student and their family in your prayers.
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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...*"