

- Objective: The confirmands will learn:
- The origin and meaning of the Confirmation vow.

Contents: The Confirmation vow

1. Lead-In

Ask What is the wording of the Confirmation vow?

I renounce Satan and all his work and ways, and surrender myself to You, O triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, in belief, obedience, and the earnest resolution to remain faithful to You until my end. Amen.

The students
Recite aloud

2. Origin of the Confirmation vow

Ask Where does the Confirmation vow come from?

Explain The exact origin is not certain, but earlier forms of the vow are found in the "Traditio Apostolica" – *Apostolic Tradition*, which was like a manual containing information about church life and liturgy in the 3rd century.

Then, in the writing of the church father Ambrosias there is an account of a rite that was closely related to baptism. Before the believer was baptised two questions were asked: "Do you renounce the devil and his works?" and "Do you renounce the world and its pleasures?" On both occasions the answer was: "I renounce."

The one to be baptized then went to the baptismal place, where the Bishop asked three questions: "Do you believe in God the Almighty Father?", "Do you believe in our Lord Jesus Christ (and His Cross)?" and "Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?" To each of these questions the one to be baptized had to answer: "I believe".

Lastly, another church father, John Chrysostom reported that, as a counter to renouncing the devil there had to be a pledge to Jesus Christ.

From these fundamental elements the confirmation vow developed.

3. Meaning of Confirmation vow

Ask What does: "I renounce Satan and all his work and ways" mean?

Listen to answers
and supplement

Renouncing Satan and all his work and ways confirms our awareness that man was born in the domain of power of the prince of this world and as such lives under the curse of sin. When we to the best of our ability wish to free ourselves from this curse, it becomes a task for life. This does not mean that after we have taken the vow we no longer sin, but it is the expression of a fundamental decision to say "No" to the devil and sin.

Ask **What does: “. . . and surrender myself to You, O triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit . . .” mean?**

Listen to answers
and supplement

This confirms the recognition that to live a life resisting the temptation of sin is not possible on the basis of one's own strength. We need the assistance of God, the grace of the merit of Christ and the communion of the Holy One Spirit. Here we express our realisation that we need Gods' help and at the same time confess to the triune nature of God, which is recorded in the first three articles of faith.

Ask **What does: “. . . in belief, obedience, and the earnest resolution to remain faithful to You until my end.” mean?**

Listen to answers
and supplement

What resolve is attached to the confession in the act of confirmation depends essentially on the faith of the confirmand. In respect of the future path of faith, continued obedience to the will of God is required. That the surrendering to God is not some temporary matter is shown in the seriousness with which the intention to be faithful to God is expressed: Faithful to You until my end. The confirmation vow is thus binding for one's whole life.

The intensive instruction that is required prior to the day of confirmation is essential for the confirmand to be made thoroughly aware of the seriousness of this matter.

Ask **What does: “Amen.” mean?**

Listen to answers
and supplement

“Amen” is a Hebrew term which is interpreted as meaning something is “solid, faithful, true.” When Jesus preached He often said, “Amen, amen, I say to

you” which really means, “What I say is the true.” So, saying Amen after the Confirmation vow has been recited essentially means that what was said is faithful and true.

The main points

I also want to ... **... recite the Confirmation vow with a firm conviction.**

Homework The confirmands learn the wording of the Confirmation vow by heart.