

CONFIRMATION NOTES 2011

The following notes have been compiled to assist you and your staff in preparing the Confirmation liturgy. Please review carefully.

I. PREPARATIONS FOR CONFIRMATION

Candidates and Sponsors

As noted in the *Diocesan Guidelines on Confirmation*: “Preparation for the reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation should begin at least one year before the Sacrament is received. During this time of preparation, each candidate should be interviewed personally to discuss his or her decision to be confirmed, his or her attitude towards the Church, and one’s understanding of Catholic doctrine...At the time of Confirmation, candidates must be in the practice of receiving the Sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist. They should also deepen their knowledge by regular religious instruction.” The Confirmation candidates should be prepared to take an active part in the liturgy, singing and praying all the responses for the Rite of Confirmation and the Mass. A worship aid containing all the hymns, responses, and instructions for the liturgy can be very helpful in this regard.

Each candidate should have a sponsor who is at least 16 years old and is a practicing Catholic who has already been confirmed. Parents may not be sponsors (Canons 893, 874). The bishop does not require that the Confirmation candidates be seated in a body apart from their sponsors. Pastors are free to arrange the seating of the candidates and their sponsors at the front of the church in the way that seems most convenient. **Pastors and coordinators should note also that the bishop will meet with the candidates 45 minutes before the Mass.**

Rehearsal

The procedure for the ceremony should be practiced with the candidates and sponsors sometime in advance. **Having the candidates (with sponsor right behind each) approach the bishop double file is the most efficient way to arrange for the anointing. In this way, the bishop can begin the Confirmation of the next candidate as soon as he has finished confirming the previous one.** As the candidates stand before the bishop at the front of the center aisle, the sponsor places the right hand on the candidate's shoulder. When the bishop turns to the next candidate to be confirmed, he or she should give his/her Confirmation name **loudly** and clearly. (This may be the Baptismal name or a new Confirmation name. A saint’s name should be chosen and **the candidate should know some information about the saint chosen.**) Then the bishop makes the sign of the cross with chrism on the forehead of each candidate saying:

Bishop: *Name*, be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Confirmed: **Amen.**

Bishop: Peace be with you.

Confirmed: **And also with you.**

Then the bishop will speak briefly to the newly confirmed and sponsor before turning to the next candidate.

Liturgical Ministries

Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist together constitute the Sacraments of Initiation. To emphasize the special relationship that Confirmation has with the Eucharist, the sacrament is administered within Mass. The bishop presides and other priests may concelebrate.

Sufficient ministers should be available for the distribution of Holy Communion in the manner decided by the pastor(s), whether under the form of bread alone, or with drinking from the cup. **Extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion should assist only if there are not sufficient priests and deacons.** It should also be noted that the vessels for Holy Communion are to be metal and not made of glass or ceramic materials.

It is appropriate that the bishop be assisted by a deacon who reads the gospel and leads the petitions for the General Intercessions. When this is not possible, the pastor proclaims the gospel and either the newly confirmed or other adult may read the General Intercessions. (Sample intercessions are enclosed/available on the Pastoral Documentation webpage.)

One or more readers proclaim the scripture reading(s) from the lectionary.

Five altar servers is the ideal for the ceremony, **six** if you wish to use incense. The servers should be vested and in the sacristy **one-half hour before the ceremony.** In as much as, ***Bishop LaValley will not be accompanied by a personal secretary, it would be important that the pastor prepare the altar servers before the ceremony.***

Enclosed you will find guidelines to assist your music ministers in choosing and leading the music for the celebration.

In larger Confirmations ushers to direct the candidates and sponsors in coming up for the anointing can be helpful, since the pastor will be too busy to do this himself.

Setup for the Ceremony

N.B. Please see “NOTES FOR CONFIRMATION LITURGY PREPARATION” and “CONFIRMATION LITURGY FORM” for the details concerning the Confirmation liturgy for the corresponding day and season in the liturgical calendar.

The usual articles needed for Mass should be prepared: the chalice(s), ciboria, corporal(s), purificators, water cruet, towel, and *lavabo* basin at the credence table. **Sufficient hosts and wine** should be set out on the gifts table. It is appropriate that some of the newly confirmed bring them to the Bishop at the time of the Presentation of the Gifts. Communion cups will be poured at the Preparation of the Gifts.

The Bishop will bring the Confirmation ritual, the Holy Chrism, and his own red vestments (if white is used for certain Sundays or solemnities, the bishop may use the parish set). For the washing of his hands after the anointing please have a pitcher, basin, sliced lemon, 2 large hand towels available in the sanctuary within easy reach.

Cameras

The people should be instructed that the Bishop will be happy to pose for photographs after the ceremony. Concerning photographs or video taping during the ceremony, the Bishop will defer to the local pastor's policy. If they are permitted during the ceremony, this must be done so as not to distract from the sacredness of the ceremony. Ushers should be on hand to exercise gentle direction in this regard.

II. THE LITURGY OF CONFIRMATION

The celebration of Confirmation is administered within Mass so that the complete sequence of Christian Initiation may be clearly shown: Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Eucharist. The Introductory Rites and the Liturgy of the Word take place in the usual way.

Presentation of the Candidates: After the Gospel, the pastor briefly presents the candidates for Confirmation.

Homily: The Bishop will preach the homily

Renewal of Baptismal Promises: After the homily the candidates stand and respond to the questions.

Bishop: Do you reject Satan and all his works and all his empty promises?

Candidates: **I do.**

Bishop: Do you believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth?

Candidates: **I do.**

Bishop: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, Our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary, was crucified, died and was buried, rose from the dead, and is now seated at the right hand of the Father?

Candidates: **I do.**

Bishop: Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who came to the apostles at Pentecost and today is given to you sacramentally in Confirmation?

Candidates: **I do.**

Bishop: Do you believe in the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting?

Candidates: **I do.**

Bishop: This is our faith. This is the faith of the Church. We are proud to profess it in Christ Jesus our Lord.

All: **Amen.**

Please note: The Bishop will not instruct the candidates to “Please Respond ‘I do’.” They should have rehearsed this as a group and be prepared with their responses.

Imposition of Hands: Candidates kneel and the congregation stands and, at the Bishop's invitation, pray in silence for a short time. Then, the Bishop with hands extended over all to be confirmed, prays:

Bishop: All-powerful God, Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ, by water and the Holy Spirit you freed your sons and daughters from sin and gave them new life. Send your Holy Spirit upon them to be their Helper and Guide. Give them the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of right judgment and courage, the spirit of knowledge and reverence. Fill them with the spirit of wonder and awe in your presence. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Anointing and Sign of Peace: The Bishop makes the sign of the cross with chrism on the forehead of each candidate saying:

Bishop: *Name*, be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Newly Confirmed: **Amen.**

Bishop: Peace be with you.

Newly Confirmed: **And also with you.**

General Intercessions: The Creed is omitted and the General Intercessions follow as soon as the Bishop has finished washing his hands.

The Liturgy of the Eucharist continues in the usual way with the Presentation of the Gifts up to and including the Prayer after Communion. After the prayer, any necessary announcements may be made. The Bishop will then say a few words of thanks, after which he prays the blessing provided in the Sacramentary or Confirmation ritual. After the deacon gives the dismissal, all process out accompanied by the recessional hymn.

The bishop will meet with the candidates 45 minutes before the Confirmation liturgy in a place separate from the worship area. Using the enclosed liturgy form, please notify the Bishop of the details of the ceremony **at least two weeks before** the Confirmation.