



DIOCESE OF METUCHEN

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OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

March 4, 2025

To All Pastors, DREs, and PCLs,

This letter contains the liturgical preferences and considerations for the celebration of Confirmation with Bishop James Checchio. Please note that some of this information is subject to the discretion of the celebrant, our Bishop. It is always best to check with the Bishop's Office (<https://diometuchen.org/our-bishop>) if you have questions, or with the Divine Worship Office for clarifications (<https://diometuchen.org/office-of-worship>).

CONFIRMATION PREPARATION GUIDELINES and GENERAL INFORMATION (within or outside of Mass)

SEATING: The Bishop has no preference or policy for seating. Candidates and sponsors may be seated in any manner that facilitates good order during the celebration of the ritual. Please ensure that all candidates and sponsors are seated at least five to ten minutes BEFORE the scheduled start time of the Confirmation.

PROCESSING IN/OUT:

- Knights of Columbus (if present)
- Cross Bearer [with 2 Candle Bearers]
- Additional Altar Servers
- Reader(s)
- Other Ministers
- The Bishop [with Deacon(s) if present]
- Master of Ceremonies, with the two assistant servers to the Bishop

IMPORTANT NOTES:

1. If the candidates are to process in (the decision is up to the Pastor/DRE/PCL), this should take place before the liturgical procession, and they should be seated 5-10 minutes before the scheduled Confirmation time begins.

2. Please do NOT have the students/sponsors process out with the liturgical ministers. You should have a plan to direct the candidates to the location for photos, if it is not in the Church.

NAMETAGS: Nametags with the printed name of the saint should be used, and they should be large enough for the Bishop to read so that no introduction of the candidate is needed.

PATRON SAINTS: A patron saint's name must be chosen. The name of Jesus cannot be used as a patron saint (e.g., "Santo Niño de Atocha"), and "obscure" titles of the Virgin Mary should be avoided (e.g., "Our Lady of St. Juan de Los Lagos"). A candidate may choose the same name as their baptismal name.

DRESS CODE: Candidates should be in proper Sunday attire. Special graduation-style robes may be worn, but stoles are not permitted.

READINGS: In the attached link (see last page), you will find the readings as per the Bishop's preference, as well as the Prayers of the Faithful, which are designed for this celebration. Therefore, any changes or additions must be approved by the Office of the Bishop ahead of time.

GOSPEL:

- The parish custom regarding the Gospel procession should be observed. Proclaiming the Gospel from a Book of the Gospels is preferred, but not necessary. If a Book of the Gospels is used, it should be carried in the procession by the deacon.
- The deacon (or priest, in his absence) should kneel and ask for the Bishop's blessing.

CONCELEBRANTS: They should *not* extend their hands during the laying-on of hands. This gesture is reserved for the celebrant (and for those associated with him who confirm due to a large number of candidates).

TRAFFIC DURING ANOINTING: Please designate someone to help manage the flow of confirmandi and sponsors during the Sacrament. Ensure that there is a steady and quick flow of students (and sponsors) receiving the Sacrament, with no lag time between candidates. Candidates should stand, with their sponsors standing behind them, placing their right hand on the candidate's right shoulder. The pastor (on the Bishop's right) holds the vessel with Sacred Chrism for the Bishop while he confirms.

- **Option A:** The candidates stand at the end of each pew with their family and friends. At the time of the anointing, the candidates remain in place, and the Bishop moves to each candidate for the anointing. This option allows family members to witness the anointing more closely.
- **Option B:** Candidates may come forward in procession, two-by-two (i.e., two lines of candidates with sponsors behind). There should be *two* candidates before the Bishop at all times.

ALSO NOTE: Instrumental music or choral singing may accompany the ritual. However, it should remain soft and serve as accompaniment to the spoken ritual dialogue. Since the words of

the dialogue form an integral part of the ritual, they should be clearly audible to the candidates above the music.

PHOTOS: It is preferred to designate a specific photographer (professional, if possible) to take pictures during or after the celebration, who can later share them with the families. The photo area should allow for the easy flow of people and accommodate a large crowd. Either one group photo *OR* individual pictures may be taken, but one option applies to ALL confirmandi.

- **GROUP PHOTO:** The group photo should be well-organized and promptly taken by a specific photographer (see page 1 under ‘procession’ for more details).
- **Individual Photo:** One individual photo should be taken for each candidate. The Bishop stands on the left side of the candidate (with or without the sponsor *OR* with family). Multiple photos should not be taken at this time to avoid undue waiting for candidates at the end of the line. Afterward, if candidates or families want more photos, they may ask the Bishop.
- **IMPORTANT NOTE:** The Pastor should remain with the Bishop.

Added Information When Confirmation is Within Mass

PENITENTIAL ACT: The Penitential Act “Form C” will be used; the deacon/cantor/choir offers the three invocations (tropes).

PRESENTATION OF GIFTS: Only bread and wine should be presented; no other gifts should be included (except for the parish offering, if that is the custom).

HOLY COMMUNION: There should be no special line for the confirmandi during the reception of Holy Communion. Confirmandi should not be expected to receive Holy Communion first while the rest of the congregation waits. The flow should be like a regular Sunday Mass.

- **Notes:** If the Knights of Columbus are present, they should not come up as ‘guardians’ during Communion.
- The singing of the Communion chant/song should begin without delay while the Bishop is receiving the Sacrament. The singing continues for as long as the Sacrament is being administered to the faithful. (GIRM #86) There should be no song (i.e., “meditation song”) following Communion.

MISCELLANEOUS

PRE-MASS ANNOUNCEMENTS: It is suggested that any additional announcements be made before Mass begins, such as the photography policy, turning off cell phones, information about a reception, etc.

LITURGICAL ITEMS NEEDED:

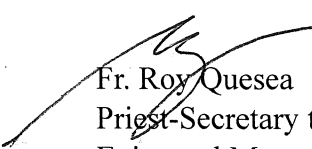
- 1 Lemon, cut in half
- Larger basin and pitcher with water
- Hand towels
- Roman Missal (with ribbons set at Confirmation orations and Holy Spirit preface)
- Lectionary with readings at the Ambo
- Body microphone (if used at the chair)
- Confirmation binder (see link attached)

HELPFUL LINKS:

1. <https://diometuchen.org/resources-1>
 - Readings
 - Prayers of the Faithful
 - Confirmation Binder (with Mass and Rite Only)
 - Post-Confirmation Information – to be filled out and submitted as soon as possible to the Office of the Bishop
2. <https://diometuchen.org/episcopal-liturgies>
 - The ‘Confirmation Liturgical Preparation Form’ must be filled out and submitted to me (rquesea@diometuchen.org) at least two weeks prior to your scheduled Confirmation.

Thank you for your help in ensuring that the above considerations are met. We appreciate all your assistance! Please don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions or need clarifications.

Yours in Christ,



Fr. Roy Quesea
Priest-Secretary to the Bishop
Episcopal Master of Ceremonies
rquesea@diometuchen.org