

*PLEASE NOTE: Updated preparation guidelines for the Sacrament of Confirmation will be provided in May 2026 to replace the current guidelines.*

---

# CONFIRMATION



“Christ’s death and resurrection brought new life to the apostles. The coming of the Spirit enabled them to confess

Jesus is Lord and empowered them to spread the good news of salvation. And every day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.”

~Acts 2:47

## THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION

## The History

During the third and fourth centuries, concern for the integrity of the gospel in a time of persecution led to the development of a lengthy catechumenal process culminating in the celebration of the sacred mysteries during the Easter Vigil. During this vigil, catechumens professed their faith and were immersed in the waters of Baptism. Clothed in new white garments, they were presented to the bishop who confirmed them with the ritual laying on of hands and anointing. After this, they took their places in the midst of the assembly and completed their initiation by sharing in the Eucharist. During the Easter season, the neophytes spent time together reflecting on the paschal mystery which they had celebrated sacramentally.

The rigors of the catechumenate tested the sincerity of the candidates and, along with the prayers and support of the community, strengthened them in their new faith. The distinctiveness of childhood was not a concern in ancient times. Infants and children were brought to the Easter sacraments by their parents.

With the end of persecution and the growth of the church, differences developed in the catechumenate process. In the East, the unity of the sacraments was preserved. Presbyters baptized, confirmed and admitted infants to Eucharist. In the West, presbyters baptized infants, but bishops retained their prerogative to confirm. Distance and growing administrative concerns prevented the bishop from getting around his diocese to confirm. The completion of initiation- Confirmation and Eucharist - was delayed.

Later, it became normative to delay Confirmation and Eucharist until the age of discretion, which was variously interpreted and this, along with the challenge of the availability of the bishop, led to the practice of Confirmation at different ages over time.

In 1215, the Fourth Lateran Council officially defined and set the number of sacraments at seven. Reflection on practice at that time and conciliar definitions contributed to the breakdown in the patristic understanding of the unity of the sacraments of initiation. In 1910, Pope Pius X lowered the age for the reception of First Eucharist. In practice, this effectively reversed the order of the sacraments of initiation.

Vatican II called for the restoration of the catechumenate for adults. The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, introduced in the United States in 1974 and mandated in 1988, restores the order and the unity of the sacraments of initiation for adults. The RCIA also provides an adaptation for use in the Christian initiation of unbaptized children who have reached catechetical age and restores the order and unity of the sacraments of initiation for them.

Vatican II also called for the revision of the Rite of Baptism for infants and the Rite of Confirmation. The praenotanda (introduction) to the 1969 *Rite of Baptism for Children*, (Section III-8.3), the 1980 *Instruction on Infant Baptism*, and *Canon 867* all call for the baptism of infants... "within the first weeks after birth." Both the praenotanda to the 1971 *Rite of Confirmation* and *Canon 891* postpone Confirmation to the age of discretion or even later.

Thus, we have two distinct orders for the initiation of children. For those baptized in infancy, completion of initiation is postponed to at least the age of discretion. For those who have attained the use of reason and were not baptized in infancy, what is prescribed for an adult is applicable; i.e. full initiation. (*CCL, 852*).

Some advocate for restoring the order of the sacraments of initiation to Baptism, Confirmation, and then Eucharist. Historically, full initiation at infancy is practiced in the Eastern Rite. Others maintain that Confirmation should always precede Eucharist. The renewed norms on Christian initiation and weight of papal teaching regarding Confirmation preceding Eucharist seem to point in their favor. The structure of the early church would become the experience of the whole church.

Others advocate for Confirmation sometime during adolescence, or even propose Confirmation being delayed to young adulthood or whatever age an individual experiences a conversion of life. They see the development of the present practice as a result of the activity of the Spirit and the call from Vatican II for “full, conscious, and active participation.”

If RCIA envisions a process of years for the preparation of adults for initiation, then a lengthy process for children is certainly in order. Vatican II and later catechetical congresses encouraged pastors to draw on the human sciences and read the signs of the times. These sciences have demonstrated the distinctiveness of both childhood and adolescence. Confirmation in adolescent years permits the recipients to place themselves more consciously in God’s loving care as they utter, to the best of their ability and with all the insecurity that characterizes the human condition, their yes to God. It also permits them to express their belonging to a larger community, and it permits the community to express its encouragement to them in its own act of faith.

Canon law allows much latitude and suggests that the question of the proper age for Confirmation is not yet closed. The Bishops of the United States have agreed that each diocese should make its own policy concerning the age for Confirmation. Given the above and the current pastoral practices of the Diocese of Syracuse, Confirmation will be celebrated during adolescence within the context of a comprehensive parish program.



## *Adolescent Faith Formation*

The time of adolescence is filled with change. Exciting changes occur such as a deeper sense of self identity, expansion of authentic freedom, an enhanced ability to relate to others and greater maturity. Depression, alienation, self-doubt and anxiety, however, also accompany the changes of adolescence. Because of these many divergent possibilities, this time of adolescence is a unique opportunity for the Catholic community to affirm, support and challenge young people to grow as persons and as believers. Over the past decade the Church has developed an all embracing approach to ministry with youth. This comprehensive approach to, with and by youth recognizes their personal, familial, social, and spiritual needs and the environments which affect their lives. It also invites them into the life, mission, and work of the faith community. The ongoing evangelization and catechesis of youth are essential and integral elements of fostering the maturing faith of the young church of today.

The growth of catechetical theory and practice and the evolution of the church's ministry with youth has forced church leaders to rethink adolescent catechesis to clarify its aim and scope, and to recognize its contribution within the broader context of ministry. This changing and somewhat perplexing scene presents the church with a marvelous opportunity to develop new initiatives in vision and practice that will shape adolescent catechesis. It is also an opportunity to engage parents in a way that fosters conversion and/or deepening discipleship.

When Confirmation is celebrated in the adolescent years, it affords the parish a significant opportunity to foster the faith of adolescents. Sacramental preparation for Confirmation has a distinct catechesis with its own focus and elements situated within the broader context of adolescent catechesis. We need to recognize, however, that the fully initiated Christian is not the fully mature Christian. Catechesis is life long and the Catholic community needs to provide learning opportunities for continuing growth in faith.

In striving to enrich and affirm the life and faith of young people through catechesis, it is humbling to realize that our best efforts may not always bring forth the fruit that was intended or hoped for. Youth deserve our very best efforts even if we do not often see the fruits of our efforts. Yet in the long run we all must rely on the presence and power of the Spirit of God. Adults and youth are challenged to be open to the urging and movement of the Holy Spirit in the process of catechesis.

The decision to seek Confirmation should be based on a person's readiness to assume the responsibilities expected of a confirmed Catholic and that person's willingness to participate in the parish faith formation program.

*"Apart from the danger of death, to receive confirmation lawfully a person who has the use of reason must be suitably instructed, properly disposed and able to renew the baptismal promises." (CL 889.2)*

The emphases during this time should be on the sharing of faith stories and the personal integration of Catholic teachings. It is recommended that the sessions include ample opportunities for prayer and time to reflect on the meaning of these themes in their lives. These guidelines situate Confirmation within the context of a comprehensive parish program.

## Adolescent Faith Themes

Prior to Direct Preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation, the following adolescent faith themes based on the themes of the Framework for Adolescent Catechesis from the USCCB are to be included in the faith formation process:

- faith and identity
- justice and peace
- meaning of the sacraments
- mission of the church and the call to ministry
- morality and moral decision-making
- personal prayer and community worship
- relationships with Jesus and the Body of Christ
- responsibility in loving relationships
- scripture
- theology of service

## Confirmation Guidelines

### INTRODUCTION

The following guidelines for the structuring of a Confirmation preparation process are based on a comprehensive parish program:

- The candidate is expected to have been previously involved in both the liturgical and sacramental life of the faith community and in an on-going process of faith formation.
- **Candidates must be actively participating in the parish faith formation program, which has included all faith themes, before entering the process for Direct Preparation of the Sacrament of Confirmation.**
- **Direct preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation is the sole responsibility of the parish.**

- Students who attend Catholic School religious education classes, which have included all faith themes, should join in the Direct Preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation at their home parishes.
- Both Catholic school and public school students are expected to participate jointly in all the direct parish preparatory events. The program should be explained in such a way that all students and parents clearly understand what responsibilities and events pertain to them.

### CANDIDATE'S READINESS

Students who are involved in parish faith formation or Catholic school religious education programs are invited to enter a parish process for the Direct Preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation. The celebration of the sacrament takes place as early as 9th grade.

### *Signs Of Readiness*

Some signs of readiness in the individual candidate for Direct Preparation for Confirmation are:

- a personal faith consciousness – as indicated by some type of personal prayer life and awareness of God in his/her life
- an appreciation of Sacred Scripture as a unique aspect of God's revelation and as invitation to ongoing relationship
- a communal faith consciousness – as indicated by participation in the faith community according to his/her ability, including Sunday Eucharist
- a sense of service – as indicated by participation in service within the parish and/or larger community and evaluated in light of the gospel mandate
- a sense of Christian identity – as indicated by participation in the faith formation program or other faith formation opportunities including workshops and/or retreats.

### *Interviews*

Interviews may be done by the pastor, catechetical leader, youth minister, or catechist, to determine readiness to enter the Direct Preparation component and/or readiness to celebrate the sacrament. Areas to be explored during the interview(s) might include:

- an opportunity for the candidate to express reasons for desiring the sacrament
- an opportunity for the candidate to reflect on and articulate his/her experience of the journey of faith - and to discern how he/she will continue to share his/her gifts with and within the parish community in response to the baptismal call to holiness
- an opportunity for the candidate to ask questions regarding the preparation program and/or the sacrament, and to make suggestions.

The interviewer needs to keep in mind that he/she is not looking for mature faith, but a maturing faith. The interviewer should affirm the candidate, and assure him/her of the continuing support of the parish community.

## *Direct Preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation*

Direct Preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation is that time period prior to the celebration of the sacrament which focuses on the nature and meaning of the sacrament in the life of the Christian as well as preparing the individual and community to meaningfully celebrate the rite in the liturgical assembly.

It is one component of the parish's regular catechetical and/or youth ministry program.

This Direct Preparation may begin with a Rite of Enrollment. This is a ceremony patterned after the Call to Continuing Conversion in the RCIA. It is a ceremony in which the parish community celebrates God's action in the lives of the candidates and the candidate's response, expressing their desire to be fully initiated into the Christian community by enrolling their names in a parish Book of Enrollment or Covenant. The parish, in turn, is asked to pledge its example, its prayer, and its support of the candidates.

It is recommended that at least six to eight well-planned sessions be provided, which include ample opportunities for prayer and time to reflect on the meaning of the candidates' ongoing experience of service. Direct Preparation should also include a full day retreat centered around one or several of these topics: discipleship, the gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit, continued relationship with Jesus and living out the Catholic faith. These sessions may be scheduled in a variety of ways in order to meet the needs of the individual parish. Possibilities include (but are not limited to):

- Weekly sessions:
  - six to eight sessions, offered once a week in the weeks immediately preceding the scheduled date for the celebration of the sacrament
- Monthly sessions:
  - six to eight sessions, offered once a month in addition to the regular catechetical sessions during the year in which the candidates will be confirmed
- Summer may provide an opportunity for flexible scheduling of sessions that are at least 6 to 8 hours in total length.

Some topics for the Direct Preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation include (but are not limited to) the following:

### **THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**

- Through *WISDOM*, the Spirit enables us to recognize and respond to the presence of God in our lives.
- Through *UNDERSTANDING*, the Spirit enables us to grow beyond an intellectual knowledge of faith toward a deeper experience of faith as response to God's presence.

- Through **RIGHT JUDGMENT**, the Spirit guides us to make decisions and choices which reflect our commitment to gospel values as disciples of Jesus.
- Through **COURAGE**, the Spirit empowers us to “stand firm in the Lord” (*Phil. 4:1*), to witness to the faith regardless of personal difficulty or suffering.
- Through **KNOWLEDGE**, the Spirit enables us to be certain of God’s love for us and to share that love with others.
- Through **REVERENCE**, the Spirit leads us to honor God as the source of all life, to see all people as brothers and sisters, and to see all of creation as redeemed by Christ.
- Through **WONDER AND AWE**, the Spirit enables us to recognize, respect, and trust God’s divine role in the unfolding of human history and in all creation.

### THE FRUITS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

In biblical theology, the concept of “fruit” refers to the result of God’s saving actions.

St. Paul, in his Letter to the Galatians, wrote “. . . the fruit of the Holy Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.” (*Gal 5:22-23*) The Latin Vulgate translation added modesty, continence, and chastity.

The fruit(s) of the Holy Spirit, then, refers to the effect(s) of the Holy Spirit active in the lives of the followers of Jesus.

- Through the experience of the profound **LOVE** and mercy of God, the Spirit enables us to surrendered our selves to God and to persons in our lives, and from that surrender flows **JOY**.
- Through **PEACE** the Spirit enables us to live in tranquillity and serenity.
- Through **PATIENCE** and **KINDNESS**, the Spirit enables us to bear wrongs without anger or vengeance.
- Through **GENEROSITY**, the Spirit enables us to act out of gospel values in choosing to do what is right, and to consider the ultimate good of even those who might be enemies.
- Through **FAITHFULNESS**, the Spirit enables us to persevere in doing what is right, and to endure suffering in order to overcome evil.
- Through **GENTLENESS**, the Spirit enables us to relinquish the desire for power over others and to trust in the power of Jesus.

- Through **SELF-CONTROL, MODESTY, CONTINENCE** and **CHASTITY**, the Spirit enables us to moderate and to balance natural human desires.

### THE THEOLOGY OF SERVICE

We are called through Baptism to service as a way of life, as the way of discipleship.

Candidates should be provided with the opportunity to reflect on their experience(s) of service, and are invited to consider new opportunities for service as fully initiated members of the Christian Community.

### THE RITE OF CONFIRMATION: SIGNS AND SYMBOLS

#### • Renewal of Baptismal Promises

Candidates renew Baptismal promises and profess the faith of the Church. This renewal and profession of faith links the celebration of the sacrament of Confirmation to Baptism as a Sacrament of Initiation.

#### • The Laying On Of Hands

The laying on of hands is an ancient biblical symbol invoking the presence of God, the imparting of divine power for a special task, and the passing on of blessings and promises of God. By this ritual action, the bishop invokes the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the candidates, and perpetuates the grace of Pentecost in the Church.

#### • Anointing with Chrism

In biblical symbolism, anointing with oil is a sign of abundance, joy, cleansing, healing, and makes one radiant with beauty, health and strength. Anointing is an ancient symbol used to consecrate persons and to set them apart for a special task.

“By Confirmation, Christians, that is, those who are anointed, share more completely in the mission of Jesus Christ and the fullness of the Holy Spirit with which (they) are filled, so that their lives may give off ‘the aroma of Christ.’”  
(CCC, 1294)

“The Seal of the Holy Spirit marks our total belonging to Christ, our enrollment in his service forever, as well as the promise of divine protection...”  
(CCC, 1296)

## LETTER TO THE BISHOP

Each candidate is requested to write to the bishop, articulating his/her desire to receive the Sacrament.

In order for the bishop to have ample time to read and review, please send these letters two weeks prior to the celebration.

## CANDIDATE'S RESPONSIBILITIES

### *Name*

It is recommended that the candidate for Confirmation retain his/her baptismal name as a witness to the intimate relationship between Baptism and Confirmation as Sacraments of Initiation. However, candidates may choose to take the name of any other saint whose life has special meaning for them.

### *Retreats*

Confirmation calls for a personal decision on the part of the candidate. Therefore, the opportunity to reflect on one's faith journey as well as the time and space necessary for integrating personal beliefs and experiences with one's understanding of a Catholic lifestyle need to be offered. The retreat experience provides this opportunity, time, and space, and is an essential part of the Confirmation process. The parish provides a Confirmation retreat for all candidates, distinct from any other retreats offered for Catholic or public school youth.

The retreat setting should be a comfortable one both in environment and in atmosphere. It is recommended that the retreat be held at a location other than the parish. The retreat should last at least one day, although a longer period, such as an overnight, allows more time for reflection and community building. The retreat should be interactive and different from what has been experienced in Confirmation classes.

The Confirmation retreat should provide the time necessary for the candidates to reflect upon their participation in the Confirmation process and the meaning of the sacrament for them. It should include quiet time for reflection and prayer. The retreat experience is an opportune time to witness to the value of young people's faith. Therefore, it is suggested that previously confirmed teens from the parish be invited to be part of the retreat team and to share their faith story with their peers.

A retreat also provides the opportunity for young people to participate in the Eucharist in a way which is particularly meaningful to them. It is recommended that the opportunity for the reception of the Sacrament of Penance, in addition to Eucharist, be offered during the retreat.

A good retreat takes planning, effort and communication among the team. The Office of Adolescent Catechesis and Discipleship can provide you with assistance in planning your retreats.

### *Service*

As baptized Catholics we are participants in the mission of the Church which calls each of us to service. Therefore, service opportunities are an essential part of all catechetical programs. In providing opportunities for young people to be involved in service, we recommend that the emphasis be placed on the opportunities afforded them rather than an accumulation of "hours completed". Service opportunities should be offered through activities taking place within both the parish community and the community-at-large.

This time allows the candidate to reflect on their experience of service to others which they have already experienced, are presently experiencing, and will continue to experience as confirmed Catholics. It is a time to make significant connections between the gospel mandate to bring about the Reign of God and their own life experiences.

## FAMILY CATECHETICAL SENSITIVITY

The attitudes, actions and values of families constantly call individuals to open themselves to a Christ-centered life. Parents especially influence their children during each phase of their faith journey and need to be involved in the preparation for and celebration of sacraments.

Effective preparation programs recognize and consider the many different family structures and respect the uniqueness of each. In addition, the parish recognizes that the preparation for and celebration of the sacraments present an opportunity to minister to the special needs of families. Pastoral care and sensitivity should characterize the components of preparation programs that touch family members.

## PARENT(S)

Parents or guardians have a unique role to play in the initiation of their children into the sacramental life of the Church. They are to form and foster along with the faith community, a spirit of faith, which will help prepare the children for a fruitful reception of the sacrament of Confirmation. The role of the parents is also expressed by their active participation in the celebration of the sacraments. (*RC, 3*)

The lived experience of sacraments in the family is most important. An atmosphere in which faith is witnessed and discussed is most conducive to growth in faith. By becoming more aware of the meaning of the initiation process by sharing in the liturgical celebrations of preparation and times of reflection with the candidate, parents can fulfill their baptismal promises and nurture the faith life of their child.

For children, the family plays an important role in their religious education and introduction into the sacramental life of the church. Sacramental preparation is the responsibility and concern of the parents with the full support and cooperation of the faith community. (*NCD 25, 212, 229; RB 4 RC 3*)

Parents, by their Christian life, form children in prayer, a sense of faith, and in the importance of sacramental life. Parents have the responsibility to:

- assist children in their preparation for sacramental celebration by:
  - ♦ celebrating regularly as part of the parish community, including Sunday Eucharist
  - ♦ modeling a life of Christian witness
  - ♦ assuring ongoing and in-depth catechetical formation through participation of their children in parish faith formation, or Catholic School and parish sacramental preparation processes
- participate in a meaningful way in the parent component of the parish sacramental preparation process
- provide continuing faith formation of their children after the reception of the sacraments by participating in the life of the Church through word, worship, witness and service.

## PARENT SESSIONS

Parent sessions are an integral part of the Confirmation process. During these sessions parents will have an opportunity to focus on key themes which will help them to support and journey with the candidate. Areas to be explored during parent sessions include:

- the process of preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation
- the theology of the Sacraments of Initiation
- the signs and symbols within the Rite of Confirmation
- the individual's relationship with Jesus and the Body of Christ
- the role of the parent and sponsor
- the development of faith in adolescents and how to communicate with teenagers in religious matters
- the gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit and the development of each person's gifts and talents
- the readiness of the candidate and how that is determined by the candidate, parent and parish staff
- exploration of what it means to be Church, the support needed to live out a Christian life style, and the call to ministry.

Pastoral flexibility is encouraged for those parents who have attended Confirmation parent meetings within the preceding year.

## SPONSORS

Ordinarily, each candidate for Confirmation will be accompanied by a sponsor. It is desirable, (though not mandatory), that one who undertook the role of sponsor at Baptism be sponsor for Confirmation. A sponsor may be male or female and must be at least sixteen (16) years of age (unless the pastor grants an exception from this age requirement for a just cause.) A sponsor must be a Catholic who is fully initiated – that is, he/she has received the sacraments of Baptism, Eucharist and Confirmation – and who is in good standing with the Catholic Church. Parents may not be sponsors for their own sons and daughters. (*Canon 874.5*)

The role of the sponsor is to be a “companion on the journey” with the candidate, to be friend and mentor, both during the process of preparation for the sacrament, and beyond. As such, he/she should be invited to be an active participant in the preparation process.

The sponsor is called through his/her own Baptism to be a disciple of the Lord Jesus. As a disciple, the sponsor offers to the candidate prayer, encouragement, support, and the witness of a life lived in response to the presence of the Lord Jesus.

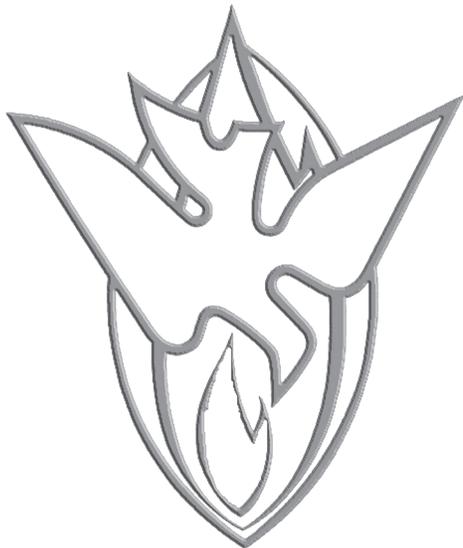
The sponsor represents the parish community and the universal faith community in welcoming the candidate.

### ***Sponsor Preparation***

In order to fulfill the role outlined above, it is important that the parish provide opportunities for sponsor formation and preparation. During these sessions, sponsors should have an opportunity to reflect upon:

- their own baptismal call to discipleship
- prayer and relationship to Christ
- faith development, especially as it relates to adolescence and adulthood
- the Confirmation process
- conversion as ongoing and lifelong
- skills necessary to “companion” a candidate on the journey, e.g. listening, faith-sharing, and discernment.

Sponsor Proxies - These individuals act only as a representative for the Sponsor should attendance at the Confirmation celebration not be possible. (i.e., unable to be physically present due to illness, military service, transportation issue, etc.) Note: Having a Proxy does not waive Sponsor’s requirements.



## ***The Ministers***

### **BISHOPS & PRIESTS**

The bishop is the chief pastor of the diocese, and the leader of the entire liturgical life of the Church committed to him. (*RCIA, 12*) The bishop is the symbol of the unity of the Church. “...he is the foremost dispenser of the mysteries of God, he is constantly to endeavor to have the Christian faithful entrusted to his care grow in grace through the celebration of the sacraments and both understand and live the paschal mystery.” (*CCL, 387*) The bishop is the ‘ordinary minister of Confirmation’. (*RC,7*)

### **PASTOR/PARISH LIFE DIRECTOR**

Pastor / pastoral administrator has a special responsibility to assure that all the baptized have the opportunity to seal their Baptism through the celebration of Confirmation. Their responsibilities include:

- fostering in the parish an understanding of its role in sacramental preparation and celebration
- becoming familiar with the Confirmation preparation process by participating in its planning and on-going evaluation
- determining the readiness of candidates, in consultation with parents, catechetical leaders and catechists
- ensuring that the parish provide opportunities for life-long catechesis so that formation in faith continues after the celebration of Confirmation.

### **YOUTH MINISTERS/ CONFIRMATION COORDINATORS**

The role of the youth minister / Confirmation coordinator is to assist the pastor in his responsibility to provide for the sacramental preparation of candidates for Confirmation. This role often includes coordinating the process, working with the parish staff, liturgy committee, candidates, parents, sponsors, the Bishop’s Office, and the Office of Adolescent Catechesis and Discipleship.

### **YOUTH MINISTERS**

Youth Ministers in the Confirmation process provide opportunities for candidates to grow in faith under the guidance of the pastor. A youth minister is a critical witness to God’s ongoing revelation in the midst of a believing community. The youth minister is comfortable with different learning styles, life experiences, individual needs and faith expressions and can lead the candidates into a deeper sense of worship and community.

## The Parish Community

The critical aspect of all the Sacraments of Initiation, including Confirmation, is the vitality of the existing community and its on-going relationship to the newly incorporated member. This shifts the focus away from what happens to the individual at the moment of reception of the sacrament and underscores instead the role of the community in its ongoing relationship to its new members.

We celebrate Confirmation because of the community's life in the Spirit. We mark candidates with the chrism because there is a spirit-filled community in which they can participate. The candidates are not only our offspring for whom we bear responsibility. They are also gifts to the community, each one offering talents and abilities that can make the community far better and richer. In sharing our life in Christ's Spirit with the candidates, in celebrating the gift of the Spirit with them, the entire parish community is renewed in its baptismal way of life.

The parish community, ever learning, celebrating, suffering, rejoicing, hoping, failing, forgiving, questioning, healing, loving... but always being centered in the mystery of the death and resurrection of Jesus.

### THE ROLE OF THE PARISH COMMUNITY

As with Baptism, catechesis for Confirmation takes place within the parish community, which has the obligation to participate in the catechetical preparation of those to be confirmed. The parish is the faith community into whose life of prayer and worship the candidates will be fully initiated. The following are some ways a parish community can become involved in the Confirmation process:

- the parish strives to be a welcoming community to the Confirmation candidates as they celebrate various rites within their process of preparation such as the Rite of Enrollment and Covenant

- parishioners could also serve as prayer partners (adults who agree to pray for individual candidates throughout their Confirmation preparation process).

These parishioners can be invited as prayer partners by the candidates, pastor, catechetical leader or in response to an invitation in the parish bulletin.

Candidates certainly could have more than one prayer partner and should be encouraged to thank the prayer partner when confirmed

- special liturgies could be celebrated throughout the Confirmation preparation process where the candidates are invited to share the liturgical roles as adult members of the parish community would do
- candidates could be invited to parish activities, organizations, committees, as an introduction into active participation in the parish community
- homilies could be given and/or mention could be made occasionally of various topics related to the Confirmation preparation process
- the entire parish community should be invited to the liturgy celebrating the sacrament and to the reception following the celebration of the sacrament
- individual parishioners could be invited to send encouraging notes to the candidates during the preparation process.

### PREPARATION FOR THE CELEBRATION OF THE SACRAMENT

Sufficient time should be provided to allow the candidates to participate in planning the liturgical celebration with the appropriate parish personnel. This planning should take place at a time distinct from the time provided for retreat.

# Pastoral Liturgical Guidelines

## INTRODUCTION

Thorough planning for both the catechesis and the Rite of Confirmation itself is essential because of the many options within the rite. Since Confirmation is a celebration of the entire parish community, responsibility for planning the liturgy lies with the Parish Liturgy Committee, working closely with the coordinators, catechists, parents and candidates.

“The whole people of God, represented by the families and friends of the candidates and by members of the local community, will be invited to take part in the celebration and will express its faith in the fruits of the Holy Spirit”. (RC, 4)

This section attempts to offer some suggestions which are norms for our diocese. Personal creativity can enhance the celebration.

## PREPARATION FOR THE RITE

Confirmation is celebrated within the context of the Eucharist in order to express more clearly the fundamental connection of this sacrament with the entire process of Christian Initiation. Any other form of celebration is by way of exception.

Concelebration is appropriate and, in this regard it is important to remember that the proper distribution of roles should be maintained throughout the celebration. When a deacon is present, he should function in his full ministerial role.

Representatives of the diverse parish ministries should be involved in the celebration, e.g. music ministers, ushers, servers, etc. The liturgy should be so arranged as to be a celebration of the faith community into which the candidates are initiated.

## PLANNING THE LITURGY

In planning the liturgy, due consideration must be given to the liturgical season in which Confirmation is celebrated. The Sacramentary provides several options for the prayers to be used in the celebration of Confirmation when it takes place within Mass.

These prayers may be used except on the Sundays of Advent, Lent and Easter season; on solemnities, on days within the octave of Easter, on All Souls, on Ash Wednesday, and during Holy Week.

Particular attention should be given to any letters of instruction from the Office of Liturgy and/or Office of the Bishop that pertain to the liturgical celebration of the sacrament of Confirmation.

(See Appendix, pages 17-20)

# Celebrating the Rite of Confirmation Within the Eucharist

## ENTRANCE PROCESSION

The procession of ministers is arranged as follows:

1. Thurifer\*
2. Cross bearer and two candle bearers or, during the Easter season, an Easter candle bearer
3. Chrism Bearer\*
4. Candidates
5. Concelebrants
6. Deacon or Lector with the Book of Gospels\*\*
7. Master of Ceremonies
8. Bishop

During the Easter Season, the Easter candle may be used in the procession to recall the relationship of Confirmation to Baptism. It is then positioned prominently in the sanctuary.

*\*Indicates options*

*\*\* If the Book of Gospels is carried in procession, it should be placed on the altar.*

*The Lectionary should already be placed on the lectern or ambo and be open to the readings.*

The bishop will follow the procedure which is the usual practice of the celebration at a Sunday Liturgy.

It is appropriate that before or after the Entrance Song, the pastor or one of the candidates welcome the bishop and all who have gathered for the celebration.

### *Penitential Rite*

The invocations of the Penitential Rite focus on God's all embracing mercy and loving forgiveness. If the third form of the Penitential Rite is used, the invocations may be assigned to the deacon, if one is present. On Sundays, the Rite of Sprinkling may be used in place of the Penitential Rite.

### *Liturgy of the Word*

If the celebration of Confirmation is at a weekend liturgy the readings of the day are used. Readings can be proclaimed by candidates who have been well prepared to exercise this ministry. Other persons involved in the process might also be considered to serve as lector.

All the readings including the Gospel are to be proclaimed from the lectern or ambo.

Ideally the Responsorial Psalm is sung.

The Gospel is proclaimed by the deacon or, in his absence, by a concelebrant (usually the pastor). The deacon or concelebrant stands before the bishop, asks for and receives his blessing before proclaiming the Gospel. Incense may be used. The master of ceremonies should be consulted concerning the bishop's preference for reverencing the Lectionary and the Book of Gospels.

### *Presentation of the Candidates*

It should be kept in mind that, at the presentation of the candidates after the Gospel, the bishop is addressed on behalf of the community. The one who presents the candidates faces the bishop in such a way that he/she can be heard by the assembly. Ideally, a place other than the one that is reserved for the proclamation of the word is used for this purpose.

The pastor or his representative may include the following points in this presentation:

- the request of the candidates for the fullness of Christian initiation
- the experience of the candidates in hearing the Word of God, in shaping their conduct according to this Word, in sharing Christian fellowship and service
- reference the candidates' letters of petition
- the actual presentation of the candidates.

Only if the candidates are few in number, may they be presented by name, in which case the candidates rise as their names are called and remain standing until all the names have been called. After the bishop acknowledges the candidates, all are seated for the homily.

### *Homily*

The bishop gives the homily. The master of ceremonies should be consulted concerning the bishop's preference as to whether he will speak from the chair, lectern/ambo, or the aisle.

### *Renewal of Baptismal Promises*

After the homily, the candidates stand and the bishop questions them (the renewal of baptismal promises). The bishop confirms their profession of faith by proclaiming the faith of the Church. The whole congregation responds: Amen. (RC, 23)

### *The Laying On Of Hands*

The bishop invites all to pray.

Suitable importance should be given to the period of silent prayer preceding the imposition of hands.

The candidates kneel for the prayer invoking the Holy Spirit.

The bishop and the priests who are present with him, "lay hands upon all the candidates" (by extending their hands over them). The bishop alone sings or says the prayer.

### *The Anointing With Chrism*

To enable the faithful to participate more fully, the bishop may anoint standing or seated before the altar or in another suitable place visible to the congregation and easily reached by the candidates. The bishop's master of ceremonies should be consulted in this matter.

Each candidate presents him/herself to the bishop or priest in keeping with the local custom.

Although the practice of presenting a card with the name of the candidate and sponsor on it may be retained, the candidate says his/her name aloud to the bishop even if it is written on a card.

The sponsor places his/her right hand on the shoulder of the candidate. The bishop anoints the candidates on the forehead with chrism saying: "N. Be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit." The newly-confirmed responds: "Amen". The bishop or priest then says: "Peace be with you." The newly-confirmed responds: "And with your spirit." The chrism remains on the forehead as a visible sign of the sacrament. Each candidate returns to his/her place after responding to the sign of peace.

The congregation is seated during the anointing. The candidates also sit until they are ready to approach the bishop, and then are seated again when they return to their places.

After the anointing of the candidates, the bishop, seated in the presidential chair, washes his hands. For this purpose a lap towel, sliced lemon, warm water, bread slices, a basin and a hand towel are provided.

During the anointing, soft instrumental music should be employed so that the words of the sacrament may be heard. This also allows for dialogue between the Bishop and candidate.

### ***Profession of Faith***

The Profession of Faith is omitted, because it has already been made in the renewal of Baptismal promises by the candidates.

### ***The Universal Prayer***

The Universal Prayer is introduced and concluded by the bishop.

On this occasion, the bishop leaves it to the discretion of the pastoral leaders, the intercessions may be read by the deacon or newly confirmed.

The intercessions may be those which appear in the ritual or may specifically be prepared for the occasion. In their preparation the universal nature of the prayer is to be maintained.

As a rule the series of intentions is to be:

- a. for the needs of the Church;
- b. for public authorities and the salvation of the whole world;
- c. for those burdened by any kind of difficulty;
- d. for the local community." (GIRM 70).

### ***Presentation & Preparation of Gifts***

Some of the confirmed may present the gifts. The gifts are bread and wine, together with other gifts for the needs of the Church and of the poor. Instrumental music could lend focus to the ritual action which is taking place.

"The priest may incense the gifts placed upon the altar and then incense the cross and the altar itself, so as to signify the Church's offering and prayer rising like incense in the sight of God." (GIRM 75)

### ***Eucharistic Prayer***

Concelebrants are requested to follow the procedure for concelebration as stated in the General Instruction of the Roman Missal.

### ***The Lord's Prayer***

The Lord's Prayer is prayed solemnly by the whole community. It may also be sung.

### ***Sign of Peace***

The deacon or, in his absence, the presider, invites the congregation to exchange the Sign of Peace.

### ***Lamb of God***

The Lamb of God accompanies the breaking of the bread (Fraction Rite). It may be sung or recited.

### ***Communion***

Holy Communion may be offered under both species for all present. Provision needs to be made for sufficient number of communion stations.

The clergy, aided by the Extraordinary Ministers of the Holy Communion (if needed), assist with the distribution of Holy Communion.

### ***Announcements***

Brief announcements may be made following the "Prayer after Communion."

### ***Recessional***

As in the Entrance Procession, the thurifer, cross bearer and servers lead the procession out of the church. They are followed by the various ministers, the newly confirmed, and then the bishop and his ministers.

## Other Considerations

The readings are found in the Lectionary and are taken either in whole or in part from the Mass of the day or from the Mass for Confirmation. On the greater feasts, e.g. solemnities or holy days, the proper readings are not omitted. On the Sundays of the year, the readings of the day are given primary consideration.

A printed program with congregational responses and hymns is useful to insure participation. Permission for the use of copyrighted materials must be obtained. The program should not include the readings and presidential prayers.

### *Placement of Music In the Liturgy*

Depending on the music resources in the parish, the following parts of the liturgy, in order of importance, may be sung. The length of the piece or the number of verses sung should be in proportion to the ritual action taking place at that time.

1. Liturgy of the Word:
  - a. Responsorial Psalm
  - b. Gospel Acclamation (if not sung, omit)
2. Liturgy of the Eucharist:
  - a. Holy, Holy, Holy
  - b. Memorial Acclamation
  - c. Great Amen
  - d. Lamb of God
3. In addition:
  - a. Entrance (Song of Gathering)
  - b. Gloria
  - c. Preparation of Gifts and Altar
  - d. Lord's Prayer and Doxology
  - e. Song of Praise & Thanksgiving (after Communion)
  - f. Recessional Hymn
4. During the conferral of the Sacrament (instrumental)

### *General Suggestions For Choices of Music*

- In order to insure full participation of the congregation, it is recommended that music which is familiar to the assembly and candidates be chosen.
- Music in keeping with the liturgical season is appropriate.

- Music which calls to mind the sacraments of initiation, the role of the Holy Spirit, and the call to Christian discipleship is appropriate.
- Soft instrumental music only is to be played while the Bishop is confirming each candidate.

### *Recommended Dress Code for teens and sponsors*

The dress of the candidates and sponsors should be suitable for the occasion.

#### **Gentlemen:**

Dress Pants or Khakis with a belt  
 Dress shoes with socks  
 Dress shirt with collar, shirt tucked in  
 Tie (optional)  
 Jacket (optional)

#### **Ladies:**

Skirt, at the knee or longer  
 Blouse or sweater: no plunging necklines, strapless, spaghetti straps or exposed mid-riffs  
 Dress, see above  
 Dress pants  
 Dress shoes

#### **Inappropriate for All:**

Jeans  
 Flip-flops  
 Sneakers  
 Overly tight clothing  
 T-shirts

The use of confirmation robes is optional. Stoles are inappropriate vesture for the candidates.

### *Seating*

Candidates should be seated with their sponsors in a special section of the church. Ideally they are seated in a way which allows the homilist to address them as a group.

### *Rehearsal*

Time should be allotted for the practice of ceremonies and music to insure a well-ordered celebration. It is especially important that the lectors, who will proclaim the Word, be chosen for their ability to proclaim the Scriptures. (Suggestion: lectors and those exercising special ministries rehearse separately before the major rehearsal, then with all present.)

### *Vestments*

The bishop's master of ceremonies should be consulted to determine whether the parish or the bishop will provide the bishop's vestments. Red vestments for the bishop, concelebrants and deacons are preferred. White vestments are permissible. On the Sundays of Advent, Lent and the Easter Season, Solemnities and the days of Holy Week, the color of the day must be used.

### *Sanctuary Arrangements*

The following should be provided:

- Chair for the bishop.
- Table for the chrism.
- Roman Pontifical or Ritual usually brought by the bishop.
- Preparations for Communion under both species for all present.
- Pitcher with warm water, basin, hand towel, sliced lemon, sliced bread, and lap towel.
- Easter Candle, if it is used.
- Only the altar cloth should be on the altar when the celebration begins. The Sacramentary, corporal, purificator, flagon, ciboria, paten and chalice(s) are brought to the altar by the minister(s) at the appropriate time during the liturgy.

### *Parish Sacramental Registry*

The reception of the sacrament of Confirmation is to be noted in the sacramental registry of the Candidates' home parish, that is, where the candidate was catechized for the sacraments, no matter where the Confirmation celebration actually took place. A notice of Confirmation is then to be sent to the candidate's parish of Baptism. If that parish has closed, the diocesan directory has a listing of where to find the sacramental records of reconfigured churches. If you do not have access to a directory, please contact your Regional or Diocesan Director of Faith Formation for the information.

# *Guidelines for Confirmation: An Overview*

The candidate is expected to have been previously involved in both the liturgical and sacramental life of the faith community and in an ongoing process of faith formation, giving particular attention to regular attendance at Mass.

## **PARENT(S)**

- Provide the lived experience of sacraments within the family and a witness to a lived Catholic Faith.
- There is an expectation that parents participate in parent sessions.

## **SPONSORS**

- It is suggested that candidates retain their baptismal sponsor, if possible. However, they may prefer to ask another person who they admire and respect.
- Candidates must be fully initiated Catholics of at least 16 years of age and a Catholic in good standing with the church.
- Parents may not be sponsors for their own sons and daughters. (*Canon 874.5*)
- Parents are invited to be an integral part of the process.

## **PRE-REQUISITES BEFORE DIRECT PREPARATION**

- Readiness (see below)
- Previous involvement in the liturgical and sacramental life of the faith community and ongoing faith formation is necessary.
- A candidate shall have actively participated in at least one full year of parish or Catholic school faith formation classes which have included the Faith Themes found in the sacramental guidelines, prior to entering direct sacramental preparation.

## **AGE & READINESS**

- Candidates will celebrate the sacrament as early as 9th grade.
- Readiness is determined through interview process.

## **DIRECT PREPARATION**

- Direct Preparation consists of six to eight hours of well planned session(s), focusing on the nature and meaning of the sacrament. There can be a variety of options for scheduling.
- Each candidate will provide a personalized letter to the Bishop requesting Confirmation.
- Candidates will participate in the planning of the liturgical celebration.

## **CONFIRMATION NAME**

- It is recommended that the candidate retain his/her baptismal name, but the candidate is free to choose the name of a saint.

## **RETREAT & SERVICE**

- A confirmation retreat should be at least 6-8 hours. This retreat is distinct from other school retreat experiences.
- Service is integral to all faith formation. For confirmation, an emphasis shall be placed on opportunities afforded rather than accumulation of hours. These services opportunities shall be varied encompassing both parish service opportunities and community outreach experiences.

# Appendix

## CONFIRMATION NOTES

NOVEMBER 2023

Office of the Bishop  
Diocese of Syracuse  
240 E Onondaga Street  
Syracuse, NY 13202

### I. PREPARATION FOR CONFIRMATION AND LITURGICAL GUIDELINES

#### Candidates and Sponsors

As noted in the Diocesan Guidelines on Confirmation, “Candidates must be actively participating in parish or Catholic religious education classes for at least one full year before they begin the direct preparation for Confirmation.” During this time of preparation, each candidate should be interviewed personally to discuss their decision to be confirmed, their appreciation of Sacred Scripture as a unique aspect of God’s revelation, a sense of Catholic identity, their regular participation in the sacramental life of the Church, and a willingness to deepen their faith 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 of age and is a practicing Catholic who has already been confirmed. Parents may not be sponsors (Canon 893, 872).**

The bishop does not require that the Confirmation candidates be seated in the 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.

#### Rehearsal

The procedure for the ceremony should be practiced with the candidate and sponsor sometime in advance. **Having the candidates (with sponsors 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 is finished confirming the previous one.** As the candidates stand before the Bishop at the front of the center aisle, the sponsor places their right hand on the candidate’s shoulder. When the Bishop turns to the next candidate to be confirmed, he or she should be his/her Confirmation name loudly and clearly. (This may be their Baptismal name or a new Confirmation name. A saint’s name is preferred and, in either case, the **candidate should know some information about the saint whose name they have 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.

**Confirmand: Amen.**

Bishop: Peace be with you.

**Confirmand: And with your spirit.**

**The Bishop may 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, whether under the form of bread alone, or under both species. If Communion is to be distributed under both species, the Communion Cups should be filled with wine before the ceremony and placed on the credence table. There should be no pouring of cups, except the Bishop’s chalice, at the altar. *Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion should assist only if there are not a sufficient number of 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.*

If deacon is present, he reads the gospel and may lead the intercessions of the Universal Prayer, although on this occasion it is allowed for the newly confirmed to do so as well. Sample texts are included. When there is no deacon present, the pastor proclaims the gospel.

One or more readers proclaim the scripture reading(s) from the Lectionary. It is always assumed that if the Confirmation is celebrated at a Saturday anticipated Mass or Sunday, the Sunday readings will be used.

**Six** altar servers is the ideal for the ceremony, **seven** if incense is used. The servers should be vested and in the sacristy **one-half hour before the ceremony**. The Master of Ceremonies will meet with them before the liturgy.

Enclosed you will find guidelines to assist your music minister(s) in choosing and leading the music for the liturgy. It is imperative, that during the Confirmation Rite, only **soft, instrumental music** be played.

#### **Setup for the Ceremony**

*N.B. Please see the enclosed notes 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 and on the credence table: the chalice, ciboria, corporal, purificator(s), water cruet, towel and basin, bread and lemons and a second ewer and basin and two large hand towels for the washing of the Bishop's hands after the Confirmation Rite. **Sufficient hosts and wine (for the Bishop's chalice)** should be set out on the gifts table. It is appropriate that some of the newly confirmed present the gifts to the Bishop at the time of the Presentation of the Gifts. Communion cups **should be pre-poured and placed on the credence table before Mass**.

**The Bishop will bring the Confirmation Ritual, the Holy Chrism, and his own vestments.**

#### **Cameras**

The people should be instructed that the Bishop will be happy to pose for photographs after the ceremony. Concerning photographs or videotaping 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 liturgy. 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 or Parish Life Director or Catechetical leader, briefly present the candidates for Confirmation.

**Homily:** The Bishop will preach the homily.

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

Bishop: Do you reject Satan, and all his works and 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, suffered death and was buried, rose again from the dead and is 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 today through the Sacrament of Confirmation is given to you in a special way just as he was given to the Apostles on the day of Pentecost?

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.

Candidates: **Amen.**

*Please note: The Bishop will not instruct the candidates to 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: Almighty God, Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ, who brought these your servants to new birth by water and the Holy Spirit, freeing them from sin: Send upon them, O Lord, the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete; give them the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and fortitude the spirit of knowledge and piety; fill them with the spirit of the fear of the Lord. Through Christ our Lord.

All: **Amen.**

**Anointing and the 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.

Confirmand: **Amen.**

Bishop: Peace be with you.

Confirmand: **And with your Spirit.**

**Universal Prayer:** The Universal Prayer follows 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 announcement may be made. The Bishop will then say a few words of thanks, after which he prayer the final blessing provided in the Sacramentary or Confirmation Ritual. After the Deacon gives the dismissal, all process out accompanied by the recessional hymn.

Using the Liturgy Form, please notify the bishop of the details of the ceremony **at least two weeks before** Confirmation is celebrated. **It is imperative that the liturgy begin on time. If there is a welcome by the Candidates before Mass, it should be done so that the procession may begin at the appointed time.**

Thank you.

## LITURGICAL PREPARATION FOR THE SEASONS OF THE YEAR

### On a Sunday of Easter Season

1. White vestments are used. The Bishop may use the parish vestments.
2. The "Gloria" is sung or recited.
3. Orations and Readings are for the Sunday.
4. If desired, one of the day's readings may be replaced by a corresponding reading from the Lectionary Selections for Confirmation.

### On a Weekday of the Easter Season

1. The Ritual Mass for Confirmation is used.
2. Red vestments are worn. The Bishop will bring his vestments.
3. The "Gloria" may be sung.
4. One or two readings may be read before the Gospel. If two readings are used, the first one is from the Acts of the Apostles and the second one is from the Epistles or Book of Revelation.

**On a Solemnity (e.g., Ascension, All Saints, St. Joseph, Annunciation, Sacred Heart, Holy Trinity, Corpus Christi, etc.)**

1. White vestments are used. The Bishop may use the parish vestments.
2. The "Gloria" is sung or recited.
3. Orations and readings are for the Solemnity.
4. If desired, one of the day's readings may be replaced by a corresponding reading from the Lectionary selections for Confirmation.

**On a Sunday in Ordinary Time**

1. The Ritual Mass for Confirmation is used.
2. Red vestments are worn. The Bishop will bring his vestments.
3. The "Gloria" is sung or recited
4. The readings may be either those of the Sunday or chosen from the Lectionary selections for Confirmation. If the Sunday readings are used, one of them may be replaced by a corresponding reading from the Lectionary selections for Confirmation.

**On a Weekday in Ordinary Time**

1. The Ritual Mass for Confirmation is used.
2. Red vestments are worn. The Bishop will bring his vestments.
3. The "Gloria" may be sung.
4. One or two readings may be read before the Gospel.

**On a Sunday of the Lenten Season**

1. Violet vestments are used. The Bishop may use the parish vestments
2. The "Gloria" is omitted and the Lenten Gospel Acclamation is used.
3. Orations and Readings for the Sunday.
4. If desired, one of the day's readings may be replaced by a corresponding reading from the Lectionary selections for Confirmation.

**On a Weekday of the Lenten Season**

1. The Ritual Mass for Confirmation is used.
2. Red Vestments are worn. The Bishop will bring is vestments.
3. The "Gloria" is omitted and the Lenten Gospel Acclamation is used.
4. One or two readings may be read before the Gospel.

**GENERAL NOTES**

1. The order of the Entrance Procession is as follows: Thurifer, Crossbearer, Knights, Deacon (with Book of the Gospels), Readers, other Deacons, Concelebrating Priests, Master of Ceremonies, Bishop, Mitre Bearer and Crosier Bearer. (The use of incense is at the discretion of the pastor.)
2. The concelebrating priests should sit in close proximity to the altar with easy access to join the Bishop for the Eucharistic Prayer.
3. The Rite of Sprinkling may be used **only** at Sunday celebrations of the Rite of Confirmation as prescribed in the *General Instruction to the Roman Missal*.
4. The Liturgy of the Word proceeds as it normally would. The Responsorial Psalm should always be sung.
5. If incense is used, the Thurifer brings the thurible to the Bishop at the beginning of the Gospel Acclamation. The Deacon then asks for the Bishop's blessing, and walked in procession to the Lectern.
6. On this occasion, I leave it to the discretion of the pastoral leaders, the intercessions may be read by the deacon or newly confirmed.
7. The Presentation of the Gifts should only be the Hosts and wine for the Bishop's chalice used in the celebration of the Mass. The Communion Cups for the assembly should be poured prior to the liturgy and placed on the credence table.
8. The concelebrating priests should join the Bishop at the altar before the dialogue introducing the Preface.
9. At Communion, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion should assist **only** if there are not sufficient priests and deacons present.

Note: This replaces the March 2016 letter.