

## PROCEDURES FOR CEREMONY OF CONFIRMATION IMMEDIATE PREPARATION

1. If possible, the bishop meets with the Confirmation candidates about 15-20 minutes before the ceremony. (This is to put them at ease, dispose them for the sacrament, and dialogue with them the meaning of the occasion and the importance of their liturgical participation as well as long-range faith commitment). This also presumes the candidates meet in an assembly hall beforehand. If they simply meet in church, the bishop will just say “hello” to them there about 10 minutes before the ceremony.) Preferably sponsors are not included in this. (The presence of sponsors changes the dynamic.)
2. Please start on time. This necessitates that the candidates be already seated in their places five minutes ahead of time, unless they are part of the procession.
3. If the candidates number 20 or more, diocesan policy specifies they are to be presented as a group; in this case, their names are not to be called individually. For 20 or less, it is up to local custom/choice whether to call each candidate by name.
4. Candidates, as they receive Confirmation, approach the bishop (preferably two by two – communion station style – if there is a large number), remaining on their side of the pews, approaching the bishop with sponsor. This allows a steady, continuous flow of candidates and sponsors. Please have the candidates stand close to the bishop.
5. For the recessional, the cross goes first, then the bishop; all bow to the altar. The newly-confirmed and sponsors follow the bishop.
6. There are four other practical matters:
  - a. It is fitting that the chairs for the bishop (and deacon) be in a place by themselves. Concelebrants (including the pastor) and servers should sit apart from them.
  - b. If at all possible, it is ideal to have five (5) servers (two acolytes, cross bearer, miter bearer, and crosier bearer). A minimum of two (2) servers is requested.
  - c. *Please have a server ready to hold the pontifical book for the laying on of hands.* (Priest(s) will join bishop in imposing/extending hands.)
  - d. Please have liquid soap or lemon and water available for the bishop to remove the Chrism from his hand right after he finishes confirming.

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## PROCEDURES FOR CONFIRMATION LITURGY REMOTE PREPARATION

1. **Readings**

If specific readings or prayer texts are required by the particular day (for example, Sunday or Solemnity) on which the Confirmation occurs, please use those readings and texts. Otherwise, readings have been assigned in the instructions for the seasons of Winter. (See liturgy planning form.)
2. **Music**

When choosing the music, please remember that Confirmation is a parish celebration. All sung parts of the Mass that belong to the assembly should reflect melodies with which the whole parish, not just those being confirmed, are familiar. Such sung parts are: entrance hymn, Holy, Lamb of God, and all sung responses and acclamations. (It is advised that the confirmands rehearse the songs sometime during their preparation process.)
3. **Ministers**

Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist complete a person’s initiation into the parish community of the Church. Confirmation is a parish event that should be planned and celebrated by all. Accordingly it is most fitting to involve regular ministers of the parish whenever possible, for example, as lectors, extraordinary ministers of holy communion, and in the execution of the music. The use of a well-prepared, capable Confirmation candidate to proclaim one of the assigned Scripture readings is encouraged, but not required.
4. **Worship Aid**

It is highly recommended that written acknowledgement by name be made in a pre-printed program of all who have helped in the preparation of the Confirmation candidates, as well as all who have participated in the liturgy, e.g., deacons, DRE/CRE, sacramental coordinator, principal, teachers, catechists, lectors, extraordinary ministers of holy communion, servers, musicians, ushers, decorators, reception preparers, emcee. This serves as a more permanent acknowledgment, and can save some time at the end of the ceremony. (The pastor can refer to this in his general acknowledgements after the post-Communion Prayer before inviting the assembly to the reception after the ceremony).

5. **Robes**

The Confirmands are completing their initiation into the parish community. As members of the community, distinguishing dress is not recommended. Note: universal Church regulations do not allow stoles to be worn by Confirmands.

6. **Name**

Since Confirmation is the completion of the Sacraments of Initiation, it is fitting for the candidate's baptismal name be used for Confirmation. Yet a "new" name may be chosen, preferably of a saint whose life helps motivate and inspire the candidate. The procedure having the candidate wear a label with the name to be spoken by the bishop in large, bold letters is very effective and widely used in the diocese. A candidate may choose any of the following three ways: a) with the candidate's baptismal name – (for example, Mary); b) with a chosen, different Confirmation name of a recognized saint (for example, Theresa); or c) using both the baptismal name and a different Confirmation name of a declared saint – (for example, Mary Theresa). The name on the Confirmation name tag should *not* have the prefix "Saint."

7. **Photography**

Out of reverence for the Mass, no videotaping or photography is permitted during the ceremony. The preferred time for photography, whether as a group or as individuals, is after the ceremony. Parents, friends and relatives are to be informed of this policy well in advance, and reminded about it before the ceremony, either by announcement or preferably mention written into the worship aid. The bishop always will be available for photographs with the candidates after the ceremony. If professional photography is used at the reception, your efforts to have the photographer organized with his/her staff to assist will be appreciated. Providing a list of the Confirmands ahead of time with any additional information (address, phone, email) that the photographer needs saves a great deal of time. It is also helpful, where such photographers are used, to mention in the announcements after the post-Communion Prayer at Mass; for example: "Photographs with the bishop will be taken by a special photographer at the beginning of the reception. Your cooperation in taking these photographs is greatly appreciated."

8. **Arrangement**

The bishop requests that all the Confirmation candidates sit together in the front pews of the church (with sponsors seated as a separate group in pews behind the entire group of Confirmation candidates). This configuration assists greatly in delivering the homily directly to the candidates without any visual interruption, as well as "commissioning" them at the end of the ceremony. It also highlights confidence in their readiness to assume a more visible role in their commitment to lead and to serve in the Church.

9. **Presentation of Candidates**

The ritual provides for only the sponsor to accompany the candidate. As much as possible there should be an uninterrupted flow of candidates and sponsors with minimum lag time between each set. When there is a large number to be confirmed (50 or more), the "Communion station" style of presenting the candidates (one on left and one on right) is encouraged. This arrangement works best when both center aisle pews are used for the candidates and their sponsors. Confirmation coordinator(s) should gently guide/direct candidates to the bishop for the anointing. The first two come forward together (with their sponsors behind them) and as one is confirmed, the next candidate and sponsor comes forward while the alternate side candidate is confirmed. This aids in a steady flow of candidates without rushing the ceremony. For this to be effective, each candidate approaches the sacrament slightly to the left or right of the actual center. Note: when a member of the Confirmation class has already participated in and been confirmed (for example, at the Easter Vigil) that person should not come forward with those to be confirmed.

10. **Holy Communion**

Those preparing for Confirmation should be growing into a fuller, more conscious, more willing participation in the Eucharist. Since Confirmation usually is temporally the final sacrament in the process of initiation, receiving the Eucharist under both kinds, that is, under the forms of both bread and wine, is strongly encouraged. It is also recommended that the correct way to receive Holy Communion in the hand and from the cup be reviewed with the candidates.