

PROCEDURES FOR CEREMONY OF CONFIRMATION IMMEDIATE PREPARATION

1. *When program and/or liturgy planning forms are provided to the bishop's office, please include instructions for the bishop to park (for example, near church, near rectory, near hall); where bishop is to vest (for example, sacristy, rectory, room in hall); where bishop is to meet candidates (for example, hall, classroom, daily Mass chapel).*
 2. If possible, the bishop meets with the Confirmation candidates about 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, **preferably seated if at all possible**. 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.)
 3. Please start on time. This necessitates that the candidates be already seated in their places **5** minutes ahead of time, unless they are part of the opening procession.
 4. If the candidates number 20 or more, diocesan policy specifies they are to be presented as a group; 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.
 5. Candidates, as they receive Confirmation, approach the bishop, (preferably two by two – communion station style - if there is a large number (40 or more) - **design of 2 X 2 Confirmation line, double line, not single file**), 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, **who will be standing on sanctuary step (not three feet away)**.
 6. For the recessional, the cross goes first, then other servers, priest(s), deacon (if used), the bishop; all bow to the altar. The newly confirmed and sponsors follow the bishop.
 7. There are three other practical matters:
 - a. It is fitting that the chairs for the bishop (and deacon) be in a place by themselves. Concelebrants and servers should sit apart from them.
 - b. If at all possible, it is ideal to have three (3) servers (cross bearer, 2 acolytes). A minimum of two (2) servers is requested. It is not necessary to have a mitre or crozier bearer. There will be a stand for the crozier and the mitre can be placed by the bishop's chair.
 - c. Please have a deacon or server ready to hold the pontifical book for laying on of hands. (Priest(s) will join bishop in imposing hands.)
 - d. Please have liquid soap or lemon and water available for the bishop to remove the Chrism from his hand.
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PROCEDURES FOR CONFIRMATION LITURGY REMOTE PREPARATION

1. **Readings**

If specific readings or prayer texts are required by the particular day (e.g., Sunday or Solemnity) on which the Confirmation occurs, please use those readings and texts. Otherwise, readings have been assigned in the instructions for the various seasons (Sept.-Oct.-Nov., Jan.-Feb. or before Lent, Mar.-early May or after Easter). (See liturgy planning form.) ***Providing the candidates with copies of the readings to be used in the liturgy sometime in the Confirmation preparation class, for their familiarity with and discussion of, having them read beforehand as well as providing a copy of readings for Ceremony printed for candidates is expected.***

2. **Music**

In 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. ***Prior Rehearsing of the songs to be sung in the liturgy (for which a choir director or accompanist will usually be needed) is expected.***

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 lector, Eucharistic ministers and in the music. The use of a well prepared, capable Confirmation candidate to proclaim one or two different assigned Scripture readings is encouraged, but not required.

4. **Worship Aid**

It is highly recommended to acknowledge by name in the pre-printed program all who have helped in the preparation of the Confirmation candidates, as well as all who have participated in the liturgy, e.g., pastor, vicar, deacons, DRE/CRE, Confirmation coordinator, principal, teachers, catechists, servers, musicians, lectors, Eucharistic ministers, 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 Prayers and inviting the assembly to the reception after the ceremony). ***A copy of program should be faxed to bishop's office (225) 336-8768 or emailed to bishop@diobr.org before ceremony (at least 1 week prior.)***

5. **Robes and Stoles**

The Confirmands are completing their initiation into the parish community. As members of the community, robes are usually not recommended. Universal Church regulation does not allow stoles to be worn by Confirmands. However, parents as well as candidates should be reminded that dress should be dignified and modest.

6. **Name**

Since Confirmation is the completion of the Sacraments of Initiation, it is fitting for either the candidate's baptismal name be used for Confirmation or a new name, preferably of a saint whose life helps motivate and inspire the candidate. The procedure having the candidate wear a label with the Confirmation name in bold letters is very effective and widely used in the diocese. A candidate may choose to be confirmed in any of the following three ways: a) with the person's baptismal name – (for example, Mary); b) with a chosen different Confirmation name of a declared saint (Theresa); c) using both their 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". ***Candidates should ensure their Confirmation name is not obstructed by long hair or coat.*** Where this custom has been practiced, candidates have presented the title, saint, for themselves as St. Faith, St. Moses, St. Scarlett. Even a proper saint's name, such as St. Ann, is not appropriate, since it is not the saint being confirmed.

7. **Photography**

To reverence the ceremony, no videotaping or photography is permitted during the ceremony. The preferred time for photography is after the ceremony, either as a group or as individuals. **Before ceremony, please have someone read to congregation: *Ex: To reverence the ceremony, videotaping or other photography is not allowed during the ceremony. After the ceremony, the bishop will be available for photographs. Please also silence any cell phones or pagers. Thank you.***

Parents, friends and relatives will need to be informed of this policy before the ceremony through an announcement or preferably written in the worship aid. The bishop 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 would need can save a great deal of time. ***It is also helpful, where such photographers are used, to mention in the post-Communion announcements at Mass: "Photographs with the bishop by a special photographer will take place (in Church or at the beginning of the reception). Your cooperation with such photography will be greatly appreciated."*** For parishes with 40 or less candidates for Confirmation, photographs of the bishop with the newly confirmed (and sponsor) will be taken in Church, directly after the Mass. This is a change from previous policy. Those not needed for being in the photographs or taking the photographs will be asked to go directly to the reception.

8. **Arrangement - Seating of Candidates and their Sponsors**

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). ***If servers, readers or others sit in first pew (in front of candidates), please have them sit at the end of the pew so that the sight line for the homily between bishop and candidates is not blocked.*** 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 our confidence in their readiness to assume a heightened role in their commitment to lead and to serve in the Church. ***DRE/Confirmation Coordinator should not be a sponsor.***

Please follow one of the two options for the seating of Confirmation candidates and their Sponsors:

Option A (usually for less than 40 candidates):

All candidates sit as an uninterrupted group together in one side of the pews in the front rows, then all sponsors as an uninterrupted group together sit in the rows behind them;

Option B (recommended for groups of 40 or more candidates)

All candidates as an uninterrupted group together sit on both sides of the pews on the front rows, then all sponsors sit as an uninterrupted group together in the rows behind them.

Rationale and purpose: These seating arrangements allow for the prominence of the candidates in the ceremony and to allow me as celebrant to preach the homily directly to them. Other configurations do not allow these features.

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 bishop for 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. When a member of the Confirmation class has already participated in and was confirmed at the Easter Vigil, that person should not come forward with those to be confirmed. *Candidates should not chew gum. Please emphasize appropriate dress for candidates – (modest dress, dress shoes and the like).*

10. **Holy Communion**

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

11. **Squeaky pew kneelers**

Pastors or staff should ensure that kneelers in the congregation don't squeak due to lack of WD-40 or similar treatment.

Rationale and Purpose: This maintenance helps keep unnecessary and distracting noises down.