

Celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation

Frequently Asked Questions 2016

Below is a summary of FAQs for parishes preparing to celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation.

1. Who may confer the Sacrament of Confirmation?

The primary minister of the Sacrament of Confirmation is the bishop. He may, if necessary, delegate the ministry to one of his vicars. The bishop has granted all pastors the faculty to confirm those Catholic adults who seek to complete their full initiation. In the celebration of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, the pastor who baptizes catechumens must also confirm and give Eucharist to them at the same celebration. He must also do the same for Christians who are being received into the full communion of the Catholic Church. This applies to all adults and children of catechetical age (seven years and above).

2. Which readings should we choose for the Confirmation liturgy, the Sunday readings or some others?

This depends on the day when it is celebrated. If the sacrament will be celebrated at Sunday liturgy (Saturday evening or Sunday) then the readings must be those of the Sunday. If, however, it will be celebrated on another day of the week the readings are chosen from the "Lectionary for Ritual Masses" (Confirmation) as listed on the Confirmation Planning Form.

3. What color vestments should the clergy use?

White on Sundays during the Easter Season. Red for all other days, regardless of liturgical season.

4. Should the candidates enter in procession?

No.

5. Are the candidates called by name for the Presentation of Candidates?

All the candidates should be called by name, parish by parish and stand in place. They are seated once the names from their parish have been called. After the homily they are asked to stand again for the Renewal of Baptismal Promises. The names should be read by the Confirmation Coordinator or Pastor.

6. What about the letters the youth write to their pastor? Should they be read at the Confirmation liturgy?

No. No letter or compilation of letters is to be read.

7. Will the Bishop physically impose hands on each of the candidates? Will the concelebrating priests?

No. There is a twofold imposition, or laying on, of hands. The first is a biblical sign, the invocation of the Holy Spirit done in silence before the anointing. The direction (#25) is that the bishop and the concelebrating priests lay hands not by physical contact but by extending both hands over or towards the group of candidates. This is followed by the actual "matter" of the sacrament, the chrismation: "the Sacrament of Confirmation is conferred through the anointing with chrism on the forehead, which is done by the imposition of the hand (note the singular), and through the words, "Receive the seal of the Gift of the Holy Spirit." This is the actual sacramental sign, and the action of anointing is by its nature a laying on of the hand.

8. May the Bishop be assisted by concelebrating priests in the Anointing with Chrism?

Yes, he may; however, Bishop DiLorenzo prefers to be the one to anoint the candidates. The candidates should come up to him one by one accompanied by their sponsors.

9. How should the young person to be confirmed be presented to the Bishop? What about a Confirmation name?

While there is a choice, it seems to fit perfectly in the role of the sponsor to introduce the candidate by stating their Confirmation name: "Bishop, may I present John or Theresa." No name tags are to be used.

10. What about the Sign of Peace given to the confirmed? Does it replace the assembly's Sign of Peace?

No, it does not. The Confirmation of each candidate is affirmed by the Bishop's offering a sign of peace to each individually. The Sign of Peace for the assembly takes place at the usual time in the Eucharistic Liturgy, just before communion.

11. What are the candidates' responses?

The candidates should be rehearsed in the following responses so as to answer audibly:

- Bishop: "N., be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit."
Candidate: "Amen."
Bishop: "Peace be with you."
Candidate: "And with your spirit."

12. Who leads the General Intercessions (Prayers of the Faithful)?

If there is a deacon present, it is appropriate for him to lead the intercessions. Multiple readers of the intercessions are to be avoided.

13. How should the candidates present themselves for the celebration?

Dress should be dignified and in keeping with the dignity of a liturgical celebration. It is essential that the Bishop be able to anoint the candidate on the forehead. Each one should stand close, and perhaps remove glasses to avoid getting oil on them. If the oil runs, it is easiest to wipe the oil with the hands and then rub the excess into the hands. The stole is the distinctive garb of the ordained minister; garments resembling a stole should not be worn by the Confirmation candidate.

14. What music should be sung?

The criteria are similar to Sunday Mass: appropriate to the sacramental celebration and the Easter season, theologically sound, beautiful, and singable by the entire assembly. **The Psalm Response, Gospel Acclamation and Eucharistic Acclamations (Holy, Memorial, Great Amen) and Lamb of God, should be sung. Because of the length of the celebration, no Hymn of Praise or Communion Meditation should be sung. A period of silence should follow the distribution of communion.**

The music used during the Anointing with Chrism can be either instrumental or sung keeping in mind that it is the celebration of a sacrament. Generally, there should be *several* musical selections during the anointing in keeping with the anointing. These musical selections can be interspersed with instrumental music.

15. Who provides the Sacred Chrism?

Each host parish is responsible for providing the Sacred Chrism which differs from the Oil of the Sick and the Oil of Catechumens.

16. May photographs be taken?

While each parish may have its own policy, parishes should consider designating one or two photographers during the conferral of the sacrament so as to eliminate the need for family members making their way up to the front during the liturgy. Flash photography may also be blinding to those in the sanctuary. The Bishop will be available for parish photographs (or individual if the group is small) in the sanctuary after the liturgy has ended.

17. Who is the Minister of Celebration (MC)? Who assigns them? Do I need to have an MC?

Each host parish will be assigned a Minister of Celebration (MC) by the Diocesan Offices who will contact the host parish coordinator at least two weeks prior to the Confirmation Liturgy. All Confirmation liturgies must have an MC assigned by the Diocese.

For additional questions or support regarding

- Confirmation Preparation and Scheduling: Michael School, Director, Office for Evangelization
- Confirmation Liturgy: Father Sean Prince, Director, Office of Worship

Old Testament Reading

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah:

The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has
anointed me;
He has sent me to bring glad tidings to the lowly, to hear the
brokenhearted,
To proclaim liberty to the captives
and release to the prisoners,
To announce a year of favor from the Lord
and a day of vindication by our God,
to comfort all who mourn:
To place on those who mourn in Zion
a diadem instead of ashes,
To give them oil of gladness in place of mourning,
a glorious mantle instead of a listless spirit
You yourselves shall be named priests of the Lord,
ministers of our God you shall be called.
I will give them their recompense faithfully,
a lasting covenant I will make with them.
Their descendants shall be renowned among the nations,
and their offspring among the peoples;
All who see them shall acknowledge them
as a race the Lord has blessed.

The Word of the Lord.

New Testament Reading

A reading from the first Letter of Saint Paul to the Corinthians:

Brothers and sisters:

There are different kinds of spiritual gifts but the same Spirit;
there are different forms of service but the same Lord;
there are different workings but the same God
who produces all of them in everyone.

To each individual the manifestation of the Spirit
is given for some benefit.

To one is given through the Spirit the expression of wisdom;
another the expression of knowledge according to the same
Spirit;
another faith by the same Spirit;
another gifts of healing by the one Spirit;
another mighty deeds;
another prophecy;
another discernment of spirits;
another varieties of tongues;
another interpretation of tongues.

But one and the same Spirit produces all of these,
distributing them individually to each person as he wishes.

As a body is one though it has many parts,
and all the parts of the body, though many, are one body,
so also Christ.

For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one Body,
whether Jews or Greeks, slaves or free persons,
and we were all given to drink of one Spirit.

The Word of the Lord.

Gospel Reading

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John:

Jesus said to his disciples:

“Whoever loves me will keep my word,
and my Father will love him,
and we will come to him and make our dwelling with him.

Whoever does not love me does not keep my words;
yet the word you hear is not mine
but that of the Father who sent me.

“I have told you this while I am with you.

The Advocate, the Holy Spirit

that the Father will send in my name-
he will teach you everything
and remind you of all that I told you.”

The Gospel of the Lord.