

PARISH CELEBRATION OF CONFIRMATION

The celebration of Confirmation is a grace filled occasion for those who will be receiving the Sacrament as well as for their families and friends, the parish community, and for the entire Church. Please use these guidelines to prepare for the parish celebration of Confirmation. The Liturgical Planning form for Confirmations is available at catholicyyc.ca/liturgy

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ROMAN CATHOLIC
DIOCESE
of Calgary

PASTORAL MINISTRY - LITURGY

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Confirmation Liturgy Guidelines

Introduction

Pastors have the special responsibility to see that all the baptized reach the completion of Christian Initiation and therefore that they are prepared with the utmost care for Confirmation. – Order of Confirmation (OC), no. 3

On the feast of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit descended upon the Apostles to help them witness to Christ and strengthen them in building the Church. In the Sacrament of Confirmation the power of the Spirit and the sign of the Cross complete the grace begun in baptism so that Christians may bear witness to Christ's Passion and Resurrection in their lives. Confirmation conforms the baptized to Christ and makes them more fully members of the Church. In this way, the Sacrament of Confirmation perpetuates the grace of Pentecost, distributing to individuals the diverse graces needed to build up the Mystical Body of Christ in unity and love. Before the celebration, the candidates will have undergone a suitable period of catechesis, be in a state of grace, and capable of renewing the baptismal promises. (OC no. 12)

Attention should be paid to giving the liturgical action the festive and solemn character that its significance for the local Church requires – OC, no. 4

The celebration of Confirmation is a grace filled occasion for those who will be receiving the Sacrament as well as for their families and friends, the parish community, and for the entire Church. Due to the connection of Confirmation to Baptism, and the special connection of the Easter season to the sacraments of initiation, in the Diocese of Calgary, preference will be given to scheduling all Confirmations during the Easter Season.

The catechesis preceding the reception of the Sacrament should include an explanation of the Confirmation rite, especially the twofold symbolism. The laying on of hands is a biblical gesture, by which the Holy Spirit is invoked. By the anointing with Chrism and accompanying words "the baptized receive the seal of the Lord and gift of the Spirit that gives them the grace to spread 'the pleasing fragrance of Christ' in the world." (OC no. 9) Use the texts of the liturgy in the preparation of the candidates. It is important that they understand what they are responding to so that their "I do" and their "Amen" are authentic and their confidence will enliven the faith of the assembly. A rehearsal with all involved close to the

celebration itself is important. Leave ample time for everyone to practice so they are confident in their role and can be fully present to the liturgy.

Please use these guidelines to prepare for the parish celebration of Confirmation. The *Liturgical Planning form for Confirmations* is available on the diocesan website or from the Pastoral Ministry Office. Please **complete and return the form at least two weeks before your celebration**. For scheduling matters, contact the Bishop's Office at 403-218-5526 or crisrina.marcil@calgarydiocese.ca.

Guidelines

Resources

These resources are available through CCCB Publications:

- *Order of Confirmation*. We recommend reading the Apostolic Constitution and Introduction to the ritual book.
- *Guide for Celebrating Confirmation*, by Paul Turner.

Available on the diocesan website:

- *Liturgical Planning Form*: Filled out electronically by one person. **To be returned as a Word doc. to crisrina.marcil@calgarydiocese.ca two weeks before the celebration.**
- *Supplementary Rites: Rite of Enrollment*. A rite provided by the CCCB for use at the parish to ritualize the intention of candidates presenting themselves for the Sacrament of Confirmation.
- *Supplementary Rites: Presentation of the Candidates*. Three options provided by the CCCB to use at the celebration when the candidates for the Sacrament of Confirmation are presented to the Bishop.
- *Altar server Guidelines* for serving the Confirmation Mass.
- *Psalm settings* for the Confirmation Ritual Mass.

Coordination

Your parish's celebration of Confirmation requires collaboration between key members of the parish and the diocesan offices.

Diocesan Offices

- Bishop's Office
 - Scheduling matters
- Pastoral Ministry Office
 - Discuss any questions you may have about the directions in this document.

Parish

- Pastor
- Confirmation Catechist(s)
- Music Director
- Liturgical Ministers (lectors, servers, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, environment and art, hospitality, etc.)
- Candidates, sponsors, parents

Rehearsal

A rehearsal should take place in advance so that all ministers as well as candidates, sponsors, and parents, understand their roles and have an opportunity to practice. The rehearsal enables all to be present to what is unfolding in the liturgy.

The catechesis offered to the candidates for Confirmation should include an explanation of the texts and rituals of the celebration. The candidates should practice so that the confidence of their responses will enliven the faith of those gathered.

Walk through the entrance of the candidates and sponsors and their movement towards the Bishop. Be sure to also practice the flow for taking pictures following the liturgy. The movement of all people should be organized and unhurried to emphasise the importance and solemnity of the occasion.

Materials

- *The Order of Confirmation*
- *Roman Missal*
- *Lectionary* marked with ribbons or tabs for the readers
- Requisites for the celebration of Mass

- Vessel with Sacred Chrism
- A bowl with warm water, lemons, and a hand towel at the credence table
- Cards for sponsors printed with the Confirmation candidates' names
- Reserved seating as necessary
- During Easter season the Paschal candle is lit.

Roles

Confirmandi

- Have undergone a suitable period of catechesis.
- Are in a state of grace before the celebration.
- Are capable of renewing their baptismal promises.
- Have been prepared with the texts of the rite and can respond with confidence.
- If you will have more than 120 confirmandi, consider having two celebrations.
- No ceremonial garments are prescribed for those to be confirmed. As any baptized Christian may wear an alb, these are permitted. **Stoles** are reserved for deacons, priests, and bishops. They are not permitted for Confirmation candidates.

Bishop

- The Bishop is the celebrant and confers the sacrament of Confirmation.
- The Bishop brings sacred Chrism but the parish should also have some available.

Priests

- The parish pastor should concelebrate with the Bishop.
- The pastor should carry the Sacred Chrism in the entrance procession.
- If no other clergy are present, the pastor should proclaim the Gospel.
- The pastor receives the name cards from the sponsors and holds the card in a way that is easy for the Bishop to read the name.
- Other priests may concelebrate and assist the Bishop as needed.

Deacon

- If there is a deacon assigned to the parish, the deacon may serve in the celebration of the Eucharist as usual.
- The deacon may assist during the anointing by bringing and holding the Sacred Chrism.

Catechists

- A catechist should briefly welcome everyone to the celebration before the entrance procession begins.
- Catechists should assist candidates for Confirmation and their sponsors so that processions into the church, towards the Bishop for the anointing, and out of the church flow smoothly and without confusion.

Sponsors

- Ideally the godparent at Baptism serves as the sponsor at Confirmation but the sponsor can be someone else.
- The sponsor must be mature, fully initiated, having received Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist, and not impeded by law of fulfilling the responsibility of a sponsor.

Servers

- Cross and book bearer (1 server)
- Candles (2 servers)
- Crozier and mitre bearer (1-2 servers)

Lectors

- **Candidates for Confirmation may not serve as lectors.**
- If necessary, candidates for Confirmation may serve in other ministries but these roles are more appropriately carried out by other ministers from the parish so that the candidates for Confirmation can focus on the liturgy.
- Candidates for Confirmation may offer the Universal Prayer if no deacon is present.
- It is encouraged that some of the newly confirmed bring up the gifts.

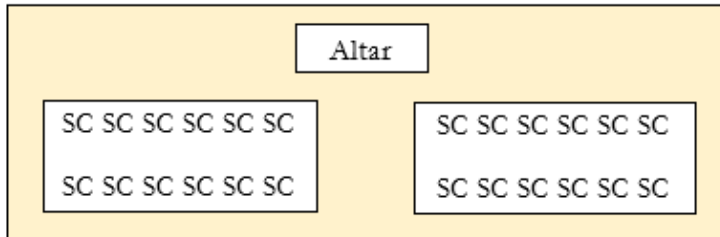
Musicians

- The parish music ministry makes selections that are in line with the parish repertoire and show good liturgical, musical, and pastoral judgement.

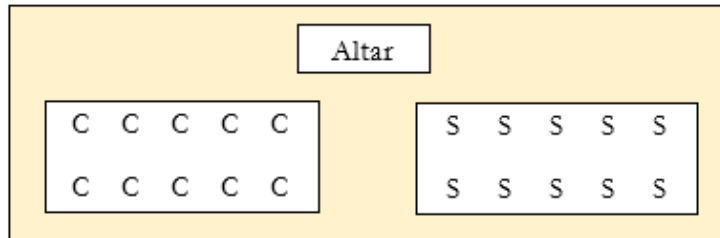
Seating

You have three choices:

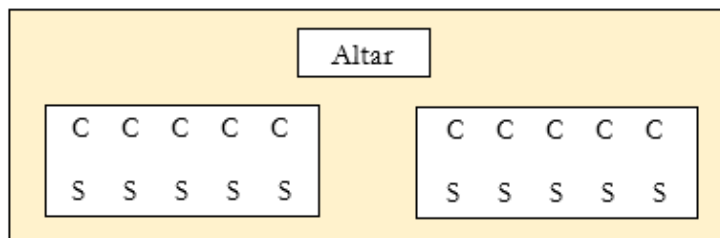
1. The sponsors and candidates are seated side by side.



2. The candidates are seated on one side of the nave, the sponsors on the other side.



3. The candidates are seated together in the front pews and the sponsors are seated together behind them.



Whichever seating arrangement you choose, be sure to have catechists in place to **coordinate the flow** of movement. There should be one or more catechists in place at the ends of the rows (you will need two if you choose seating arrangements two or three) and another near the bishop to guide candidates and sponsors and ensure flow of movement.

Choice of Mass

- **Sundays in Easter season:** The Ritual Mass is not permitted. The Bishop will use the Mass texts for the Sunday.
- **Weekdays in Easter season:** The Ritual Mass is permitted. The Bishop will use the Mass texts for the Ritual Mass of Confirmation, Roman Missal pp. 1126-1127, this includes the addition to the Eucharistic Prayer.
- **Sundays in Ordinary Time:** Although the Ritual Mass is permitted, the Bishop will use the Mass texts for the Sunday.
- **Weekdays in Ordinary Time:** The Ritual Mass is permitted. The Bishop will use the Mass texts for the Ritual Mass of Confirmation, Roman Missal pp. 1126-1127, this includes the addition to the Eucharistic Prayer.
- See the Liturgy of the Word section below concerning the choice of readings.

Procession

- The candidates for Confirmation should process in before Mass with or without their sponsors (depending on the seating arrangement).
- This pre-procession could be accompanied by a hymn to the Holy Spirit.
- Next, a catechist should briefly welcome everyone to the celebration.
- The Mass begins with the usual entrance procession.
- The pastor should carry in the Sacred Chrism.

Introductory Rites

Penitential Rite

The Roman Missal offers three options plus the Sprinkling Rite as an option on Sundays.

1. *Confiteor* (I Confess) and Lord, have mercy. If you choose this option the Bishop will lead the people in reciting the *Confiteor* and you have the option to either recite or sing the Lord, have mercy.
2. The second option is less commonly used in our diocese but it is a valid option
3. The third option has invocations followed by the Lord, have mercy. It begins “You came to heal the contrite, Lord, have mercy.” This option can be recited or sung.
4. The Sprinkling Rite would be suitable for Confirmations taking place on Sunday but should not unduly lengthen the celebration beyond 1.5 hours.

Gloria

The Glory to God is sung at a Confirmation Mass even if it takes place on a weekday using the weekday readings.

Liturgy of the Word

Great emphasis should be placed on the celebration of the word of God that introduces the Rite of Confirmation. For it is from the hearing of the word of God that the many-sided work of the Holy Spirit flows out upon the Church and upon each one of the baptized or confirmed and that the Lord's will is made known in the life of Christians. – OC no. 13

- Confirmandi should not be the lectors.

Sundays in Easter and Ordinary Time

- The readings and Psalm for the Sunday are used
- The Creed is omitted; there is a Profession of Faith in the Confirmation ritual

Weekdays in Easter

- Choose the readings for the Mass of the day or a set of readings from the Ritual Mass for Confirmation. Do not mix the two; the readings should appear in a single lectionary, either the Weekday Lectionary or the Ritual Lectionary/Order of Confirmation.
- Readings of the day: you may use the Responsorial Psalm for the day or one of the Confirmation Psalms.
- Confirmation readings:
 - In Easter season the first reading should be from the Acts of the Apostles, no. 765 (1-5) and a Gospel reading from John is preferred, no. 768 (8-12).
 - The readings will not be in order; use ribbons or post it flags to indicate the location of the readings selected for the lectors
- The Responsorial Psalm text (refrain and verses) should be in the translation approved for Canada that is from one of the lectionaries.
- The Creed is omitted; there is a Profession of Faith in the Confirmation ritual.

Weekdays in Ordinary Time

- Choose the readings and Psalm from the Ritual Mass for Confirmation
- The Creed is omitted; there is a Profession of Faith in the Confirmation ritual

Presentation of the Candidates

- The CCCB Supplement gives three choices; the text is available from the Pastoral Ministry Office.
- If you choose options B or C be sure to have the text ready for the Bishop and a server to hold the book with that text.
- The candidates for Confirmation may be presented by the pastor, another priest, the deacon, or by a catechist.
- If the candidates are called by name, use the name by which family and friends know them.

Homily

The Bishop may conclude his homily by reading the instruction from the ritual book. A book bearer should be prepared to hold this book for the Bishop.

Creed

The Creed is not said because there is a Profession of Faith in the Confirmation ritual.

Profession of Faith – Renewal of Baptismal Promises

- 1 server to hold the book and 1-2 servers to take the crosier and mitre.
- The Bishop will say “This is our faith . . .” Do not replace this text with anything.

Laying On of Hands and Prayer

- A server continues to hold the book.
- The Bishop invites all to pray for the candidates and gives them a period of silence in which to do so. The invitation offers a catechesis on the meaning of Confirmation that helps the community to know what it is praying for.
- This imposition of hands is similar to the gesture used for imparting a Solemn Blessing. The words have been part of the Confirmation ritual for over a thousand years. The hand laying associated with the apostolic tradition comes during the anointing with chrism.

Anointing with Chrism

The Sacrament of Confirmation is conferred through the anointing with Chrism on the forehead, which is done by the laying on of the hand, and through the words: Accipe signaculum Doni Spiritus Sancti (Be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit) – OC no. 9

- The *Order of Confirmation* makes no mention of using a special name for Confirmation. It presumes that the Bishop will confirm using the candidate's baptismal name, which draws a close connection between these two sacraments. In the Diocese of Calgary candidates will ordinarily choose the name of a saint as a model of holiness. The chosen name is to be used in this part of the liturgy.
- Sponsors should have a card with only the confirmation name of the candidate clearly printed.
- **No music and no pictures** during the anointing please.
- The pastor is on the Bishop's left to receive the name cards from the sponsor and the deacon (or another priest or server) is on the right side holding the oil.
- When reaching the Bishop, the sponsor hands the name card to the pastor, who shows it to the bishop. The sponsor says: "**Bishop, I present to you for Confirmation, N.**" This way the Bishop can hear and read the name.
- While presenting the candidate for confirmation, the sponsor places his or her right hand on the confirmand's right shoulder because the Bishop will place his hand on the confirmand's left shoulder after the anointing and offer the greeting of peace.
- The Bishop dips his right thumb in the chrism and then will trace the Sign of the Cross on the candidate's forehead while the other fingers of his hand are on top of the candidate's hand, which signifies the apostolic laying on of hands.
- It is not permitted to hand gifts to the newly confirmed as they return to their seats; doing so is a distraction from the sacramental moment. A more appropriate time to give gifts would be during the taking of individual photos with the Bishop.

Washing Hands

- The Bishop will go to the credence table to wash his hands. Do not bring the water and lemons to him.
- You may have music here.
- The server will take the crozier back and place it into the stand.

Universal Prayer

- One of the newly confirmed may offer the petitions if no deacon is present.

Preparation of the Gifts

- Select some of the newly confirmed to present the gifts.

Communion

- May be under one species or two, as per the custom of the parish.

Recessional and Photos

- If photos are to take place in the church:
 - The candidates should not process out.
 - The Bishop will return to the altar after the recessional hymn for photos.
- If photos are to take place in the hall:
 - The candidates may follow the Bishop in the recessional.
- A group photo, individual photos, or photos of the family with the Bishop are all permitted but the PARISH must organize and direct the photo-taking process so that it flows smoothly and efficiently.
 - If a gift is to be given to the newly confirmed, it would be appropriate to do so after each individual photo is taken.

Eastern-Rite Catholic Already Confirmed

- **After** the other candidates have been confirmed, a catechist may present this individual saying something like: “Bishop, N. was confirmed at baptism but has undergone a period of catechesis with his/her peers and wishes to receive a blessing.”
- The sponsor hands the pastor a card with the individual’s name.
- The Bishop will bless the individual. There will be no anointing.