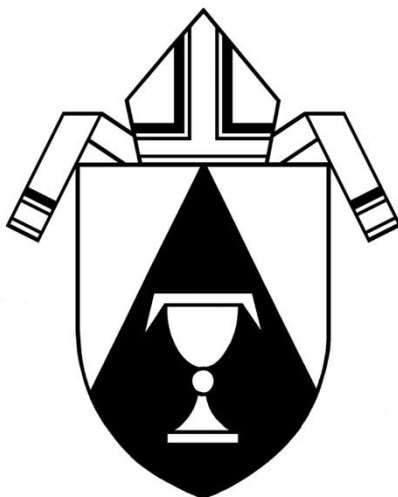


INSTRUCTIONS FOR CONFIRMATION MASSES

(MARCH 2024)



DIOCESE
OF
SACRAMENTO

INSTRUCTIONS FOR CONFIRMATION MASSES

1. The Confirmation Mass should exemplify the very best we have to offer liturgically. The Confirmation liturgy should be reverent, dignified, and beautiful. This is accomplished by good planning and preparation, thoughtful and well-executed music, active participation by the assembly, and the involvement of competent liturgical ministers.
2. The Confirmation liturgy is never to be a show place for novel or virtuosic performance but should represent the normal liturgical practice of the particular parish community.
3. "The whole people of God, represented by the families and friends of the candidates for Confirmation and by members of the local community, will be invited to take part in such a celebration and will endeavor to express their faith by means of the fruits the Holy Spirit has produced in them" (*Order of Confirmation*, no. 4) The cultural and ethnic diversity of the parish community should be taken into account in the preparation of the liturgy.

CHOICE OF MASS

4. The Ritual Mass for Confirmation (Roman Missal Ritual Masses: Christian Initiation: Conferral of Confirmation; Form A, B, or C) is used *except* on the Sundays of Advent, Lent, and the Easter season, Solemnities, in Holy Week and during the Octave of Easter. On any of these days the Proper Mass setting is used.

ITEMS TO BE PREPARED FOR CONFIRMATION

5. In addition to all that is necessary for the celebration of the Eucharist, the following should be prepared:
 - a. A pitcher of water, bowl, towel, and some lemon slices are to be ready to bring to the bishop so that he may wash his hands when he has finished the anointing.
 - b. Each parish should have a copy of most recent edition of the Order of Confirmation (published 2016) and have it available to the bishop who may or may not bring his own copy.
 - c. It is expected that the parish will provide the Sacred Chrism along with a small bowl or oil stock. The bishop may or may not supply the Sacred Chrism.

- d. Arrange for a minimum of four altar servers.
- e. Should the bishop wish to administer the sacrament of Confirmation while seated, a chair which can be placed in front of the sanctuary should be readily available. (See the *Specific Instructions for the Order of Confirmation*.)

VESTMENTS

- 6. In Ordinary Time the Confirmation Mass may be celebrated using white or red vestments. When Confirmation is celebrated on Sunday, the color of the liturgical season is used. For example, on Sundays in Lent, violet is to be used. On weekdays in Lent, white is to be used. During the Easter Season white is to be used.
- 7. The bishop will usually wear vestments belonging to the parish; a stole and chasuble are to be prepared for him. He will bring his own alb.
- 8. Concelebrating priests vest in the same color as the bishop; they also wear a chasuble if available, otherwise an alb and a stole.

ROLE OF THE DEACON

- 9. Insofar as possible a deacon shall assist at Confirmations. The deacon proclaims the Gospel, offers the General Intercessions, assists in the Rite of Confirmation, prepares the altar for the Liturgy of the Eucharist, and distributes Holy Communion.
- 10. If there is no deacon available in the parish, the bishop may bring with him a deacon who will, in addition to performing his normal liturgical roles, serve as a Master of Ceremonies.
- 11. If a deacon is not present, the Gospel is proclaimed by the pastor or another concelebrating priest.

PROCESSIONS

- 12. Candidates may process or they may be seated prior to Mass. If the candidates process, it is important that the entrance and recessional processions be rehearsed so they are done in an orderly, dignified, and reverent manner. Instruct the children on the placement of their hands while in the procession, e.g., Hands joined or by their side.
- 13. Entrance Procession: The candidates for Confirmation enter the church ahead of the liturgical ministers. Walking two by two the candidates follow each other.

Someone should be assigned to facilitate this procession so there are no major gaps between candidates. A procession is a communal act, a sign of unity, not a parade.

14. The liturgical procession follows the candidates in this order:

- Thurifer (*if incense is used*)
- Cross bearer and servers with candles
- Additional servers, if any
- Readers
- Deacon with the Book of the Gospels
- Concelebrating priests
- Bishop, with one or two deacons, if available

MUSIC

15. Music is an integral part of all liturgical celebrations. Special care should be given to the planning and execution of music for Confirmation. It should be appropriate to the occasion in terms of musical style and textual content. Music supports the liturgical actions without prolonging the celebration unnecessarily. If the altar is to be incensed and/or the Sprinkling Rite is to be done, music shall accompany the entire liturgical action and correspond to it.

16. The parish Sunday Mass should be the model for the musical program for the Confirmation Mass. Music for Confirmation should be drawn from the normal liturgical music repertoire of the parish community, in order to facilitate the participation of all in attendance, and secondly to acknowledge that those being confirmed are part of a specific worshipping community.

17. The candidates should rehearse the Confirmation rite, especially the responses, as well as the music to be sung at the Confirmation liturgy. Some, if not most, of the music should be familiar to the candidates.

18. If a worship aid is printed for the occasion, permission must be acquired for the reproduction of any music to be included. If the parish does not have annual reprint licenses with the various publishers, permission for “onetime use” reproduction may be obtained by contacting the publishers. The Office of Worship ((916) 733-0211) can provide further information on obtaining permission to reproduce music. Parish events are not covered under a Diocesan reprint license; the parish must obtain permission for each event.

INTRODUCTORY RITES

19. An entrance hymn accompanies the entrance procession. If there are a great many candidates and the procession will be lengthy, appropriate instrumental music may accompany the entrance of the candidates, reserving the hymn for the procession of the liturgical ministers and the bishop. (It is often useful to have instrumental music for a few minutes before the procession, preceded by the cantor or other minister inviting the people to quiet their hearts and minds in prayer.)
20. Because of the intrinsic link between Baptism and Confirmation, the Rite of Blessing and Sprinkling of Holy Water may be used at Confirmations, especially during the Easter Season. An appropriate chant or song should accompany the Sprinkling Rite; however, it should be of such a nature that it can easily be concluded when the ritual action has been completed.
21. The *Gloria* is to be sung at all Confirmations, including weekdays during Lent. However, the *Gloria* is *not* to be sung on Sundays in Lent. It is not permissible to substitute another hymn or canticle for the *Gloria*.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

1. The readings are the proper readings of the day.
2. The readings are to be proclaimed by qualified, trained readers from the parish community. When the Confirmation candidates are not young children, the readers may be chosen from among the candidates, if they are competent readers. If two readings are used in addition to the Gospel, there should be two readers.
3. The Responsorial Psalm should be sung by a qualified cantor, with an appropriate antiphon (response) for the people.
4. The Verse before the Gospel is sung with its appropriate acclamation (*Alleluia* except in Lent).
5. The Gospel is to be read by a deacon. If no deacon is present the Gospel is read by the pastor or another concelebrating priest.

RITE OF CONFIRMATION

6. After blessing the people with the Book of Gospels (before the homily), the bishop will sit and the pastor or another priest, or deacon, or catechist presents the candidates for confirmation. There is no set formula, but the

Presentation should be simple, clear and direct, e.g.: “Bishop¹ N., _____ parish presents these young people who have been prepared for and are now ready to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. It is my privilege to present them to you at this time.”

7. If there are fewer than fifty candidates, their names are called individually. Each candidate stands as his or her name is called. After all the names have been called, the candidates sit and the bishop gives the homily.
8. After the homily the candidates stand for the Renewal of Baptismal Promises.
9. The Laying on of Hands: After the Renewal of Baptismal Promises the candidates remain standing. The book bearer or deacon holds the Confirmation Ritual for the bishop as he prays with outstretched hands over the candidates as a group. Other assisting priests, if present, also extend their hands during the prayer over the candidates. (*Order of Confirmation. No. 25.*)
10. Anointing with the Sacred Chrism: The candidates approach two by two. The two candidates stand shoulder to shoulder so that the bishop may easily anoint each one, turning only slightly from one to the other. Sponsors, standing behind their candidate, place their right hand on the right shoulder of the candidate as they approach the Bishop. The sponsor says the name of the candidate to the Bishop.
11. Care is to be taken so that the bishop can easily anoint the candidates without interruption or delay.
12. Two deacons or servers should accompany the bishop and stand on either side of him and move with him as needed. The individual on the bishop’s right holds the Chrism while the one on his left holds the book. The bishop may decide to hold the Chrism himself.
13. When the candidate comes to the bishop the sponsor announces his/her name. The bishop then anoints his/her forehead, saying: “N., be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit” or “N., recibe por esta señal el Don del Espíritu Santo.” The confirmand immediately answers: “Amen/Amén.” The bishop then says: “Peace be with you” or “La paz esté contigo” and the confirmand responds “and with your spirit” or “Y con tu espíritu.” The responses are very important and should be rehearsed and strong.
14. During the anointing by the bishop, an appropriate hymn or psalm may be sung, or instrumental music may be played. Music should be of a quiet and meditative nature so as not to interfere with the exchange between the bishop and

¹ Or “Father” in the case of a Vicar General who is a presbyter.

candidate. It should not begin until after the first few candidates have been confirmed.

15. After all have been confirmed, servers bring a pitcher of water, a bowl with lemon slices and a towel to the bishop so that he may wash his hands.

UNIVERSAL PRAYER

16. The Creed is not said as the baptismal promises were said earlier. After the bishop has washed his hands all stand for the General Intercessions. The bishop says the opening invitation and the concluding prayer. The deacon, if present, offers the general intercessions. The person(s) offering the intercessions remains in place until the bishop says the concluding prayer.
17. If a sung response is used during the General Intercessions, everything must be carefully coordinated so that the prayer flows smoothly and are not prolonged unnecessarily.
18. The General Intercessions in Appendix I or II below, taken from the *Order of Confirmation* with an intercession for vocations added, are to be used at all Confirmations in the Diocese of Sacramento. It is permissible to add one or two intercessions if desired.
19. The bishop always introduces the intercessions and prays the concluding prayer.
20. If a deacon is present, he is to offer the Intercessions. If no deacon is present, they may be offered by someone involved in the preparation of the candidates. Ordinarily, the intentions should be offered by one person only. However, if they are offered in more than one language, there may be a reader for each language. Someone other than those confirmed read the Intercessions.

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

21. After the General Intercessions, the Eucharist continues in the usual way. A collection may be taken up. It is fitting that some of the newly confirmed bring the gifts of bread and wine to the bishop. Additional offertory rituals or symbolic tokens beyond gifts to relieve the needs of the Church and of the poor are not permitted.
22. The Ordinary of the Mass (Holy, Holy, Holy; Memorial Acclamation, Great Amen; Lamb of God) should be sung whenever there is singing at Mass. These acclamations are meant to be sung by the entire assembly so the settings should be familiar.

23. Notify the bishop beforehand whether or not the Lord's Prayer will be sung; if the Lord's Prayer is sung, the Doxology "For the kingdom, the power...." is to be sung as well.
24. There is no singing during the Sign of Peace; quiet instrumental music which leads smoothly into the "*Lamb of God*" is acceptable. The exchange of peace is made with those nearby and is not prolonged.
25. A familiar setting of the "*Lamb of God*" should be sung so as to facilitate maximum participation; care should be taken that the setting used is of an appropriate length, or can be brought readily to a close when the liturgical action has been completed.
26. Holy Communion is to be administered under both species unless, for pastoral reasons, the bishop has restricted the chalice. (*General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, #240). There should be two ministers of the cup for each minister of the host.
27. The song during Communion is meant to accompany the liturgical action while calling to mind the great mystery being celebrated. Often a song with a simple refrain is the best choice for the Communion Procession so that people may more easily participate without having to rely on a book or worship aid.
28. A hymn or song of praise after Communion may be sung by the assembly. A period of silence should also be observed at this time.

BLESSING AND DISMISSAL

29. If announcements are to be made, they are done after the post-Communion prayer. When a Solemn blessing is to be given, the Deacon must remember to instruct the people, saying: "Bow down for the blessing." The Deacon is to use for the dismissal the simple formula, "Go in peace."

OTHER INSTRUCTIONS PERTAINING TO THE CONFIRMATION MASS

30. Attire: Candidates and sponsors should dress modestly and, in a manner consistent with the dignity and decorum of the sacred liturgy. Men should wear slacks, shirt, tie, and dress shoes. Women should wear dresses with a modest neckline and cover knees and shoulders. Gowns may be worn. Stoles are not to be used.
31. Names: Choosing a confirmation or saint name is a praiseworthy custom and should be encouraged, especially when a candidate does not have a saint name as his/her baptismal name. Choosing a confirmation name reinforces the candidates' sense of the communion of saints, encourages him/her to rely on a particular saint's patronage, and inspires them to imitate the saint's unique virtues. Name tags should include only the name that the candidate wishes to be confirmed with (either their baptismal name OR their saint's name.) The name should be bold and in a large font.
32. The Bishop is pleased to accommodate families who wish to take a photo of him with the newly-confirmed for a short time after Mass. If a professional photographer has been hired to take a group picture, the bishop will pose with the group after Mass. It is important always to maintain respectful behavior and decorum whenever photos are being taken in the church. Organizing and rehearsing a group photo ahead of time is highly recommended.
33. The offering given to the Bishop will be deposited into a fund to assist with charitable needs. It is suggested that the amount should correspond to the size of the parish. For a small parish, the suggested offering is \$250, a medium-size parish \$500 is suggested and large-size parish \$750. A very poor parish is not expected to give an offering.

APPENDIX I

The Universal Prayer (#30)

Bishop:

My dear brothers and sisters,
let us humbly pray to God the almighty Father
and be of one mind in our prayer,
just as faith, hope and charity,
which proceed from his Holy Spirit, are one.

Deacon or minister:

For these his servants,
whom the gift of the Holy Spirit has confirmed:
that, planted in faith and grounded in love,
they may bear witness to Christ the Lord by their way of life,
let us pray to the Lord.

R. Lord, we ask you, hear our prayer.

For their parents and sponsors:
that by word and example
they may continue to encourage
those whom they have sponsored in the faith
to follow in the footsteps of Christ,
let us pray to the Lord.

R. Lord, we ask you, hear our prayer.

For the holy Church of God,
in union with Francis our Pope, and Jaime, our Bishop, and all the Bishops,
that, gathered by the Holy Spirit,
the Church may grow and increase in unity of faith and love
until the coming of the Lord,
let us pray to the Lord.

R. Lord, we ask you, hear our prayer.

For an increase of vocations
to the priesthood and religious life,
that young men and women respond generously to the God's call,
let us pray to the Lord.

R. Lord, we ask you, hear our prayer.

For the whole world:
that all people, who have one Maker and Father,
may acknowledge one another as brothers and sisters,
without discrimination of race or nation,
and with sincere hearts seek the Kingdom of God,
which is peace and joy in the Holy Spirit,
let us pray to the Lord.

R. Lord, we ask you, hear our prayer.

Bishop:

O God, who gave the Holy Spirit to your Apostles
and willed that through them and their successors
the same Spirit be handed on to the rest of the faithful,
listen favorably to our prayer,
and grant that your divine grace,
which was at work when the Gospel was first proclaimed,
may now spread through the hearts of those who believe in you.
Through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

APÉNDICE II

Oración de los Fieles

El obispo:

Queridos hermanos:

oremos a Dios Padre todopoderoso,
unidos en la misma fe, en la misma esperanza,
en la misma caridad,
que proceden del Espíritu Santo.

El diácono o ministro:

Por estos hijos e hijas de Dios,
que han sido confirmados
por el Espíritu Santo,
para que, arraigados en la fe
y fundamentados en la caridad,
den verdadero testimonio de Cristo,
roguemos al Señor.

R. Te rogamos, óyenos.

Por sus padres y padrinos,
responsables de su fe,
para que, con su palabra y ejemplo,
los ayuden a seguir fielmente a Cristo,
roguemos al Señor.

R. Te rogamos, óyenos.

Por la santa Iglesia de Dios,
congregada por el Espíritu Santo
en la unidad de la fe y de la caridad, para que,
en comunión con nuestro Santo Padre el Papa Francisco,
con nuestro obispo Jaime,
y con todos los obispos del mundo,
crezca y se difunda entre todos los pueblos,
roguemos al Señor

R. Te rogamos, óyenos.

Por los hombres del mundo entero,
que tienen un solo Creador y Padre,
para que se reconozcan como hermanos
y, sin discriminación de raza o de nación,
busquen, con sincero corazón, el reino de Dios,
que es paz y gozo en el Espíritu Santo,
roguemos al Señor.

R. Te rogamos, óyenos.

Por un aumento en las vocaciones sacerdotales y religiosas,
para que jóvenes, hombres y mujeres,
respondan generosamente al llamado de Dios,
roguemos al Señor.

R. Te rogamos, óyenos.

El obispo:

Dios y Padre nuestro,
que diste el Espíritu Santo a los Apóstoles
y estableciste que,
por medio de ellos y sus sucesores,
ese mismo Espíritu se transmitiera a todos los fieles,
escucha benévolo nuestra oración
para que aquello que obró tu favor
en los comienzos mismos de la predicación evangélica,
ahora también lo difunda
por medio de los corazones de los creyentes.
Por Jesucristo, nuestro Señor.

R. Amén.