

EUCCHARISTIC LITURGY FOR CELEBRATING CONFIRMATION

Letters to Bishop/Meeting the Bishop

Candidates should write a letter to the Bishop stating their understanding of this sacrament, why they want to be confirmed, and how they intend to be faithful to their Christian commitment. **This should not be a form letter; but should be well prepared and presented.** The letter is not a prerequisite for receiving the sacrament. Letters should be sent as a group, addressed to Bishop John Stowe at the Catholic Center (no individual envelopes, please) to be received at least 2 weeks prior to the date of Confirmation.

The Bishop will greet the candidates as they line up for the entrance procession – he will not meet with them as a group. Therefore, please be sure to have the candidates near or in the narthex at least 10 minutes before the scheduled start of the Confirmation Mass.

Special Circumstances

Please inform the Worship Office if there are adults to be confirmed with the youth, along with their name and the circumstances surrounding their situation. This information may be included with the Liturgy Planning Sheet. Please notify the Worship Office immediately/as soon as is possible if there are non-English speaking candidates or if non-English speaking families of those to be confirmed will be present (unless this is a Spanish Mass), and indicate on the plan sheet if any of the readings or intercessions are to be in Spanish.

Confirmation Names and Name Tags

Choosing a patron saint's name for Confirmation is optional for youth to be confirmed, and not needed for adults who are to be confirmed. If a confirmation name is chosen, it is with the expectation that the candidate learns something about the saint and the virtues of the saint he or she wishes to imitate. It is helpful if the candidates wear name tags – please be sure to have their legal/baptismal name prominently typed on the name tag, and their chosen saint's name (if there is one) typed underneath their baptismal name.

With or without a name tag, Bishop John prefers that the sponsor introduce the candidate, "Bishop John, this is _____, (who has chosen the confirmation name _____)". The bishop will call the candidate by his/her baptismal name, adding the confirmation name when one is used.

Please remember to complete the paperwork recording the name and date of Confirmation on the Baptismal Certificate or sending the information to the parish of Baptism.

Dress for Candidates and Sponsors

The candidates and sponsors should be reminded to dress appropriately in modest dress: Please no shorts, T-shirts, jeans, revealing or tight tops, tight pants, or short skirts/dresses. Note: No stoles should be worn by or given to the candidates, either before, during or after the Mass. The stole is the symbol of the ordained, therefore is not appropriate for any lay person.

Seating arrangement for Candidates

Seating: (This will vary with each parish depending on number of candidates and space). The candidates are to sit together, not be interspersed with sponsors. The candidates should be seated so they and their sponsor can approach the sanctuary with ease.

The Oil of Chrism. The Bishop will bring the Chrism needed for the confirmation. **Candidates for Confirmation are to attend the Chrism Liturgy to better understand the symbol of the Sacred Chrism. This Mass takes place the every year the Tuesday of Holy Week, so parishes should**

make the appropriate plans to include this date on their schedule when they begin preparation. Contact the Worship Office for information: 859-253-1993, ext 1010.

Recognition of those already confirmed/Inclusion of Candidates for Full Communion

Individuals who received the Sacrament of Confirmation/Chrismation at the time of their Baptism are welcome to participate in the Confirmation Liturgy. Please contact the Worship Office for the manner of recognition to be included in the Presentation of Candidates, and mention in the petitions. **RCIA candidates for full communion are not usually confirmed at this celebration, but if the Bishop has made an exception in your particular circumstance, please include that information on the plan sheet.**

Master of Ceremonies

An MC assists Bishop John with any liturgy in which he presides. The MC is assigned by the Worship Office, has been instructed in his/her duties and should work closely with the servers, but not do the servers' tasks. The MC will be sent a copy of the plan sheet and may call the parish to schedule a meeting time with the servers. Please let the MC know of a scheduled liturgical rehearsal with the candidates, as he/she may find it helpful to be at this rehearsal.

Deacons

In parishes that have a parish Deacon, the deacon is to be asked to assist at the Confirmation Mass. In parishes where more than one deacon is assigned, the parish may choose which TWO deacons assist the Bishop at the Confirmation Mass.

Servers

The parish should provide servers who are trained and experienced in serving at a Eucharistic Liturgy. There is no set number of servers, but bear in mind that at least one will need to serve as mitre bearer and crozier bearer (it is preferred to assign 2 for these tasks), therefore when no incense is used, a minimum of four servers are needed – five are preferred. In addition to this, have only the number that helps the celebration to flow smoothly. Example: if using incense, and a cross and 2 candles are carried in the gathering procession, there is a need for 6 servers (if no incense is used, 5 are needed). All servers are to work with the MC, who may request a brief rehearsal time prior to the celebration, therefore servers should meet the MC in the sacristy no less than 30 minutes prior to the scheduled start time of the Confirmation Mass.

Lectors

Having candidates serve as lectors is not permitted. The reception of the sacrament is their primary concern. The Confirmation Rite itself explains that, "Great emphasis should be placed on the celebration of the word of God that introduces the rite of confirmation. 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 of the baptized and confirmed." (#13) Parish lectors are a more appropriate and preferred choice, especially family members of the candidates who normally serve as lectors in the parish. [*Please note:* Members of the newly confirmed are encouraged to bring the gifts forward at the Preparation of the Gifts, where only the bread, wine and gifts for the poor and/or Sunday collection are brought forward.]

Music

The music selected for this celebration should flow from the readings or the liturgical season – **especially during the Easter Season, when "Alleluia" music should be chosen.** They should be songs that the assembly, especially the candidates, can sing. A "Meditation Song" after Communion is not necessary or appropriate according to the rubrics. Nor is it appropriate for the Confirmandi to sing a "solo" song for the congregation. Rather, sacred silence *or* a hymn of praise (sung by all) should follow Communion.

If a booklet containing the words or music of the songs is printed, be sure that appropriate copyrights accompany each song. Since the Bishop presides at this liturgy, the diocesan copyright license may be used. All booklets or worship aids must be sent to the Worship Office for approval prior to printing. Contact the Worship Office for more information.

Entrance Procession

It is recommended that the candidates process in the entrance procession, and with careful rehearsal to observe the proper reverence (bow or genuflect before entering their pews). If the number of candidates is large, it is recommended that sponsors NOT participate in the entrance procession. Please also inform the MC if the newly confirmed are to process out in the recessional and details regarding the arrangements for group and individual pictures with the bishop. Generally, if pictures are to take place in the sanctuary after the Mass, the newly confirmed should remain in their pews/seats for the recessional and after Mass until the MC calls them forward for pictures.

Sprinkling Rite

In Confirmations that take place on Sunday (including Saturday evening), except during penitential seasons (Advent and Lent), and any that take place during the Easter Season (even if on a weekday), **the Sprinkling Rite will replace the Penitential Act.** During the Easter season, if the water in the baptismal font was blessed at the Easter Vigil, that water should be used and does not require further blessing, therefore the Bishop will omit the words of blessing in the rite as outlined in the Appendix of the Missal. A song of baptismal character is sung during the actual sprinkling.

Selection of Scripture Readings

When Confirmation is celebrated on a solemnity, the octave of Easter, a Sunday or Saturday as the anticipated Mass for Sunday, the readings appropriate to that day are used.

When Confirmation is celebrated on a weekday in Easter Season, the readings of the day should be used, and an additional second reading may be chosen from the confirmation ritual Mass, Lectionary Nos. 765. Note that in the Easter Season, the first reading should always be from Acts, so the second reading should be chosen from choices other than Acts.

In Ordinary Time, the readings may be the readings of the day or chosen from the Ritual Mass, Lectionary Nos. 764 to 768. If two readings before the Gospel are chosen, the first should be from the Old Testament and the second from the New Testament.

Confirmation Ritual

Begins after the Gospel is proclaimed as follows: The Presentation of Candidates may be made by the pastor or another priest, deacon or catechist, and is done using the formula or something similar provided by the Worship Office. Note this presentation is addressed to the Bishop and not the assembly. If the number of candidates is relatively small, each candidate's name may be called separately. If the number of candidates is large, please amend the formula appropriately. **The person presenting the candidates should also ask them to stand, either as their individual names are called, or at the end of the presentation.** The Bishop then accepts them and the congregation responds with applause. The candidates are seated and Mass continues with the Homily.

After the homily, the Bishop invites the candidates to stand and Renew their Baptismal Promises. The candidates should respond with a strong vocal "I DO" after each question. *The connection to Baptism is already sufficient in this Liturgy, so candles for the candidates are unnecessary, and having the candidates light baptismal candles for the Renewal of Baptismal Promises is inappropriate.*

This is followed by the Laying On of Hands and the Prayer which follows. If the number of candidates is 25 or less, the Bishop will lay hands on each candidate individually. It is preferred that the candidates

line up in the sanctuary facing the altar and the Bishop will travel from one to the next. Candidates then return to their places after the Prayer which follows the Laying on of Hands. No music is played during the laying on of hands, as the assembly is called to pray for each candidate during this action.

The Anointing with Sacred Chrism takes place next. The deacon or priest assists by holding the Chrism oil (Bishop's provided vessel). **Each candidate with sponsor approaches the Bishop (again, facing the altar) and the sponsor places his/her right hand on the candidates shoulder during the anointing.** Again, the sponsor presents the candidates with the words, "Bishop John, this is _____, (who has chosen the confirmation name _____)". **Please remind the candidates of their responses during and after the anointing – Bishop says, "Be sealed..." and the candidate responds, "Amen", then the Bishop says, "Peace be with you" and the newly confirmed responds, "And with your spirit" .** If there are a large number of candidates, music may be appropriate during this time. Newly Confirmed and their sponsor return to their places immediately after being anointed.

The washing of the Bishop's hands immediately follows the anointing. The parish should provide a basin/bowl with a lemon (cut in half and placed by itself in the bowl), fresh water to pour over the hands for rinsing, and a towel. (Note: no soap!)

Prayer of the Faithful

These may be taken from the Confirmation ritual or the candidates may compose these prayers, using those in the ritual as models. The number should be within reason and the content according to the usual model for intercessions (for the needs of the Church, for public authorities and the salvation of the whole world, for those burdened by any kind of difficulty, and for the local community.) **These should be typed and sent to the Worship Office with the planning sheet.** The Bishop will use the introduction and concluding prayer from the Confirmation ritual. The Deacon, if present, reads the petitions; a lector reads them if there is no deacon.

Communion

Communion is always to be offered under both forms. Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are needed only if necessary to supplement the priests and deacons present (Ordinary Ministers of Holy Communion) to ensure smooth and timely distribution, bearing in mind the usual procession of the people for Communion. Anyone serving as an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion should be properly mandated and commissioned for the particular parish in which the Confirmation Liturgy is presently taking place.

Picture Taking and Reception After Mass

Group and/or individual pictures may be taken after Mass – the MC will facilitate these, so the contact for the parish should inform the MC of the pictures desired. The parish should consider employing a photographer to take the pictures. A reception may be held after Mass – this should be indicated on the plan sheet.