

**SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION
GUIDELINES**

DIOCESE OF GREEN BAY

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Table of Contents
Sacrament of
Confirmation Guidelines

	PAGE
Confirmed in Discipleship.....	1
Readiness for Confirmation Preparation	5
Competencies Related to Confirmation Preparation	6
Essential Program Components	7
Confirmation In Light of Canon Law	10
Guidelines for the Celebration of Confirmation	14

CONFIRMED IN DISCIPLESHIP

A Brief Overview of the Sacrament of Confirmation

Introduction

In recent years Confirmation has sometimes been described as a “Sacrament in search of a theology”. The problem is not that there is a lack of theological explanations of the Sacrament. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* provides us with clear parameters, rooted in the Church’s Tradition for discussing the Sacrament. (CCC, Part Two, Article 2, 1285-1321). Nevertheless, debate continues regarding the pastoral issues surrounding the proper order and age for celebrating the Sacrament.

What follows is the approach to Confirmation in the Diocese of Green Bay. It provides the basis and parameters for the revised catechetical guidelines for Confirmation. All parishes of the Diocese are asked to follow them in preparing youth for the celebration of the Sacrament.

Part One: Confirmation and the Paschal Mystery

The central theme of the Hebrew Scriptures is the Passover-Exodus-Covenant. Our Christian Scriptures reveal to us the fulfillment of this saving action of God in the Paschal Mystery of Jesus’ death-resurrection and the sending of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. All the Sacraments and the Church itself find their origin, meaning and purpose within that Mystery. Most pertinent to us here is the fact that both in the Hebrew experience and again in the New Testament experience God’s saving action is revealed in two distinct but interrelated events. First, God intervenes to overthrow the forces of evil that hold humanity captive. God’s saving action restores a once *enslaved, dead* people to freedom and fullness of life. Second, God then confirms or seals this relationship with the saved people, commissioning them both as a sign and as an instrument for bringing the *Good News* of salvation to all peoples.

We observe this twofold action in the Hebrew Scriptures first from the event of the *Passover-Exodus*, whereby the Israelites are rescued from the Egyptian oppression and find themselves a free people as they gather on the shore across the Reed Sea. Second, God confirms them as a new people at Mount Sinai when God enters into a *Covenant* with them and commissions them to be a sign to the Gentile nations that their saving God, Yahweh, is the one true God. It is helpful to recall that the Jewish people celebrated this covenant experience at their feast of Pentecost, 50 days after the celebration of the feast of Passover.

In the Christian Scriptures we see this same twofold action in the events of Jesus’ *death-resurrection* and the disciples’ *Pentecost* experience. What had been accomplished for a particular people, namely the Israelites, in the Hebrew Scripture account is clearly a prefigurement of the ultimate and cosmic saving action of God accomplished in Jesus.

It takes no great leap of imagination to see the intimate connection between the Sacraments of Baptism/Confirmation and the events just recounted. Baptism is a death/resurrection experience. The enslaving power of evil is destroyed in the baptismal waters just as the enslaving Egyptians were destroyed in the Reed Sea. A person bursts forth from the grave of the baptismal waters much as Jesus burst forth from his tomb on that first Easter.

Thus freed from slavery and death and united to the Risen Jesus as his disciples, the baptized person's relationship with Jesus is sealed by the Spirit in the Pentecost experience of Confirmation. Jesus' Spirit is poured out to empower and commission the new disciples to continue the mission of the Church: to be a sign and instrument for proclaiming and promoting the Good News of God's saving action and the establishment of God's Reign.

Baptism and Confirmation are best understood, then, as correlative but distinct Sacraments. Through Baptism we participate in Jesus' death-resurrection and are born to new life in the Spirit. The effect of Confirmation, on the other hand, "is the full outpouring of the Holy Spirit as once granted to the apostles on the day of Pentecost." (CCC, # 1302). There can be no Pentecost without Good Friday -Easter. Pentecost, for its part, completes and perfects what was effected through Good Friday-Easter. For that reason the Church has always viewed the two sacraments as integrally related theologically, even if for various pastoral reasons, they are celebrated apart from each other. (cf. CCC, #1321).

Thus, in Baptism we participate in Jesus' death and are raised up to new life in the Risen Lord. We become children of God and disciples of Jesus. In Confirmation we participate in the Pentecost experience. Like the first disciples we are sealed by the Spirit of Jesus, empowered through the Spirit's gifts and commissioned to go forth in the name of Jesus and his Church to continue his mission.

Part Two: Sacraments of Initiation - Past and Present

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* identifies Baptism, Confirmation and First Eucharist as the Church's Sacraments of Initiation. (CCC, # 1212) And as outlined in the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA), new converts today are to receive these three distinct, though correlative sacraments in one integrated ritual celebration, ideally within the annual Easter Vigil liturgy.

Thus, the Church has reclaimed in our time this ancient tradition of initiation as normative for all *new adult converts* (and unbaptized children who have reached the age of discretion). This has led some liturgists and theologians to suggest that this same integrated ritual of Baptism, Confirmation and First Eucharist should be reintroduced for the initiation of infants of Christian parents as well (as is the traditional practice in Eastern Rite Catholic churches). As a minimum, they propose the restoration of the order of reception: Baptism followed at a later time by Confirmation and Eucharist--in that order.

While there is much to be said for this proposal (which has in fact been adopted in some dioceses in the United States), it must be viewed in the light of several other important facts. First, this precise ritual cannot be found in the Apostolic church as the sole way of initiating converts. In fact there seemed too much variety and spontaneity in the manner of initiation in the Christian Scriptures. This precise ritual of initiation did not evolve in the life of the Church with any consistency or precision until the fifth century; nor was it ever universally practiced. Due to various historical and theological developments, too complex to outline here, this order was rather short-lived in much of the church.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* describes the pastoral reality that had a part in the eventual separation of the two Sacraments, namely the inability of the local bishop to be present at all Baptisms. (cf. CCC, # 1290-92). The development of the theology of Original Sin and the historical-pastoral realities caused by the Barbarian invasions and the consequent mass Baptisms also played a part. We need not go into the "why and how"; the salient fact remains that both theologically and pastorally the integral connection between Baptism and Confirmation and their nature as Sacraments of Initiation became blurred. For a while in the

popular understanding at least, Confirmation came to be viewed as an optional “add on”, a kind of “booster shot” for Baptism. During some periods of history and in some locales the reception of Confirmation became more an exception than a rule.

Putting aside for a minute the question of the value of restoring the precise order for celebrating the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and First Eucharist, the Church since Vatican II is clearly asking us to reclaim its original understanding of Confirmation as a Sacrament of Initiation integrally connected in its nature and purpose to Baptism. This is the critical point underlying the Diocese’s approach to the Sacrament.

Part Three: Dimensions of Initiation

If initiation is the proper context for understanding Confirmation, we need to explore briefly the various meanings of initiation. In the English language the word *initiate* can be used several ways. It can mean *to start something*, as in “she initiated the discussion by asking...” or “the ambassador initiated the peace talks...”. It can also mean *to enter or bring into* as “the freshmen were initiated into the fraternity...” or “she was initiated as a member of the pep club...”.

As applied to the Sacraments of Initiation both meanings are applicable as we can see when we examine what takes place as a result of the celebration of these Sacraments:

- Through Baptism in particular a person officially and publicly *starts or begins* his/her life of union with the Risen Lord.
- Through Baptism in particular a person is *brought into* the Church and *begins* his/her life as a member of this community of disciples of Jesus.
- Through Confirmation in particular a “confirmed person receives the power to profess faith in Christ publicly and as it were officially (*quasi ex officio*)” (CCC, #1305) and is thus empowered in a special way to participate in the Church’s mission.
- Through First Eucharist a person is *welcomed for the first time* to the Lord’s Table as a new member of the community of disciples and *begins* to be nourished by Communion with the Risen Lord, the continued practice of which will serve in an ongoing way to deepen and intensify what was *begun* through Baptism and Confirmation.
- Through Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist a person *fully enters* into the Paschal Mystery.

By reviewing the various dimensions of what is experienced through the Sacraments of Initiation several points become clear. While integrally related and interdependent in terms of one’s total or full initiation (one is not fully initiated until having received all three Sacraments), each Sacrament has a unique role.

Baptism is the Sacrament of Initiation par excellence because it plunges us into the Mystery of Jesus’ death and resurrection, unites us with the Risen Lord as his disciples and establishes us as members of the community of disciples, the Church. This remains the case whether one is baptized in infancy, as a youth or as an adult.

Confirmation for its part is "...the full outpouring of the Holy Spirit as once granted to the apostles on the day of Pentecost; it increases the gifts of the Holy Spirit in us" (CCC #1302). It thus continues what was begun in Baptism by empowering "and as it were officially" commissioning us to carry out in the name of the Church the mission of the Church. Granted, from Baptism onward one is united to Jesus and can be expected to participate in the Church's mission. But like the first disciples who became united to the Risen Lord and rose to new life with him through their Easter experience, a Pentecost experience "gives us a special strength of the Holy Spirit to spread and defend the faith by word and actions as true witnesses of Christ." (CCC, #1303) Finally, given the close connection between Confirmation and First Eucharist as Sacraments of Initiation, a special goal of Confirmation preparation should be to deepen the confirmand's appreciation for Eucharist and the role ongoing participation in Eucharist should play in one's life as a confirmed disciple of Jesus.

If a person is baptized as an infant, it should not be considered extraordinary or inappropriate to welcome the young child to First Eucharist even though he or she has not yet received Confirmation. The child has become a member of the community at Baptism. The role of the Eucharist is to nourish one's union with Jesus and to deepen one's life in the Paschal Mystery at all stages in life. So even if a person has not yet been officially and publicly *confirmed for mission* that person is still in need of and can benefit from full participation at the Lord's Supper.

In terms of diocesan practice, therefore, it can be considered both theologically and pastorally sound policy to continue to follow our existing practice. Namely:

- Catholic parents are encouraged to bring their children to the Church for Baptism in their infancy.
- Children who have reached the age of discretion shall be prepared to be welcomed to the Lord's Table in the celebration of First Eucharist.
- Youth shall be prepared by a specially designed program of catechetical instruction and sponsorship to celebrate their Confirmation and thus complete their initiation as disciples of Jesus who are now *confirmed for mission* in the name of the Church.

Summary

When we apply the above theology to development of a Diocesan catechetical preparation program the following principles emerge that need to be respected, explained and applied:

1. Confirmation is a Sacrament of Initiation, integrally related to Baptism and Eucharist.
2. Confirmation is the Sacrament that re-presents through its sacramental signs (makes present again) the Pentecost experience of the first disciples.
3. Confirmation's effects are to be described as:
 - a) "...the full outpouring of the Holy Spirit as once granted to the apostles on the day of Pentecost;
 - b) increasing the gifts of the Holy Spirit in us;
 - c) giving us a special strength of the Holy Spirit to spread and defend the faith by word and actions as true witnesses of Christ, to confess the name of Jesus boldly and never be ashamed of the Cross;
 - d) ... and the confirmed person receives the power to profess faith in Christ publicly and as it were officially." (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1302, 1303 and 1305)
4. Confirmation therefore equips, empowers and commissions the person to participate fully as a disciple of Jesus in the Church's mission to proclaim and promote the Good News of God's Reign.

READINESS FOR CONFIRMATION PREPARATION

The following are basic understandings of our Catholic teachings and Tradition that confirmation candidates will have acquired during their years of catechesis prior to the Confirmation Preparation program. *Understandings* in this context implies that during this catechesis the youth have also had the opportunity both to experience and apply these truths within their life situations.

Candidates for Confirmation demonstrate the ability:

- to give at least a simple explanation of the Paschal Mystery's centrality in our Catholic faith and its relationship to the Passover-Exodus experience and in the death-resurrection of Jesus.
- to explain the nature and importance of the Scriptures in the life of the Church;
- to describe in general terms how the Scriptures developed through stages of oral and written tradition;
- to apply fundamental principles to the reading of Scripture.
- to give an adequate definition of the Church which includes:
 - its origins in Jesus
 - its nature as a community of disciples
 - its organizational structure as a visible institution
 - its sacramental nature and the various dimensions of its mission.
- to explain and apply the basic moral values of the Gospel and Church teaching to their life situation and the moral decision they face.
- to describe the nature of sacraments in general and the ability to describe the nature and purpose of each of the seven Sacraments.
- to explain the nature and importance of the Eucharist and prayer in the life of the Church.
- to describe a personal relationship with Jesus and a desire to be his disciple.

COMPETENCIES RELATED TO CONFIRMATION PREPARATION

“Preparation for Confirmation should aim at leading the Christian toward a more intimate union with Christ and a more lively familiarity with the Holy Spirit—his actions, his gifts and his biddings—in order to be more capable of assuming the apostolic responsibilities of Christian life. To this end, catechesis for Confirmation should strive to awaken a sense of belonging to the Church, as well as the parish community. The latter bears special responsibility for the preparation of confirmands.” (CCC, 1309.)

In light of the guidance given by the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* the following can be considered the minimum desired competencies that result from any Confirmation preparation program in the Diocese of Green Bay. The Confirmation candidates will:

- understand that Baptism has established them in a relationship to Jesus that is best described as discipleship.
- describe the nature of discipleship in Jesus.
- demonstrate a disciple’s ability to sustain and deepen their relationship to Jesus through prayer.
- be familiar with various forms of prayer in their life.
- demonstrate a disciple’s ability to continually strive to conform their lifestyle to Gospel vision and values proclaimed by Jesus.
- demonstrate a disciple’s willingness and ability to enter more fully into Jesus’ mission of proclaiming the Good News of God’s Reign through:
 - service to others
 - good example
 - prophetic witness
 - word.
- explain the role of the Spirit in the life of the Church and in the life of discipleship
- describe the nature and function of the Gifts of the Spirit that are bestowed in a special way in Confirmation.
- explain the historical significance of the symbols and ritual involved in the celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation.
- explain the role religious imagination plays in the spiritual life and in the Church’s tradition of worship.
- demonstrate an appreciation of the essential place that “full, conscious and active participation” in the Eucharist is to play in their ongoing life as a confirmed disciples of Jesus and member of the Church.

ESSENTIAL PROGRAM COMPONENTS

The following elements are to be included in the overall catechetical preparation for Confirmation:

I. General Preparation

General preparation includes all the formal and informal catechetical formation provided to a child by parents and the parish from baptism through the tenth grade.

II. Formal Preparation Program

A. An information session for parents and youth that presents the following information:

- An explanation of the nature and importance of Confirmation (as outlined in the *Confirmed in Discipleship Essay* above)
- The role and responsibilities of both parents and youth in the preparation program.
- The nature and role of the sponsor and guidelines for selecting a sponsor.
- An overview of the preparation program's schedule of classes and related events.

B. The selection of sponsors.

C. A Sponsor Information and Training Session.

D. A retreat experience consisting of at least one day.

E. Core content to be presented in formal classes.

a) The nature and importance of our overall growth as disciples of Jesus as foundational to preparation for confirmation.

b) The ongoing tasks/skills involved in the life of discipleship:

i) Walking with Jesus: nature and the importance of prayer and of "full, conscious and active" participation in the Eucharist for growth in discipleship.

ii) Learning from Jesus: the disciple's need to continually grow in understanding and appreciation for the vision and values taught by Jesus, as contained in the Gospels and teachings of the Church.

iii) Sharing in the ministry of Jesus: the disciple's need to continually deepen the motivation and skills required for participating in Jesus' mission to proclaim and promote the Good News of God's Reign.

v) Serving with Jesus: This life of discipleship is lived out and deepened through membership, stewardship and participation in the ongoing sacramental, spiritual, social and ministerial life of one's local parish community.

c) The theology of Confirmation: its roots in the Paschal Mystery and its relationship to other Sacraments of Initiation; the effects of the Sacrament.

- d) The overall role of the Holy Spirit in the life of a disciple and the nature and effect of the Gifts of the Spirit conferred through Confirmation.
- e) The Rite of Confirmation: its structure and the significance of sacramental symbols and actions employed.

This is to be considered the core or minimum content for the immediate preparation course. Depending on the needs of the students or the custom of the parish, additional content can be included either for enrichment or remedial purposes. If using one of the published Confirmation preparation programs approved by the Diocese, it may sometimes be necessary to supplement the program with a session or two so as to include topics listed above that are not adequately treated in the chosen program.

- F. Sponsor/Youth sessions during which sponsors and youth meet to develop strategies for fostering the skills of discipleship needed for carrying out the mission of Jesus:
 - Christian service
 - personal prayer
 - participation in liturgy
 - personal conversionThese sessions can also include the components of “remedial work” and reviewing progress.
- G. The selection of the name one wishes to have bestowed at Confirmation. (The confirmand may select his/her Baptismal name or any other **Christian** name.)
- H. An interview with the confirmand by a catechist, catechetical administrator, pastor or other person delegated by the pastor, to be provided before, during and/or at end of program.
- I. A letter written by the confirmand to the Bishop requesting to be confirmed and giving reasons for the request.
- J. The opportunity to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation at some time during the Formal Preparation Program.
- K. Practice, as needed, for the actual celebration of the Rite.

The above can be considered the essential elements of the overall process of preparation for Confirmation in the Diocese of Green Bay.

NOTE: Depending on parish custom and circumstances the Introduction Sessions/Activities can take place anytime during the 10th grade or 11th grade. However, the Formal Preparation Program should not be scheduled to begin prior to the 11th grade except when the Formal Preparation is extended over two years, as some of the published programs are structured. When using such an extended program, it may be initiated in either the 10th or in the 11th grade.

Preparation Resources: To obtain a list of the most current textbooks/resources a parish may want to consider using for preparation, please contact the Department of Total Catholic Education.

IN LIGHT OF CANON LAW

Those who have been baptized continue on the path of Christian initiation through the Sacrament of Confirmation. In this Sacrament they receive the Holy Spirit, who was sent upon the Apostles by the Lord on Pentecost.

This giving of the Holy Spirit conforms believers more perfectly to Christ and strengthens them so that they may bear witness to Christ for the building up of His Body in faith and love (from Instruction, 1).

GENERAL NORMS

A. Juridical Consequences

1. By Confirmation the baptized are joined more perfectly to the Church, are strengthened and are more strictly obliged to be witnesses to Christ by word and deed and to spread and defend the faith (Canon 879).
2. By Baptism and Confirmation the faithful are deputed to the apostolate (Canon 225, 1).

B. Relation to Full Initiation

1. The Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist are so related to each other that all are required for full Christian Initiation (Canon 842.2).
2. Unless a serious reason stands in the way, an adult who is baptized should be confirmed immediately after baptism and should participate in the Eucharistic celebration, including the reception of Communion (Canon 866).

C. Non-Repeatability

1. The Sacrament of Confirmation cannot be repeated because it imparts a character.
2. If, after a diligent investigation, a doubt still remains whether Confirmation was actually or validly conferred, it should be conferred conditionally (Canon 845.1).
 - a. Eastern Orthodox are confirmed at baptism. They may not be reconfirmed when they are received into the Catholic Church.
 - b. Eastern Catholics may not be re-confirmed.
 - c. Christians of other denominations, upon being received into full communion with the Catholic Church, are confirmed as Catholics even if they have been confirmed in their previous denominations.

D. Matter and Form

1. The Sacrament of Confirmation is administered by the anointing with oil on the forehead, which is done by the imposition of hands using the words prescribed in the approved liturgical books (Canon 880.1).

2. The words prescribed in the Latin rite are: "Be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit."
3. The chrism used in the Sacrament of Confirmation must be consecrated by a bishop, even if the Sacrament is administered by a presbyter (Canon 880.2).

E. Capability for Confirmation

1. All baptized persons who have not been confirmed, and only they, are capable of receiving Confirmation (Canon 889.1).
2. If they can do so without serious inconvenience, Catholics who have not yet received the Sacrament of Confirmation are to receive it before being admitted to marriage. (Canon 1065.1).

F. Preparation for Confirmation

1. To receive Confirmation licitly, apart from the danger of death, one must be suitably instructed, properly disposed, and be able to renew one's baptismal promises. Those who are in danger of death, or those who do not have the use of reason, are exempted from these requirements (Canon 889.2).
2. The bishop on the day of Confirmation will dwell on the idea of commitment, of obligation and of responsibility.

G. Time and Place

1. The Sacraments of Initiation of adults are to be celebrated at the Easter Vigil itself (RCIA, 55).
2. It is desirable that the Sacrament of Confirmation be celebrated in church and also within Mass, but for a just and reasonable cause it may be celebrated outside Mass and in a worthy place (Canon 881).

OFFICES AND MINISTRIES**A. The Minister**

1. The ordinary minister of Confirmation is a bishop.
2. A priest validly confers this Sacrament if he has this faculty by virtue of the universal law or a special concession from the competent authority (Canon 882).
3. In the diocese a priest has the faculty to confirm one who is seven years or older immediately after baptism or immediately after receiving one already baptized into full communion with the Church (Canons 866, 883, 891).
4. Often there are members of our RCIA programs who are baptized Catholics but who were never catechized or who, for some other reason, were just not confirmed. If these are persons who have never "left" the Catholic Church formally, the pastor does

NOT have the faculty to confirm them. Such a faculty can and must be requested from the bishop, since this affects the validity of the Sacrament.

B. Presbyters with Faculty by Law to Confirm

1. The priest by mandate of the diocesan bishop (e.g. Vicar general).
2. The faculty is given to priests to confirm one who is seven years or older immediately after baptism or immediately after receiving one already baptized into full communion with the Catholic Church (Canons 866, 883, 891)
3. The priest in danger of death situations.

THE SPONSOR**A. Desirability of Having a Sponsor**

1. As far as possible, there should be a sponsor for the person to be confirmed, and the sponsor would be present at the Confirmation.
2. The sponsor's duty is to see that the one confirmed acts as a true witness to Christ (Canon 892).
3. It is appropriate that the sponsor at Confirmation be the same person who served as a baptismal godparent, but a special sponsor is not excluded.

B. Qualifications of Sponsors

1. That one be designated by the person to be confirmed, or by the parents or the person who takes their place;
2. That one be at least sixteen years old;
3. That one is Catholic, confirmed and already has received the Eucharist, and is a practicing Catholic;
4. That one is not under a lawfully imposed canonical penalty;
5. That one is not the father or mother of the one to be confirmed(Canon 874. 1, 5). However, even when there is a sponsor, parents may present their children for Confirmation. "Presenting" is the action of accompanying the candidate to the bishop (Rite 21).

THE LITURGY

A. The Rite of Confirmation when Celebrated Outside of Mass

Whenever the Sacrament of Confirmation is celebrated outside of Mass, it should take place within a Liturgy of the Word. The format is given in the Rite of Confirmation is:

1. Entrance Rite:
 - a. Entrance Song
 - b. Greeting
 - c. Opening Prayer

2. Liturgy of the Word:
 - a. One, two or three readings with appropriate responses and silent periods. Readings appropriate for confirmation are listed in The Lectionary for Mass (Nos. 7863-767).

3. Confirmation:
 - a. Presentation of Candidates
 - b. Homily
 - c. Renewal of Baptismal Promises
 - d. Laying on of Hands
 - e. Anointing with Chrism
 - f. General Intercessions
 - g. Lord's Prayer

4. Concluding Rite:
 - a. Solemn Blessing/Prayer over the People
 - b. Dismissal

PROOF AND RECORDING OF CONFIRMATION

A. Proof

1. If there is no conflict of interest, it suffices to have a declaration of one witness who is above suspicion.
2. One should obtain a recent baptismal certificate and check if there is any notation by "Confirmation".

B. Recording

1. The pastor, or his delegate, must record in the Confirmation register the name of the minister, the full name of the person confirmed, the parents, the sponsor, and the date and place of confirmation.
2. A notice should always be sent to the parish in which the person was baptized.
3. The pastor, or his delegate, must make note of the Confirmation in the baptismal register.

GUIDELINES FOR THE CELEBRATION OF CONFIRMATION

DIOCESE OF GREEN BAY

PLANNING THE LITURGY

1. A request for Confirmation dates will be sent to parishes in April. This should be completed, signed by the pastor and returned to the Chancery by May 15.

Confirmation is to be celebrated within Mass.

2. When Confirmation is scheduled on Saturday evening or Sunday (Mass of Obligation); or a major feastday:
 - a) The readings of the Sunday/feastday must be used. One reading (not the Gospel) may be substituted from the lectionary readings for Confirmation.
 - b) The liturgical color of the season/feast should be used.
 - c) Prayers, however, may be taken from the liturgy for Confirmation.
3. When Confirmation is scheduled on a weekday, not a major feastday:
 - a) Any of the readings given in the lectionary for Confirmation may be used.
 - b) The liturgical red vestments are appropriate.
 - c) Prayers may be taken from the Liturgy for Confirmation/or the day.
4. Concerning the use of symbols:
 - a) Candidates are not to wear stoles; this vestment is appropriate only to those in Holy Orders.
 - b) The laying on of hands and anointing with oil are the primary symbols of the sacrament. Other symbolic actions or materials that might distract from the primary symbols should be avoided.
 - c) If any kind of certificates are presented to the candidates, they are not to be given out during the Mass.

5. Concerning the seating of the candidates:

Those to be confirmed may be seated in one of two ways: (1) As a group, showing their unity in seeking full initiation into the community; (2) With their sponsor (alongside or behind), showing the close relationship of the fully initiated to those requesting Confirmation.

6. Concerning the presentation of the candidates:

- a) The presentation ceremony which takes place after the Gospel and before the homily should be brief - candidates may be called by name and stand reciting a brief commitment such as, "Here I am," or "I am willing." Individual witness talks are inappropriate at this time.

Example: The pastor stands and says, "Bishop _____, the parish community of _____ wishes to present to you its young men and women who have been prepared and are ready to receive the fullness of the Spirit in the Sacrament of Confirmation. Each candidate has been well instructed and is accompanied by a sponsor. It is my privilege to present them to you at this time." (*Candidates stand - or stand individually as they are called.*)

The pastor should make the presentation, but the DRE or other appropriate person may read the names.

- b) All candidates should wear name tags with their *Confirmation name* (a *Christian name must be used.*) These names should be in large print - easily readable.
- c) One recommended procedure is for the sponsor to present the candidate to the Bishop, saying: "Bishop _____, I present my friend (*relative*), _____, who is taking the name _____."

7. Concerning communication with the Bishops:

The liturgy plans, Confirmation candidate letters, and any dinner invitations to the Bishops or details about the Confirmation reception should be reviewed by the pastor and sent to the Vice Chancellor at least two weeks prior to the Confirmation date.

CELEBRATING THE CONFIRMATION LITURGY

INTRODUCTION: Everything should be done to encourage participation in the Liturgy, especially by those being confirmed.

I. Ministers involved in the celebration:

- A. **Bishop:** The bishop will provide his own cassock and alb.
- B. **Concelebrants:** The pastor(s) and other priests who concelebrate should wear alb and stole (appropriate liturgical color).

- C. **Master of Ceremonies:** Various priests and permanent deacons have been trained as master of ceremonies to assist the bishops in the Rite of Confirmation. If Bishop Banks is confirming, Msg. John Schuh will serve as Master of Ceremonies.
- D. **Ministers of the Eucharist:** If priests or deacons are present for the liturgy, they are to be used as Eucharistic ministers.
- E. **Acolytes:** Five acolytes are needed -- a cross/or Easter candle bearer, 2 candle bearers, pastoral staff bearer, mitre bearer. It is recommended that the acolytes who handle the mitre and pastoral staff wear white gloves. (*This keeps these objects from soil and stain.*) The acolytes should be vested in liturgical garb.
- F. **Various Ministers:** Insofar as possible, each person should perform his/her role by doing solely and totally what the particular liturgical function requires. Hence,
 - 1. The sponsors, faithful and candidates should take various roles in the liturgy, e.g., carrying the lectionary and proclaiming the first readings, leading songs, offering intercessions, preparing and setting the altar, bringing up the gifts, etc..
 - 2. When a deacon is present the deacon should function as a deacon and not remain in the pews. The deacon should never function as both deacon and master of ceremonies.
 - 3. A deacon or priest should read the Gospel.
 - 4. The bishop will preach the homily

II. Special Directives for the Confirmation Liturgy

A. The Anointing of Candidates:

- 1. The Bishop administers Confirmation by standing in the center of the sanctuary as the candidates approach him. Care must be taken that the actual ceremony is easily visible to the congregation. There should not be long delays between the presentation of each candidate.
- 2. Please stress to those being confirmed the importance of their spoken response. During the rite, their **AMEN** and **AND ALSO WITH YOU** are their acceptance of the sacrament. These words should be spoken clearly and loudly.
- 3. The Sacred Chrism is not wiped off the foreheads of those Confirmed.
- 4. After the Confirmation, the bishop's hands can be cleaned with one-half lemon, pitcher of water and a basin. A small towel can be used to wipe the Bishop's hands.
- 5. It is not necessary to wash the Bishop's hands again at the preparation of gifts.

B. Other details of the liturgy:

1. If gifts in addition to the bread and wine are offered at the presentation of gifts, please place a small table somewhere in the sanctuary for them.
2. The Eucharistic bread should be the white or whole wheat standard hosts. Home-baked Eucharistic bread is not to be used.

DEACON AS MASTER OF CEREMONIES FOR CONFIRMATION**I. Before the Ceremony begins:****A. Pastor and Parish:**

1. Prepare Sacramentary. Have ribbons set to Preface of the Holy Spirit.
2. Check with the pastor regarding the readings. Ask him who has been appointed to read the Gospel.
3. Check the credence table in the sanctuary, provide:
 - a) plate with lemon.
 - b) pitcher, basin and towel for washing Bishop's hands.
 - c) chalice, corporal, etc.
4. Acquaint yourself with location of table for the presentation of gifts -- wine, bread, etc.
5. Review with servers their specific role for the Confirmation celebration.
6. Check for correct number of chairs in the sanctuary.
7. Check microphone and how it is used in this church.

B. Bishop:

1. Assist him with his suitcases.
2. Things that are of direct concern to you from his suitcases are:
 - a) Confirmation Book
 - b) stock of sacred Chrism
 - c) mitre
 - d) pastoral staff
3. Place the Confirmation Book and the sacred Chrism in the sanctuary before the ceremony begins.

4. Put the pastoral staff together.
5. Perhaps Bishop wants a few minutes to himself in preparation for the ceremony. Please have a room available.

These guidelines can also be used for a minister/not a deacon who acts as Master of Ceremonies.

II. Ceremony:

A. Assist in Procession. Order of Procession is:

1. Crossbearer and acolytes (with lighted candles, or Easter candle during the Easter season)
2. Candidates: (if in procession)
3. Lector
4. Concelebrants
5. Master of Ceremonies
6. Bishop
7. Mitre and pastoral staff bearer

B. Entrance to the sanctuary:

1. All bow to altar or genuflect to tabernacle. The Master of Ceremonies receives the Bishop's mitre and pastoral staff and gives them to the mitre bearer and pastoral staff bearer. The mitre bearer and pastoral staff bearer should place these in their designated location.
2. Get the Sacramentary for the acolyte to hold.

C. Liturgy of the Word:

1. Bishop needs the mitre for the readings. He will remove mitre at the Alleluia Verse is sung and need the crosier for the reading of the Gospel.

D. Confirmation Rite:

1. Bishop needs the mitre and crosier immediately after the imposition of hands by all the concelebrants. Have the mitre bearer and pastoral staff bearer ready. Hand Bishop the mitre. He will put it on himself. Hand him the pastoral staff with the crook away from him.
2. Give the Sacred Chrism to the priest assisting the Bishop.

3. During the actual confirming the acolytes should prepare for the washing of Bishop's hands. One server holds the plate with the lemon and the towel. The other olds the basin and pitcher.
4. The Bishop and candidates conclude the Confirmation Rite with General Intercessions.

E. Liturgy of the Eucharist:

1. Direct the acolytes to assist Bishop in the Presentation of the Gifts.
2. Prepare the altar, corporal, chalice, Sacramentary, etc.
3. Alert the acolytes in assisting with the cruets, etc.
4. Assist in clearing the altar during Communion and after.
5. See that the Bishop gets his zucchetto (*little red cap*) when he sits after Communion.
6. Cue mitre and crosier bearer to present mitre and pastoral staff before final blessing.

F. Recessional:

1. Alert crossbearer and acolytes to get cross and candles for recessional.
2. Arrange recessional:
 - a) Cross bearer and acolytes
 - b) (If in recessional) the newly Confirmed
 - c) Lector
 - d) Concelebrants
 - e) Master of Ceremonies
 - f) Bishop

III. After the Ceremony:**A. Return to sacristy and altar area to pick up the following:**

1. Confirmation book and homily notes.
2. Stock of Chrism.

B. Assist Bishop with the following:

1. Put pastoral staff in pastoral staff case.
2. Pack Bishop's suitcase.
3. Offer to place the suitcase in Bishop's car.

IN DOUBT - please contact the Chancery: 435-4406, Ext. 8189 or 8179