

# **Celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation**

## **Frequently Asked Questions 2017**

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

### **1. Who may confer the Sacrament of Confirmation?**

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

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

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

### **3. What color vestments should the clergy wear?**

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

### **4. May Deacons vest for the Confirmation liturgy?**

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Yes, however, all vested Deacons (or priests) are to sit together in an assigned location prior to the start of the liturgy.

### **5. Will vested Deacons have a liturgical role during the Confirmation liturgy?**

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Depending on the number of vested Deacons present, vested Deacons may be asked to assist with the distribution of the cup. However, only one Deacon (assigned before the liturgy) serves as the Deacon of the Word, and the same Deacon as the Deacon of the Eucharist.

### **6. Should the candidates enter in procession?**

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No.

### **7. Who proclaims the Gospel?**

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The Deacon of the Liturgy (assigned before the liturgy), or, if there is no Deacon assigned for the liturgy, the pastor of the host parish.

### **8. Are the candidates called by name for the Presentation of Candidates?**

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

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

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

### **10. Will the Bishop physically impose hands on each of the candidates? Will the concelebrating priests?**

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

### **11. May the Bishop be assisted by concelebrating priests in the Anointing with Chrism?**

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No. Bishop DiLorenzo is to be assisted during the Anointing with Chrism by only the Master of Ceremonies and server holding the bowl of chrism and a finger towel. The candidates will come up to the Bishop one by one accompanied by their sponsors. All priests and deacons present for the liturgy are asked to remain in their seats during the Anointing with Chrism.

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

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While there is a choice, it seems to fit perfectly in the role of the sponsor to introduce the candidate by stating their Confirmation name: "Bishop, may I present John or Theresa." The sponsor is asked to enunciate and speak loud enough for the Bishop to hear the candidate's name.

### **13. May candidates wear nametags?**

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Yes, however, they must be printed beforehand (not handwritten) and contain only the name the Bishop will state when he anoints them with Chrism. In addition, the nametags should be worn on the candidate's left shoulder area, and ladies are asked to have their hair pulled back in order for their name to be seen by the Bishop. The use of nametags is an option determined by the host parish.

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

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

### **15. May the priests or deacons offer a congratulatory handshake after candidates shake hands with the Bishop?**

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No. The Bishop's gesture (the Sign of Peace) is extended on behalf of the entire Church. Priests and/or deacons present are asked to remain in their seats for the Sign of Peace given to the confirmed during the Rite of Confirmation.

### **16. What are the candidates' responses?**

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

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

### **17. Who leads the General Intercessions (Prayers of the Faithful)?**

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

### **18. How should the candidates present themselves for the celebration?**

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

### **19. What music should be sung?**

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The criteria are similar to Sunday Mass: appropriate to the sacramental celebration and the Easter season, theologically sound, beautiful, and singable by the entire assembly. The Psalm Response, Gospel Acclamation and Eucharistic Acclamations (Holy, Memorial, Great Amen) and Lamb of God, should be sung. Because of the length of the celebration, no Hymn of Praise or Communion Meditation should be sung. A period of silence should follow the distribution of communion. The music used during the Anointing with Chrism can be either instrumental or sung keeping in mind that it is the celebration of a sacrament. Generally, there should be *several* musical selections during the anointing in keeping with the anointing. These musical selections can be interspersed with instrumental music.

**20. Is the Gloria sung during the Sacrament of Confirmation liturgies for a weekday (non-weekend) celebration?**

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Yes. The Gloria is sung at all Confirmation Liturgies, those on a weekday, Saturday, or Sunday.

**21. Who provides the Sacred Chrism?**

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Each host parish is responsible for providing the Sacred Chrism, which differs from the Oil of the Sick and the Oil of Catechumens. Some Sacred Chrism be poured into an ample-size dish that will allow for easy use during the Anointing with Chrism.

**22. May photographs be taken?**

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

**23. Who is the Master of Ceremonies (MC)? Who assigns them? Do I need to have an MC?**

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Each host parish will be assigned a Master of Ceremonies (MC) by the Office of Worship who will contact the host parish coordinator at least two weeks prior to the Confirmation Liturgy. All Confirmation liturgies must have an MC assigned by the Diocese.

**24. Should the host parish schedule a meal with the Bishop prior to the Confirmation liturgy?**

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Yes. For all weekday liturgies, a dinner should be scheduled onsite or at a location near the host parish with the Bishop, pastor of the host parish, and the Master of Ceremonies. Pastors of neighboring parishes and/or deacons may also be invited at the discretion of the host parish.

**For additional questions or support regarding**

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