

Confirmation Guidelines for Bishop Conlon

Please be sure these guidelines are forwarded to the Pastor, Parochial Vicar, Deacon, DRE, Principal, Music/Liturgy Director and others involved in the ceremony.

General Information

- **Diocesan Master of Ceremonies (MC)**

Your parish is being assigned a Diocesan Master of Ceremonies. You will be contacted by the Divine Worship Office in the Diocese of Joliet or by the MC directly providing his name and contact information. The MC is available to you in advance of your ceremony to answer all of your Confirmation questions, especially those involving the Bishop. The MC will also be present to assist you and the Bishop on the actual day of Confirmation. Feel free to contact your designated MC at any time while planning your Confirmation for answers to your questions on procedures, the rite, readings, music, etc.

It is customary to offer a stipend to the MC for his time and travel expenses and to extend an invitation to any meals, if any, you arrange for the Bishop.

- **Parking**

Please arrange for a reserved parking place for the Bishop near the church entrance.

- **Confirmation Names**

Candidates whose given/baptism name is not Christian should choose a Confirmation name from the names of canonized saints. Other candidates may choose a Confirmation name. Whether they keep their baptism name or choose a confirmation name, the candidates should have a good knowledge of their patron saint (even if they have chosen the name to honor a relative or friend). Please provide an opportunity for the candidates to learn and write about their patron saint during their preparation.

- **Letters from Candidates**

Rather than writing the Bishops, the candidates should write their pastor about their desire to be confirmed. The pastor will then recommend the candidates to the Bishop at the confirmation ceremony.

- **Dress Code for Candidates and Sponsors**

Simple Confirmation robes for candidates are an inexpensive way to ensure that all are dressed appropriately and that there is no distinction between those able to afford more expensive clothing and those who are not.

If robes are not feasible, please have the boys wear dress slacks, shirt and tie. The girls should wear dresses, skirts or dress slacks. Please remind the girls to maintain modesty in regard to the length of their skirt and the neckline. Sponsors should be encouraged to follow a similar dress code.

- **Music**

Music is an integral part of the Confirmation liturgy. However, due to the length of the rite, please ensure that the music doesn't extend unduly beyond the ritual actions. For this reason, please avoid meditation songs or hymns of thanksgiving after the distribution of Holy Communion has been completed.

- **Announcements**

Please make any announcements and offer "thank you's" before Mass rather than after Communion.

- **Vestments**

The Bishop will bring their own vestments and can bring a matching dalmatic if a deacon will be serving at the Mass. The Bishop will wear red vestments when the Mass of Confirmation is celebrated. Otherwise he will use the color of the day.

The Bishops will also bring their own oil stock.

- **Readings/Prayers**

If your Confirmation ceremony takes place on a Sunday of Advent, Lent or Easter or a solemnity, please use the assigned readings and prayers of the day. Otherwise, choose the readings from those suggested in the *Rite of Confirmation*; the prayers will be taken from the *Rite of Confirmation*.

During Ordinary Time

Reading I – reading is to be from the Old Testament

Reading II – reading should be from the New Testament

During Easter Season

Reading I - reading may be from the Old Testament or Acts of the Apostles

Reading II – reading is to be from one of the New Testament letters

- **Servers**

At least five servers are needed (Cross bearer, 2 candle bearers, miter and crosier bearers).

- **Ministers**

Servers, Readers, Extraordinary Communion Ministers (when needed) should be experienced ministers from the parish; that is, not chosen merely due to their relationship to the candidates for Confirmation. To be the recipient of a sacrament and to serve as a sponsor are in themselves liturgical roles. Based on the principle that a member of the assembly should ordinarily fulfill only one liturgical role at any given celebration, it seems better that Confirmandi and their sponsors should not also serve as lectors, musicians, ministers of Holy Communion, cantors, or servers. Other members of the assembly should fulfill these roles whenever possible. (One obvious exception is gift bearer)

- **Incense**

Normally, incense will not be used at Confirmation Masses.

- **Lunch or Dinner**

Schedule permitting, the Bishop would enjoy having dinner with the priests and deacons of the parish either before or after the ceremony. However, this is entirely up to the pastor and the parish schedule. Please call the Bishops' Office in advance to confirm: (815)-221-6185 for Bishop Conlon.

Evening Confirmations - suggested dinner time - 5:30 p.m.

Daytime Confirmations – lunch following ceremony (or if having two ceremonies in the same day, a meal in between the ceremonies would be appreciated)

- **Commemorative Prayer Cards**

The Bishops have commemorative prayer cards for those being confirmed. The cards will be sent to your parish weeks in advance so they can be included with any parish materials given to the candidates.

- **Photographs**
The Bishop is happy to remain for a group picture and/or individual photographs in the reception hall, rather than in the church. **Due to the number of people usually in line waiting for pictures, it would be best if each Confirmandi and family were limited to two pictures (poses) with the bishop to facilitate the process. The two preferred poses would be 1) Confirmand/Sponsor/Bishop and 2) Confirmand/Family/Bishop. If time permits, the bishop would be willing to take additional photographs after the line is finished.** Please choose a setting that is away from the main traffic flow of the crowd. It would be helpful to have a staff person to direct the photography line and to assist with taking group pictures if requested. If the room is not carpeted, a rug for the Bishop to stand on for pictures would be most appreciated.
- **Professional Photographer/Videographer**
The professional photographer/videographer must remain stationary and in a non-distracting position during Confirmation as to not disturb the sanctity of the Sacrament. **NO flash photography allowed.**

Order of the Ceremony

Please have the candidates and sponsors seated before the liturgy begins so that the procession with the entrance hymn can begin at the scheduled time.

The Knights of Columbus are most welcome to serve as an honor guard for the procession at the beginning and end of the liturgy. If they stand in the middle of the aisle, please ensure that there is enough room for the procession to comfortably pass between them.

1. Entrance Procession / Order of Procession

- Knights of Columbus (if present)
- Cross bearer and candle bearers
- Readers (if desired)
- Deacon (with Gospel Book), priests, MC, Bishop, Miter and Crosier bearers.

The priests should genuflect/bow and reverence the altar ahead of the Bishop. If there is a deacon, he reverences the altar with the Bishop.

2. Rite of Penitence/Sprinkling Rite

During the Easter Season, the Bishop may use the sprinkling rite from the Sacramentary. The deacon or server should carry the aspergillum bucket as the Bishop sprinkles the people. If the church is large with many aisles, the pastor or deacon can assist with the sprinkling.

Outside of the Easter Season, we will use one of the forms of the Penitential Rite. If Form C is chosen, the deacon (or pastor) should lead it.

The Gloria is not sung except on Sundays or solemnities.

3. Readings

During Ordinary Time

Reading I – reading is to be from the Old Testament
Reading II – reading should be from the New Testament

During Easter Season

Reading I - reading may be from the Old Testament or Acts of the Apostles
Reading II – reading is to be from one of the New Testament letters

As the Gospel Acclamation begins, all stand except the Bishop. The deacon (or pastor) bows/kneels before the Bishop for a blessing before proclaiming the Gospel. After the Gospel, the deacon (or pastor) brings the Book of Gospels to the Bishop to kiss (if there is no Book of Gospels, then this is omitted).

4. **Order of the Rite of Confirmation**

- a. The deacon (or pastor) proclaims the Gospel.
- b. After the proclamation of the Gospel and the Bishop reverences the Book of Gospels, the pastor presents the candidates. **(See attached formula – YELLOW SHEET)**

Please do not call the candidates by name.
- c. The Bishop gives the homily. The Bishop will not quiz the candidates on their readiness for the sacrament.
- d. The Bishop leads the renewal of baptismal promises. Please practice the responses.
- e. The priests do not join the Bishop in extending hands with him during the Confirmation prayer.
- f. **Bishop Conlon** will stand to anoint the candidates. The deacon or pastor should stand to his right holding the Chrism stock. The candidates should stand in front of Bishop Conlon on the same level or a step below the Bishop. Their sponsor stands behind them, putting their right hand on the candidate's right shoulder. As soon as one is anointed, another candidate should take his/her place so that there are two candidates in front of the Bishop at all times. It would be helpful if an assistant could ensure that the candidates are shoulder to shoulder and close to the Bishop so that he can reach them for the anointing.
- g. Have the candidates approach from two sides, along the front pews, with their sponsors behind them. Please leave some space between the candidates receiving the sacrament and the person next in line, so that the sight line isn't blocked.
- h. The candidate's confirmation name **only** (whether the baptismal name or a new name) should be printed clearly and in large letters on a name tag worn on the chest of the candidates. Please be sure that the name tag is clearly visible to the Bishop and not covered by hair or clothing. Neither the candidate nor the sponsor needs to announce the name.
- i. Bishop: "N., be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit."

Candidate: "Amen."

Bishop: "Peace be with you."

Candidate: "And with your spirit."

Please practice these responses with the candidates
- j. N.B. Any music during the anointing of candidates should be quiet **instrumental** music so that the Bishop and candidates can hear each other.

Following the anointing, the Bishop washes his hands with water and lemons (no bread is needed). He will then return to the chair for the General Intercessions.

5. **General Intercessions** – Please use the intercessions from the *Rite of Confirmation*. Other petitions may be added as needed. The intercessions should be read by the Deacon of the Mass or the Lector only, not by the Confirmandi.
6. **Collections** – Unless Confirmation is celebrated during a Saturday evening or a Sunday Mass, no collection should be taken.
7. **Preparation of the Gifts** – The Bishop will receive the gifts seated at the chair; the MC will help direct the gift bearers to him. The deacon (or pastor) should prepare the altar, including the mixing of the water with the wine.

8. **Communion** – Communion under both forms is encouraged at this Mass. If both species are offered, please be sure that sufficient wine is consecrated and that there are two cups for each host station (at least where the newly confirmed will receive as most seem to take this option). Care must be taken to assure that Extraordinary Ministers are used only when there are insufficient members of Ordinary Ministers.

9. **Recessional** – Only the Bishop and Deacon kiss the altar. All then bow to the altar or genuflect to the tabernacle. The procession out of Church begins with the Knights of Columbus, cross bearer and servers, then the deacons, priests, MC, the Bishop, miter and crosier bearers last. The newly-confirmed follow.

Presentation of Candidates

Pastor: “Will the candidates for Confirmation please stand. Most Reverend Father, I present these candidates for Confirmation and attest that they are prepared to receive this Sacrament of Christian initiation.”

Bishop: “Thank you, Father _____.
I am grateful to you and to everyone who has helped to prepare these candidates for Confirmation, including their parents, sponsors, catechists, and the candidates themselves The Candidates may be seated.”

(yellow sheet)