

**NORM FOR THE AGE FOR CONFIRMATION**  
**Diocese of Sacramento**  
**September 12, 2005**

**Canon 891:**

*The sacrament of confirmation is to be conferred on the faithful at about the age of discretion unless the conference of bishops determines another age or there is danger of death or in the judgment of the minister a grave cause urges otherwise.*

**Receive the Gift: The Age of Confirmation:**

*(A Resource Guide for Bishops, by the Committee on Pastoral Practices of the USCCB)*

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, in accord with the prescriptions of canon 891, hereby decrees that the Sacrament of Confirmation in the Latin Rite shall be conferred between the age of discretion and about sixteen years of age, within the limits determined by the diocesan bishop and with regard for the legitimate exceptions given in canon 891. *(Norm of the Bishops of the Latin Catholic Church in the United States, approved by the Holy See in May 2001, effective July 1, 2002)*

**NORM:**

1. In the Diocese of Sacramento the age for the reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation (of a person baptized as an infant) is grade levels 7, 8 and 9, and anyone older who missed Confirmation earlier (including adults).
2. Each parish and chaplaincy may choose a particular age, within the approved range. Before reaching a decision on the age, a pastor is to consult with the parish pastoral council, religious education coordinator, and principal and be sensitive to the wishes of parishioners. The practice of neighboring parishes also is to be taken into account so that there may be common practice in the area.
3. Non-baptized children of catechetical age and non-baptized adults are to receive Confirmation within the rites of initiation, i.e., when baptized. *(RCIA #305, Receive the Gift, the Age of Confirmation, p.1)*
4. Parishes currently using the restored order of the Sacraments of Initiation are urged to adapt to the diocesan norm as soon as possible but may continue current practice for a period of up to five years (or until December 31, 2010).

**RATIONALE:**

1. The diocesan bishop wishes to honor/acknowledge the current pastoral practice in 80 of the 105 parishes and chaplaincies.

2. The diocesan bishop is responding to numerous requests from pastors, DREs and others to establish a uniform norm for the age of Confirmation.
3. While supportive of the theology of the Sacraments of Initiation, the diocesan bishop acknowledges that the absence of an adequate base and practice of youth ministry and catechesis and the consequent practice of the majority of the parishes cannot be ignored.
4. The diocesan bishop fully appreciates the initiative and work of those who have long proposed the restored sequence of the Sacraments of Initiation. He is pleased that the Diocese of Sacramento was among the pioneers in this endeavor and anticipates that we may come back to it when the necessary youth ministry and catechetical system is solidly in place.

**NOTE:**

The majority of dioceses in the United States have not changed their practice to the restored order of the Sacraments of Initiation – (FDLC Sacraments Committee Status Report on a study of the restored order of Initiation – October 2003, USCCB). This includes the neighboring dioceses of Sacramento.

Promulgated by Bishop William K. Weigand  
September 12, 2005