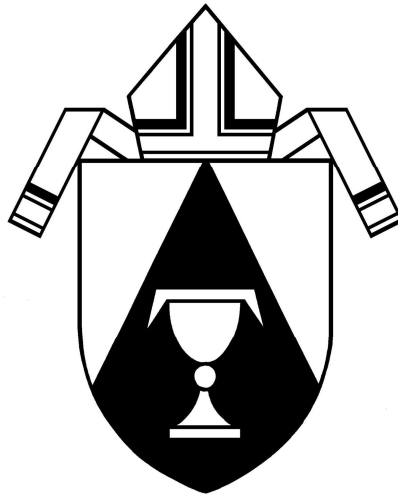


**GUIDELINES  
FOR THE  
PREPARATION  
OF THE  
CONFIRMATION  
LITURGY**

**(REVISED, AUGUST 16, 2011)**



**DIOCESE  
OF  
SACRAMENTO**

# GUIDELINES FOR THE PREPARATION OF THE CONFIRMATION LITURGY

## ***General Instructions*** **for Preparing the Confirmation Liturgy**

1. The Confirmation Liturgy should in all things be a model of good liturgical celebration. Appropriate, well-planned and well-executed liturgical music, the active participation of the assembly, and the use of the proper liturgical ministers of high competency should attest to the care which is given to every liturgical celebration of the community.
2. The Confirmation Liturgy is never to be a showplace for novel or virtuosic expressions, but should represent normative worship for the particular parish community involved; the community into which the *Confirmandi* are being initiated.
3. That being said, it is nevertheless true that %Special attention should be paid to the festive and solemn character of the liturgical service, and its significance for the local church.... The whole people of God, represented by the families and friends of the candidates and by members of the local community, will be invited to take part in the celebration and will express its faith in the fruits of the Holy Spirit.+*(Rite of Confirmation, Roman Pontifical.)*
4. The cultural and ethnic diversity of the parish community should be taken into account in the preparation of the liturgy.

### **CHOICE OF MASS TEXTS**

5. The Ritual Mass for Confirmation (Sacramentary, Ritual Masses: Christian Initiation #4: Confirmation; Form A, B, or C) is used except on the Sundays of Advent, Lent, and the Easter season, on Solemnities, on days within the Octave of Easter, or during Holy Week; on any of these days the proper texts are used.
6. If confirmation is celebrated during a regularly scheduled parish Sunday Mass, the Mass of the Day should be used.

## **CHOICE OF READINGS**

### **7. *The readings are taken from the Mass of the Day.***

8. The readings, apart from the Gospel, are proclaimed by properly qualified readers from the parish community. When the confirmation candidates are not young children, the readers may be chosen from among their number, if they are competent lectors. If two readings are used before the Gospel, there should be two readers.
9. The Gospel is proclaimed by a deacon; if no deacon is present it is to be proclaimed by the pastor or another concelebrating priest.

## **GENERAL INTERCESSIONS**

10. The General Intercessions from the *Rite of Confirmation* are to be used at all Confirmation Liturgies in the Diocese of Sacramento: a copy is attached for your convenience. It is permissible to add one or two intercessions if desired.
11. The bishop always introduces the intercessions and prays the concluding prayer.
12. If a deacon is present, he is to offer the intercessions. If no deacon is present, they may be offered by someone involved in the preparation of the candidates. Ordinarily, the intentions should be offered by one person only; however, if they are offered in more than one language, there may be a reader for each language. It is best that the intercessions not be offered by one of the newly-confirmed, since this prayer of the community is offered in a special way for those who have just received the sacrament.

## **ITEMS TO BE PREPARED FOR THE LITURGY**

13. In addition to all that is necessary for the celebration of the Eucharist, the following should be prepared:
  - a.) If the bishop will confirm while seated, a chair which can be placed in an appropriate location at the front of the sanctuary should be available. (See the *Specific Instructions for the Rite of Confirmation*.)
  - b.) A pitcher of water, basin, towel, and some lemon slices are to be ready to bring to the bishop so that he may wash his hands when he has finished the anointing.
  - c.) The *Rite of Confirmation* from the *Roman Pontifical* is to be available for the bishop.
  - d.) Supply the Chrism for the anointing and a small bowl.

## **VESTMENTS**

14. The Confirmation Mass may be celebrated in either red or white vestments; however, on Sundays the color of the liturgical season is used.
15. The bishop will usually wear vestments belonging to the parish; a stole and chasuble are to be prepared for him. He will bring his own alb.
16. Concelebrating priests vest in the same color as the bishop; they also wear a chasuble if available, otherwise an alb and a stole.

## **ROLE OF THE DEACON**

17. It is always appropriate that a deacon assist at a liturgy celebrated by the bishop. The deacon proclaims the Gospel, offers the general intercessions, assists in the Rite of Confirmation, prepares the altar for the Liturgy of the Eucharist, and distributes Holy Communion.
18. If there is no deacon available in the parish, the bishop will, on occasion, bring with him a deacon who will, in addition to performing his normal liturgical roles, serve as a Master of Ceremonies.
19. If a deacon is not present, the Gospel is proclaimed by the pastor or another concelebrating priest.

## **Processions**

20. It is important that the processions into and out of the church be rehearsed, so that all will flow in a dignified and reverent manner.
21. The candidates for confirmation enter the church first, preceding the liturgical ministers. The candidates are to follow each other closely, walking two-by-two, without excess distance between pairs. A procession is a communal act, a sign of unity, not a parade of individuals. (Any similarities to a graduation are to be assiduously avoided throughout the rites.)

22. The liturgical procession follows the candidates in this order:

Thurifer (*if incense is used*)

Cross bearer (*outside of Lent the Paschal Candle may be substituted for the Processional Cross*)

Two servers with candles

Additional servers

Readers

Concelebrating priests

Deacon

Bishop, accompanied by two deacons or chaplains, if available.

### **Music**

23. Music is a normative part of all liturgical celebrations, and special care should be given to the planning of music for the Confirmation Liturgy. It should be appropriate in musical character and textual content, and support the liturgical actions which it accompanies, without prolonging the celebration unduly.

24. The parish Sunday Mass should be the model for the musical program for the confirmation liturgy. Music at the Confirmation Liturgy should be drawn from the normal liturgical music repertoire of the parish community, in order first to facilitate the participation of all in attendance, and secondly to acknowledge that those being confirmed are part of a specific worshipping community.

25. Whenever possible, the candidates for confirmation should have the opportunity to rehearse beforehand the music which will be sung at the Confirmation Liturgy; ideally, some of this music would be incorporated into other celebrations and gatherings which are part of the candidates' period of formation.

26. If a worship leaflet is printed for the occasion, permission must be acquired for the reproduction of any music to be included. If the parish does not have annual reprint licenses with the various publishers, permission for one-time use+reproduction may be obtained by contacting the publishers. The Office of Worship, (916) 733-0220, can provide further information on obtaining permission to reproduce music. (Parish events are not covered under a Diocesan reprint license, as is sometimes believed; the parish must obtain permission for each event.)

The following musical elements should be prepared for the Confirmation Liturgy:

### **Opening Rites**

27. A processional chant or hymn; if there are a great many candidates and the procession will be quite lengthy, appropriate instrumental music could accompany the entrance of the candidates, reserving the hymn for the liturgical procession. (It is often useful to have instrumental music for a few minutes before the procession, preceded by the cantor or other minister inviting the people to quiet their hearts and minds in prayer.)
28. Because of the intrinsic link between Baptism and Confirmation, the Rite of Blessing and Sprinkling of Holy Water, by which we recall our Baptism, should be used at the Confirmation Liturgy whenever practical, especially during the Easter Season. An appropriate chant or song should accompany the Sprinkling; however, it should be of such a nature that it can be gracefully brought to a conclusion when the ritual action has been completed.
29. On Sundays outside of Advent and Lent, and on solemnities, the hymn *Glory to God* should be sung. It is not permissible to substitute any other hymn or canticle for the *Gloria*.

### **Liturgy of the Word**

30. The Responsorial Psalm should be chanted or sung by a qualified cantor, with an appropriate antiphon for the people.
31. The Verse before the Gospel is sung with its appropriate acclamation (*Alleluia* except in Lent).

### **Rite of Confirmation**

32. A sung ~~%~~Amen+or other simple, brief acclamation should be used at the end of the renewal of baptismal vows when the bishop declares: ~~%~~This is our faith... .+
33. During the anointing by the bishop, an appropriate hymn or psalm may be sung, or instrumental music may be played. Whatever is chosen should be of a quiet and meditative character, and should not begin until after the first few candidates have been anointed.

34. If a sung response is used during the General Intercessions, all must be carefully coordinated, so that the prayer may flow in an appropriate manner, and not be unnecessarily prolonged.

### **Liturgy of the Eucharist**

35. The acclamations during the Eucharistic Prayer (Holy, Memorial Acclamation, and Great Amen) should be sung whenever there is singing at Mass. These acclamations are to be sung by the entire assembly, and the settings used should be familiar.

36. Please alert the bishop beforehand whether or not the Lord's Prayer will be sung; if the Lord's Prayer is sung, the doxology *For the kingdom, the power....* is to be sung as well.

37. It is preferable that there be no singing during the exchange of the sign of peace; quiet instrumental music which leads smoothly into the "*Lamb of God*" is acceptable. The exchange of peace is made with those nearby and is not prolonged.

38. An appropriate setting of the "*Lamb of God*" should be sung; care should be taken that the setting used is of an appropriate length, or can be brought readily to a close when the liturgical action has been completed.

39. There should be singing by the assembly during the Communion Procession; singing at this time helps to express the unity that we find in sharing the Lord's Supper, and imparts the character of a true procession to the action at hand. Often a song with a simple, easily memorized refrain is the best choice for the Communion Procession. It is fine for the assembly to sing a refrain in alternation with a choir or cantor singing verses, but the choir or cantor should not sing a solo piece during Communion. The Communion song should last for at least the majority of the time that Communion is distributed.

40. It is preferable not to have a *meditation* piece after Communion. However, there may be a song of praise sung by the entire assembly at this time, as is mentioned in the *Order of Mass*. If such a hymn is sung, the recessional hymn may be omitted in favor of an instrumental recessional. If no hymn of praise is sung, there should be a brief period of prayerful silence following the completion of Communion.

### **Blessing and Dismissal**

42. If a post-communion hymn of praise has not been sung, a recessional song should be sung by the entire assembly. An instrumental recessional is also sometimes appropriate.

## SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS for the RITE of CONFIRMATION

1. If the candidates process into the church, they do so in the manner of a liturgical procession, preceding the ministers. The candidates are to follow each other closely, walking two-by-two, without excess distance between pairs. A procession is a communal act, a sign of unity, not a parade of individuals. (Any similarity to a graduation is to be assiduously avoided throughout the rites.) **Each candidate should have a name tag, indicating his/her confirmation name or baptismal name, but not both.**
2. After the Gospel (before the homily), the bishop will be seated, and the pastor will **introduce the candidates** for confirmation. The presentation has no set formula, but should be simple and direct, e.g.:

Bishop N., the parish community of \_\_\_\_\_ wishes to present to you these young people who have been prepared and are ready to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. It is my privilege to present them to you at this time.

Unless the group is more than 50 in number, the candidates' names are called individually and they will stand in their places.
3. After the bishop's homily, the candidates stand for the **renewal of baptismal promises**.
4. For the **general imposition of hands**, after the renewal of baptismal promises, the candidates kneel. The book bearer or deacon holds the confirmation ritual for the bishop as he prays with outstretched hands over the candidates as a group. (Only if additional priests are to assist with the anointing do they also extend their hands.) (*Rite of Confirmation #9.*)
5. For the **individual anointing and imposition of hands**, one of the following procedures will be followed, depending upon the bishop presiding.
  - a. When **Bishop Soto** presides, the candidates will approach two by two, standing. The pair is to stand close together, so that the bishop may anoint both from one position, turning only slightly to his left or right.
  - b. When **Bishop Weigand** presides, the candidates will stand in a row across the front of the church, with their sponsors standing behind them. The bishop will move from candidate to candidate. After the anointing, each confirmand moves away while another takes his/her place in the line. When completing a line, the bishop begins to move in the opposite direction, anointing as he goes.

Care is to be taken in either method that the bishop can anoint continuously with no delay between confirmands.

Small children being confirmed should be standing on the same level as the bishop. Taller children are to be one step lower than the bishop.

Finally, the candidates are to face forward (toward the sanctuary/altar) during the anointing, NOT outward so as to facilitate the taking of photos.

6. The sponsors should be instructed to place their right hand upon the shoulder of the candidate during the anointing, while, at the same time, praying silently for the candidate.
7. Ordinarily, the bishop will use both hands for the imposition and anointing, therefore two chaplains (priests, deacons or servers) should accompany the bishop and stand on either side of him and move with him. The one on the bishop's left holds the chrism, the one on his right holds the crozier. Alternatively, the bishop may elect to hold the chrism himself.
8. With his hand on the candidate's head, the bishop anoints the candidate's forehead, saying: And, be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit. The confirmand immediately answers: Amen, while the bishop continues to impose both hands upon the confirmand for a period of time, praying as he does so. The bishop, slightly embracing the confirmand, then says: Peace be with you. The confirmand responds with the words, and also with you. **Note: After November 27, 2011, confirmand responds with the words "and with your spirit."**
9. After all have been confirmed, servers bring the pitcher of water, a basin, a couple of lemon slices, and a towel to the bishop so that he may wash his hands.
10. After the bishop has washed his hands, all stand for the general intercessions. The bishop says the opening invitation and the concluding prayer. The deacon, if one is present, offers the general intercessions. If no deacon is present, they may be offered by someone involved in the preparation of the candidates, but not generally by the newly-confirmed. This maintains the sense that the candidates are the recipients of the sacrament and the beneficiaries of the prayers of intercession. The intercessions provided in the Rite of Confirmation are to be used, but they may be added to. (cf. Appendix). The person(s) offering the intercessions should precede to and remain at the place of the reading until the bishop concludes the prayer.
11. After the general intercessions, the Eucharist is celebrated in the usual way, except that the profession of faith (creed) has been substituted by the baptismal promises made earlier. A collection may be taken up. Some of the newly-confirmed may take

up the collection and bring the gifts of bread and wine to the altar. Additional offertory rituals are to be discouraged.

12. For Communion, it is recommended that both the assembly and the newly-confirmed be able to receive Communion under both species. (*General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, #240). If the Precious Blood is distributed, there should be two ministers of the Cup for each minister of the Body of Christ.
13. The bishop is pleased to accommodate families who wish to take an individual picture of the newly-confirmed and sponsor after Mass in front of the Church or at the reception for a brief while. If a professional photographer has been invited (this is not common any longer) to take a group picture, the bishop will pose with the group after Mass, but will not pose for individual photographs taken by a professional photographer. (The sacrament is not to be taken advantage of for business purposes nor should pressure be put on families for costly photos.)
14. The offering given to the Bishop or Auxiliary Bishop is given to a charity fund, which helps mission dioceses and seminaries, local charities, etc. Because pastors and parish stewards have inquired as to an appropriate amount to offer, it is suggested that the amount should correspond to the size of the parish. Thus, for a small parish, the suggested offering might be \$250, a medium-size parish \$500 and large-size parish \$750. A poor parish would not be expected to give an offering.

## APPENDIX

### GENERAL INTERCESSIONS

#### **Bishop:**

My dear friends:

let us be one in prayer to God our Father  
as we are one in the faith, hope, and love his Spirit gives.

Deacon or minister:

For these sons and daughters of God, confirmed by the gift of the Spirit,  
that they give witness to Christ by lives built on faith and love.

We pray:

**R.** Lord, hear our prayer.

For their parents and godparents who led them in faith,  
that by word and example they may always encourage them  
to follow the way of Jesus Christ.

We pray:

**R.** Lord, hear our prayer.

For the holy Church of God,  
in union with N., our pope, N., our bishop, and all the bishops,  
that God, who gathers us together by the Holy Spirit,  
may help us grow in unity of faith and love until his Son returns in glory:

We pray:

**R.** Lord, hear our prayer.

For all people of every race and nation,  
that they may acknowledge the one God as Father,  
and, in the bond of Christian unity,  
seek his kingdom, which is peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

We pray:

**R.** Lord hear our prayer.

For vocations to the priesthood and the religious life, that young men and women might respond generously to God's call to full-time ministry in the Church through a consecrated life, and that families and parishes might actively support and nurture vocations.

We pray:

**R.** Lord hear our prayer.

**Bishop:**

God our Father, you sent your Holy Spirit upon the apostles,  
and through them and their successors you give the Spirit to your people.  
May his work begun at Pentecost continue to grow in the hearts of all who believe.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

## APÉNDICE

### INTERCESIONES GENERALES

#### **Obispo:**

Queridos amigos y amigas:  
seamos uno en la oración a Dios Padre  
así como somos uno en la fe, la esperanza, y el amor que su Espíritu da.

#### **Diácono o ministro:**

Por estos hijos e hijas de Dios,  
confirmados por el don del Espíritu,  
para que den testimonio de Cristo con sus vidas fundadas en la fe y el amor.  
Oremos:

**R.** Señor, escucha nuestra oración.

Por sus padres y padrinos que los han guiado en la fe,  
que por la palabra y el ejemplo  
puedan ellos animarlos siempre a seguir el camino de Jesucristo.  
Oremos:

**R.** Señor, escucha nuestra oración.

Por la santa Iglesia de Dios,  
junto con N., Nuestro Papa, N., nuestro obispo, y todos los obispos,  
que Dios, que nos une por medio del Espíritu Santo,  
nos ayude a crecer en unidad de fe y amor hasta la venida gloriosa de su Hijo.  
Oremos:

**R.** Señor, escucha nuestra oración.

Por todos los pueblos de cada raza o nación,  
para que reconozcan al único Dios como Padre,  
y, en el lazo de unidad común,  
busquen su reino, que es la paz y el gozo en el Espíritu Santo.  
Oremos:

**R.** Señor, escucha nuestra oración.

Por vocaciones al sacerdocio y a la vida religiosa,  
para que muchachos y muchachas  
puedan responder generosamente al llamado de Dios  
para ejercer un ministerio completo en la Iglesia por medio de la vida consagrada,  
y que las familias y parroquias les apoyen activamente  
y animen las vocaciones.

Oremos:

**R.** Señor, escucha nuestra oración.

**Obispo:**

Dios Padre,  
enviaste tu Espíritu Santo sobre los apóstoles,  
y a través suyo y de sus sucesores das el Espíritu a tu pueblo.  
Que su obra comenzada en Pentecostés continúe creciendo  
en los corazones de todos los creyentes.

Te lo pedimos por Cristo Señor nuestro.