



DIRECTIVES FOR  
CONFIRMATIONS  
IN THE  
DIOCESE OF BURLINGTON

2019

Revised January 2019

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# The Sacrament of Confirmation

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The Most Reverend Christopher J. Coyne, Bishop of Burlington, issues the following guidelines to be observed for the celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation:

## Recording of the Sacrament

1. The recording of the Sacrament of Confirmation is at the parish in which the candidates are registered, not the parish where the celebrations take place. Notification must be made in a timely manner to the Confirmandi's Church of Baptism.
2. The Diocese of Burlington does not issue Confirmation certificates signed by the Bishop. Parishes may issue certificates to their own candidates if they so desire, but certificates are no longer to be sent to the Bishop's Office for the Bishop's signature.

## Canonical Requirements for Confirmation

3. There should be individual sponsors. Parents cannot be sponsors for their own children. The person who is chosen should be sufficiently committed to the practice of the faith so that he/she can receive the Eucharist at the Confirmation Mass and fulfill the requirements stated in canon 874 of the *Code of Canon Law*.
4. Bishop Coyne offers Mass each Sunday and Holy Day for the people of the Diocese (*pro populo*). Stipend/intentioned Masses should not be scheduled when the Bishop celebrates the Mass of Confirmation as his intention will be for the Confirmandi.

## Preparation before Mass Begins:

**Candidates and Sponsors are to be seated in the Church 45 minutes prior to Mass. The Bishop will come into the Church and be available for pictures at that time.**

5. Bishop Coyne will normally vest with the rest of the clergy (priests and deacons). He does need sufficient space to lay out his vestment bag on a table or counter. If there is not sufficient room in the sacristy or lower church, he will vest in the rectory with the rest of the clergy. Please kindly reserve a nearby parking spot for the Bishop. Bishop Coyne will bring his own vestments. A cordless microphone

should be available where the Bishop will vest. Please double-check the batteries in the cordless microphone.

**NOTE: there should be only 2 Deacons vested.**

6. Confirmation takes place at Mass.

- a. **During the Lenten Season:**

- i. **Lenten Weekday or Saturday morning/afternoon:** the prayers are taken from the Mass of Confirmation. The readings will be pre-selected (see #8 below). The vestment colors are white.
  - ii. **Sundays (including anticipatory Masses on Saturday) or Solemnities in Lent:** the prayers and readings are taken from the Mass of that particular Sunday or solemnity. The vestment colors are violet.

- b. **During the Easter Season**

- i. **In the Easter Octave:** the prayers and readings are taken from the Mass of the Day in the Octave. The vestment colors are white.
  - ii. **Easter weekday or Saturday morning/afternoon outside the Octave:** the prayers are taken from the Mass of Confirmation. The readings will be pre-selected (see #8 below). The vestment colors are white.
  - iii. **Sundays (including anticipatory Masses on Saturday) or Solemnities in the Easter Season:** the prayers and readings are taken from the Mass of that particular Sunday or solemnity. The vestment colors are white.

7. Priests and deacons provide their own vestments:

**N.B.:** In accord with *Redemptionis Sacramentum*, 123, the stole is worn underneath the chasuble.

8. The **readings** for the Mass are preselected and will be sent separately. A Book of the Gospels should be used at each Confirmation Ceremony. If Confirmation falls on a Sunday, Solemnity, or during the Easter Octave, the readings of the day will be used (see #6 above).

9. The Bishop brings a stock of **Sacred Chrism** for the anointing; however, additional Chrism from the parish is appreciated. The stock of Chrism should be available in the sacristy prior to the Confirmation Mass.

10. Communion should be distributed under both species. Contact the Office of Worship if additional chalices need to be brought.

11. In preparation for the Mass, please arrange: a water cruet plus an additional lavabo set, a lemon sliced on a dish with sliced white bread, a larger white towel (the Bishop will drape this towel across his lap while washing his hands), a glass of water for the Bishop, as well as the sacred vessels for Mass with a sufficient number of hosts. Please make sure that the number of vessels, including ciboria in the Tabernacle, corresponds to the number of Holy Communion stations during Mass.
12. The pastor of the hosting parish should assign the necessary communion distribution positions to the other concelebrants and deacons before Mass begins. Only in the case of necessity (not enough Ordinary Ministers of Holy Communion) should Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion be used.
13. Confirmation Mass requires a minimum of **five** altar servers: a cross bearer who also serves as the book bearer, two candle bearers (acolytes), two insignia bearers (miter and crozier). A sixth server should be added if incense is used, adding solemnity to the conferral of the Sacrament of Confirmation. Servers should be well-trained and experienced at serving at Sunday Mass. A Master of Ceremonies (provided by the Office of Worship) will be at each Confirmation and will rehearse with the servers before Mass. It is kindly requested that all altar servers be vested and ready 30 minutes before the ceremony begins.
14. For good order, please seat the sponsor beside the candidate.  
**N.B.:** • No stoles or robes are to be worn by the students;  
• No candles are to be used at the renewal of Baptismal vows;  
• Candidates and sponsors should be formally dressed;  
• During rehearsal, please emphasize that candidates and sponsors are not to chew gum during Mass.
15. Each candidate is asked to wear a **nametag** with his or her Confirmation name printed legibly in large script on the top with their baptismal name underneath in large letters. They are to be worn on the candidate's right hand side. **Each parish is responsible for providing the name tags of their students.**
16. The use of photography during the Mass is **not** permitted.
17. To ensure proper reverence and order for the Sacrament of Confirmation and Holy Mass, the pastor of the sponsoring parish should hold a rehearsal in advance of the ceremony. It is encouraged that before or after the rehearsal, priests be available to celebrate the Rite of Penance and that candidates as well as sponsors be encouraged to avail themselves of the opportunity to confess.

- 18.** There are to be no crosses or awards given during or immediately following the Confirmation liturgy.
- 19.** Musicians from the parishes celebrating Confirmation will serve as the pastoral musicians the liturgy. It is recommended to have musicians from multiple parishes form a joint choir. Most of the music will be selected from a list provided by the diocese. See the attached document for the list and additional guidelines on music at the Confirmation liturgy.
- 20.** A worship aid, with the music selections included, will be created for each Confirmation liturgy by the Diocesan Office of Worship.
  - a. The music director for the confirmation liturgy will need to communicate selections to the Office of Worship at least 3 weeks before the celebration in order to complete the worship aid in a timely manner.
  - b. Parishes may opt to create and include a half-sheet of content of their choosing (list of candidates' names, ministers of the liturgy, "thank-yous," invitations to hospitality following Mass, etc).
  - c. Parishes will be responsible for printing the worship aids once they are completed by the Office of Worship.

### **The Confirmation Mass**

- 21.** The liturgical **procession** includes, in this order: [incense, if used,] the cross bearer, acolytes, [Knights of Columbus], [deacon of the Gospel], [Deacon of the Altar], concelebrants, the Bishop, and insignia bearers. The confirmandi and their sponsors will be seated in place prior to the procession. *Please note: No more than 2 deacons should be vested and serving at the Mass.*
- 22.** The deacon will offer the Penitential Act with the text that is provided. The *Kyrie* is spoken, not sung. The *Gloria* follows after the *Kyrie*.
- 23.** The *Gloria* is sung at Confirmation ceremonies during the Easter Octave and during the Easter Season. The *Gloria* is omitted during Lent.
- 24.** The **readings** are proclaimed from the *Lectionary*. If Confirmation candidates serve as readers, please ensure that they are able to do so audibly and with a clear sense of the reading's meaning. The deacon, or in his absence, a priest, will ask for the Bishop's blessing (Your blessing, Father") and proclaim the Gospel. At its conclusion, he should not venerate the Book of the Gospels, but bring the Book of the Gospels to the Bishop for him to venerate.

25. After the Gospel, the Pastor or DRE goes to the ambo and presents the candidates from their parish to the Bishop. **The candidates will stand after their name is called and remain standing until all candidates are called.**
26. The Bishop will then give his **homily** from the center aisle. It is highly desirable that the Bishop have a lapel **microphone** both for his homily and for the Rite of Confirmation.
27. When the Bishop has finished his homily he will stand at the presider's chair with miter and crozier and invite those to be confirmed to stand for **the renewal of baptismal promises**. The response to the baptismal promises "I do" and the "Amen" follow the questions and should be carefully explained so that the candidates will make their answers in a strong, clear voice as a true proclamation of their faith. **This should be addressed to the candidates at the rehearsal.**
28. The Bishop will then remove mitre and crozier and extend hands over the candidates for the laying on of hands.
29. The Bishop in mitre and crozier once again will return to the front of the altar for **the anointing with Chrism**, which is to be administered in silence for the first several candidates. Music then begins and is sung softly throughout the remainder of the anointing of candidates until the time the Bishop finishes washing his hands.
30. For the actual Confirmation, the candidates are to line up in front of their sponsors from one side of the Church at a time and approach the Bishop from the side aisles **(and not the center aisle)** so as to be perpendicular to the congregation for the reception of the Sacrament. They will move up onto the altar platform with the sponsor behind and to the left of the candidate. Placing their right hand on the shoulder of the candidate, the sponsor will speak the candidate's Confirmation name clearly to the Bishop prior to the anointing. The Bishop will confirm all the candidates from one side before turning and confirming the candidates from the other side.

**N.B.:** During rehearsal, please remind the candidates to go right to the Bishop when it's their time to be confirmed; don't make the Bishop reach way out to anoint you. Also remind the sponsors to give the confirmation name immediately upon reaching the Bishop in a loud enough voice so the Bishop can hear the name over the music.

Pastors or Confirmation coordinators should identify any candidate or sponsor who, due to mobility issues, is unable to come forward or ascend the steps into the sanctuary, informing the Bishop or Master of Ceremonies BEFORE Mass begins. The Bishop will anoint the candidate at the pew or in the aisle as needed.

31. The Bishop will **wash his hands** at the chair after the anointing. Servers should take the lavabo set and towels (one for the Bishop's lap and one to dry his hands), as well as sliced lemon and sliced white bread arranged on a dish, and approach the Bishop at his chair.
32. The **General Intercessions** (see attached) are taken directly from the Ritual for Confirmation with an additional intention for vocations and placed at the ambo before Mass begins. They are to be read by the deacon if one is present. If no deacon is present, the intercessions may be read by a selected member of the Confirmation class or a lector.
33. A deacon or concelebrating priest is to **prepare the altar** in the customary manner when the General Intercessions are concluded.
34. The Bishop will receive **the offertory gifts** in front of the altar with the deacon and altar servers. Only bread and wine should be brought forward in the offertory procession.
35. The Bishop will choose the Eucharistic Prayer at the Mass. All priests concelebrate the Mass with the Bishop.
36. Music should not unnecessarily prolong the Mass.
37. After the Bishop distributes **Holy Communion** to his deacons, he and the selected priests will distribute Holy Communion to the faithful, beginning with the newly confirmed and their sponsors.
38. After the Bishop has concluded distributing Holy Communion, he goes to the chair, where **the servers wash his hands**. The water from this washing is to be poured down the *sacrarium* or on the ground outside.
39. The order of the recession is the same as the order of procession.

# Ritual of Confirmation:

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## **RENEWAL OF BAPTISMAL PROMISES**

After the homily the candidates stand and the Bishop questions them:

**Bishop:** *Do you renounce Satan, and all his works, and all his empty promises?*

**Candidates respond together:** *I do.*

**Bishop:** *Do you believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth?*

**Candidates:** *I do.*

**Bishop:** *Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary, suffered death and was buried, rose again from the dead, and is seated at the right hand of the Father?*

**Candidates:** *I do.*

**Bishop:** *Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who today through the Sacrament of Confirmation is given to you in a special way just as he was given to the Apostles on the day of Pentecost?*

**Candidates:** *I do.*

**Bishop:** *Do you believe in the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting?*

**Candidates:** *I do.*

The Bishop accepts their Profession of Faith by proclaiming the faith of the Church:  
*This is our faith. This is the faith of the Church. We are proud to profess it in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

**The whole congregation responds:** *Amen.*

## THE LAYING ON OF HANDS

Bishop faces the people and with hands joined, says:

*Dearly beloved, Let us pray to the God the almighty Father, for these, his adopted sons and daughters, already born again to eternal life in Baptism, that he will graciously pour out the Holy Spirit upon them to confirm them with his abundant gifts, and through his anointing conform them more fully to Christ, the Son of God.*

All pray in silence for a short time.

Then the Bishop lays hands over all those to be confirmed (as do the Priest who are associated with him). But the Bishop alone says:

*Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who brought these your servants to new birth by water and the Holy Spirit, freeing them from sin: send upon them, O Lord, the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete; give them the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and fortitude, the spirit of knowledge and piety; fill them with the spirit of the fear of the Lord. Through Christ our Lord.*

The whole congregation responds: *Amen.*

## THE ANOINTING WITH CHRISM

The deacon to the right side of the Bishop holds the Chrism for the Bishop. Each candidate goes to the Bishop, wearing his or her nametag with the **Confirmation name written in a large print on top and baptismal name below**. The sponsor places his right hand on the candidate's shoulder and announces the Confirmation name to the Bishop.

The Bishop dips his right thumb in the Chrism and makes the sign of the cross on the forehead of the one to be confirmed, as he says:

**Bishop:** *N. (Confirmation name), be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit.*

**The newly confirmed responds:** *Amen.*

**Bishop:** *Peace be with you.*

**The newly confirmed responds:** *And with your spirit.*

## General Intercessions

**Bishop:** My dear brothers and sisters, let us humbly pray to God the almighty Father and be of one mind in our prayer, just as faith, hope and charity, which proceed from his Holy Spirit, are one.

**Deacon or Minister:**

For these his servants,  
whom the gift of the Holy Spirit has confirmed:  
that, planted in faith and grounded in love,  
they may bear witness to Christ the Lord by their way of life,  
let us pray to the Lord.

*R. Lord, we ask you, hear our prayer.*

For their parents and sponsors:  
that by word and example  
they may continue to encourage  
those whom they have sponsored in the faith  
to follow in the footsteps of Christ,  
let us pray to the Lord.

*R. Lord, we ask you, hear our prayer.*

For the Holy Church of God,  
together with Francis our Pope, Christopher, our Bishop, and all the bishops:  
that gathered by the Holy Spirit,  
the Church may grow and increase in unity of faith and love  
until the coming of the Lord, let us pray to the Lord.

*R. Lord, we ask you, hear our prayer.*

For the whole world:  
that all people, who have one Maker and Father, may acknowledge one another as  
brothers and sisters, without discrimination of race or nation, and with sincere hearts  
seek the Kingdom of God, which is peace and joy in the Holy Spirit,  
let us pray to the Lord.

*R. Lord, we ask you, hear our prayer.*

**Bishop:** O God, who gave the Holy Spirit to your Apostles  
and willed that through them and their successors  
the same Spirit be handed on to the rest of the faithful,  
listen favorably to our prayer,  
and grant that your divine grace,  
which was at work when the Gospel was first proclaimed,  
may now spread through the hearts of those who believe in you.  
Through Christ our Lord.

*R. Amen.*

## **CONFIRMATION FORM 2019**

Date of Confirmation: \_\_\_\_\_

Deanery: \_\_\_\_\_

Place and town of Confirmation: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Date when rehearsal took place: \_\_\_\_\_

Parishes included in this ceremony: \_\_\_\_\_

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Priest con-celebrants: \_\_\_\_\_

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Deacon of the Word: \_\_\_\_\_

Deacon of the Altar: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Confirmandi: \_\_\_\_\_

Is there a meal prior to the confirmation? \_\_\_\_\_

If so where and when? \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO THE BISHOP'S OFFICE ONE WEEK  
PRIOR TO THE CONFIRMATION CEREMONY EITHER BY EMAIL OR FAX.**

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