

**DIOCESE OF FORT WORTH**  
**SUMMARY OF PASTORAL NOTES FOR THE CELEBRATION OF THE**  
**SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION**

Revised April, 2012

The following notes have been compiled to help pastors and the parish ministers to prepare for the celebration of Confirmation in their parish. Please see Pages C-1 to C-15 in Sacramental Guidelines for full information on the Sacrament of Confirmation.

**1. GENERAL INFORMATION:**

- 1.1 Bishop Vann will always celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation during Mass. He will be accompanied by a deacon; however, if the parish has one *deacon, he will serve as the Deacon of the Word. If the parish has more deacons, they are to function as deacons of the Word and of the Altar* at the Mass. The Bishop's attending deacon will serve as Master of Ceremonies and assist the Bishop at the Sacrament of Confirmation.
- 1.2 The Mass text will normally be the proper ritual Mass for Confirmation found in the sacramentary, with the preface of the Holy Spirit, using red vestments. However, on the Sundays of Advent, Lent and Eastertide, and on other solemnities, the Mass is that of the day with the appropriate colored vestments.
- 1.3 Three scripture readings will always be proclaimed, taken only from among those selections found in the lectionary for the ritual Mass of Confirmation, or in the case of a solemnity, from the Mass of the day.
- 1.4 All priests present are invited to concelebrate the Eucharist with the bishop.
- 1.5 It is appropriate that two of the candidates read the lessons, but only if they are well prepared and able to proclaim the text. Otherwise, a trained lector should be used.
- 1.6 Enough altar servers should be provided to carry the cross and candles in the procession, handle the bishop's miter and pastoral staff, wash the bishop's hands, and perform the normal duties of serving Mass.
- 1.7 Communion under both kinds will always be distributed to those being confirmed and to the whole congregation.  
*N. B. Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion should be instructed that Clergy (the Bishop, concelebrating priests, and deacons) are the Ordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, and as such will always serve Holy Communion when they are present at Mass.*

- 1.8 At the end of the ceremony, the bishop and the ministers will leave first in procession, followed by the newly confirmed.
- 1.9 **Bishop Vann requests that a copy of the liturgy (including all hymns, readings, and any additions to or changes in the liturgy) be sent to the Office of Worship ([dwarner@fwdioc.org](mailto:dwarner@fwdioc.org)) for review 2 weeks prior to the date of Confirmation.** Please see the attached Liturgy planning form.

## 2. THE CANDIDATES:

- 2.1 Age of Confirmation: In the Diocese of Fort Worth, candidates for the Sacrament of Confirmation must be 15 years of age or older.
- 2.2 Preparation: The guidelines of the Diocesan Office of Religious Education are to be followed.
- 2.3 Confirmation name: Long standing tradition is for those preparing for the Sacrament of Confirmation to choose the name of a Saint as a Confirmation name. This must be the name of a recognized Saint. If a candidate does not choose a Saints name for Confirmation, he/she will use their Baptismal Name.. In either case the candidate's proper name should be used and not a nickname (Robert instead of Bob). Please encourage those whose given name is not a Christian name to choose a Confirmation Name.

- 2.4 Dress: While no particular type of dress is required, candidates and sponsors should be told ahead of time that Confirmation is an important event in their life and they should dress appropriately. (At some Confirmations candidates have appeared in T-shirts and jeans and have been embarrassed because they did not seem to realize ahead of time that everyone else would be dressed more formally.) Please remind young ladies that they should dress modestly. Strapless dresses, very short dresses, and those with low neck lines should be discouraged.

Red or white robes (provided by the parish) are acceptable, and in fact often help to alleviate problems associated with improper attire..

- 2.5 Candles: According to the Rite, candidates *do not* carry candles, they *do not* wear stoles, nor should any ceremonies, e.g. pins, etc., not included in the Rite of Confirmation, be added; certificates or other awards should be presented at the reception after the ceremony.

## 3. THE RITE:

- 3.1 The Rite as presented in the Roman Pontifical will be followed **exactly**. Please consult the Office of Worship before planning any changes.
- 3.2 The Gospel is proclaimed by a deacon (or one of the concelebrating priests if no deacon is present).
- 3.3 Immediately after the Gospel, the pastor, D.R.E., or Confirmation director, presents the candidates to the bishop. If the number is small, they may be called by name; if the number is large, the whole group is presented at one time. The candidates rise when presented and remain standing until all candidates are called and the Bishop invites them to be seated.
- 3.4 The bishop addresses the candidates in the homily.
- 3.5 Following the homily, the bishop leads the candidates in the renewal of the Baptismal promises.
- 3.6 The candidates then approach the bishop singly, with their sponsors (and their parents, if desired).
- 3.7 The sponsor, or if desired, one of the parents, presents the candidate to the bishop, with the candidate's full Baptismal name plus the Confirmation name.  
  
E.g., "Bishop Vann, I am pleased to present Robert Paul" or "Mary Frances Elizabeth". (They may need to read from a small card for this. However the card has no special significance and should not be used if not needed.)
- 3.8 During the anointing the sponsor places his/her right hand on the candidate's shoulder.
- 3.9 For the anointing, the bishop wears the miter and carries the pastoral staff. The deacon stands beside him with the container of chrism.
- 3.10 Those in charge of preparing the candidates should be sure that they are aware of the two responses they will be asked to make during the reception of the anointing: "**Amen**" and "**And with your spirit.**"
- 3.11 After the anointing, the bishop's hands are washed. A drop of liquid soap or a cut lemon in the bottom of a dry basin and plenty of water in a separate pitcher or ewer are sufficient.
- 3.12 Normally the deacon makes the intercessions of the Prayers of the Faithful. It is also permissible for one or two of the newly confirmandi to read the

intercessions. It is also appropriate that some of the newly confirmed present the gifts in the procession at the offertory.

- 3.13 The bishop will wash his hands again after he distributes Holy Communion
- 3.14 The person in charge of the music for the ceremony should meet with the bishop immediately beforehand to explain which parts of the liturgy will be sung, etc.

#### 4. MUSIC (SEE ALSO CONFIRMATION MUSIC GUIDELINES):

- 4.1 Since the celebration of Confirmation is a solemn occasion in the parish, as much singing as possible should take place. Although a choir is always appropriate, care must be taken that the congregation has full opportunity to share in the singing. Music and singing may be included at every proper place in the liturgy, but *at least* the following parts of the Mass must *always* be sung:

- Entrance song
- Gloria (when used)
- Responsorial psalm
- Alleluia
- Acclamations at the Eucharistic Prayer: Holy, Holy, Holy; Memorial Acclamation; and the Great Amen
- Communion processional
- Recessional (sung or instrumental)

If there are, e.g. ten or fewer candidates, music is not needed during the anointing. If there are a great number of candidates, music is appropriate during the anointing of the candidates. However, it should not be so loud that the bishop and candidate cannot hear one another.

#### 5. SPONSORS:

- 5.1 The requirements for the sponsors of Confirmation are spelled out in Canons 892 and 893. It is most appropriate that it be the Baptismal sponsor if that is possible. The sponsor must be at least sixteen years old, *already confirmed*, of either sex, and of course a practicing Catholic.

- 5.2 Parents *may not* be sponsors at Confirmation, but they may present their son or daughter if there is also a sponsor.

## 6. CHECK LIST OF ITEMS TO PREPARE BEFOREHAND:

- Everything normally needed for Mass
- Sufficient chalices for Communion under both kinds
- Bread and wine prepared for the offertory procession
- A large dry bowl with a drop of liquid soap (or a cut lemon) in the bottom, a pitcher with plenty of water, and a large towel
- The Roman Missal and Lectionary arranged for the proper texts
- The bishop will bring the Chrism, vessel to be used during Confirmation, and the Rite of Confirmation
- Servers for the Mass and 2 servers to assist the bishop with miter and pastoral staff

## 7. MISCELLANEOUS:

- Parking: Please provide a parking place for the bishop.
- Confirmation certificates are **not** distributed during the liturgy.
- **Please designate (ahead of time) someone to take charge of arranging families who want photos to expedite their movement to and from the picture-taking area. Also please remind families to have someone with a camera ready when it is their turn for a photo.**
- The bishop will be happy to pose with the confirmation candidates for candid photos, **one per family after the service**, but not for professional photographers.
- Bishop Vann would prefer that the confirmation candidates wear a name tag or that sponsors show a card with the name of the confirmation candidate as it is sometimes difficult to hear or understand the names spoken by the sponsors. Please instruct Sponsors to speak clearly when presenting their candidate and not to whisper.
- Sample intercessions are attached.

**If there are any questions regarding Confirmation Liturgies, please call Deacon Don Warner (817/560-3300 ext 302) or e-mail @ [dwarner@fwdioc.org](mailto:dwarner@fwdioc.org).**

These intercessions are offered as an **example**. They may be used or others may be composed.

*UNIVERSAL PRAYER/PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL*

(from the Rite of Confirmation)

30. The general intercessions follow, in this or a **similar form** determined by the competent authority.

Bishop        My dear friends,  
                  let us be one in payer 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, let us pray to the Lord:

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, let us pray to the Lord:

For the holy Church of God, in union with Benedict our pope, Kevin 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, let us pray to the Lord:

For all men and women of every race and nation, that they may acknowledge the one God as Father, and in the bond of common fellowship seek his kingdom, which is peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, let us pray to the Lord:

Bishop        God our Father, you sent the 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.  
                  Through Christ our Lord.