

DIRECTIVES FOR CONFIRMATIONS
FALL, 2021

Effective: September 1, 2021

The following guidelines will be observed for the celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation in the Diocese of Bridgeport through December 31, 2021.

GENERAL NORMS

1. The conferral of the sacrament of Confirmation can occur in **two ways**: (1) within a Celebration of the Word of God, or (2) within Holy Mass. The choice of celebration will be made by the respective pastor of each parish.
2. **Delegation will no longer be given to Pastors** for the celebration of Confirmation in their parishes, unless there is an emergency situation.
3. **Masks** must be worn by everyone in the congregation, as per the state mandate. Candidates may remove their masks at the moment of being anointed but must replace their masks before returning to their seats.
4. **White** gowns may be worn by all Candidates for Confirmation.
5. Each candidate is to **wear a nametag** with his or her **Confirmation name** printed legibly in large script.
6. **Sponsors** may stand adjacent to their candidate during the rite of Confirmation. However, whether they place their hands on the shoulder of their candidate will be dependent upon the consent of the candidate and his or her parents.
7. The **minimum number of candidates** needed for the celebration of Confirmation in any parish is **30**. If a parish has fewer than 30 candidates in a given year, they may combine with another parish to reach that number or hold off the Confirmation ceremony until the following year.

NORMS FOR CELEBRATING THE SACRAMENT

8. **Altar servers**: The conferral of Confirmation in either manner requires **five** altar servers when a bishop is the celebrant; only **three** altar servers are necessary when a priest is the celebrant. If this number cannot be met, please inform the bishop's Master of Ceremonies a few days in advance. For a bishop, required servers are a cross bearer, two candle bearers and two insignia bearers (miter and crozier); white gloves are worn by the insignia bearers and are brought to the parish by the Bishop or the Master of Ceremonies. All altar servers should be vested and ready for the rehearsal **30 minutes before** the ceremony begins.

9. **Incense** is not used during the celebration of Confirmation.
10. If available, a **lapel microphone** with fresh batteries should be made available for the Bishop's use.
11. **A stock of Sacred Chrism** is normally brought by the Bishop or the Vicar General, but not by a visiting bishop. The stock of chrism is to be placed on a table to be set up where Confirmation will be administered.
12. In the Diocese of Bridgeport, vestments of a red color are to be worn for the Ritual Mass. The Bishop will wear a red cope for the conferral of confirmation within a Celebration of the Word of God. On those occasions when the Ritual Mass is prohibited, vestment color must correspond to that of the liturgical day.
13. The **prayers** for Mass depend on the ritual context:
 - a. When Confirmation is conferred within Holy Mass, Mass texts are taken from *Ritual Masses for the Conferral of Sacraments of Christian Initiation: 4. For the Conferral of Confirmation*, found in the Third Typical Edition of the *Roman Missal for Use in the Dioceses of the United States of America* (2010 edition). However, on the Sundays of Advent, Lent, and Easter, on Solemnities, the days within the Octave of Easter, the Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed (All Souls' Day), on Ash Wednesday, and during Holy Week, the Mass texts of the respective day are to be used¹.
 - b. When Confirmation is conferred within a Celebration of the Word of God, the *Order for the Conferral of Confirmation without Mass* contained in Chapter Two of the *Order of Confirmation for Use in the Dioceses of the United States of America* (2016 edition) is employed.
14. The **readings** for the Service or Mass must be indicated on the planning sheet.
 - a. If the *Ritual Mass for the Conferral of Confirmation* is used, the readings are taken from those contained in the *Ritual Masses for the Conferral of Christian Initiation: 4. Confirmation*, found in numbers 764-768 of Volume IV of the Second Typical Edition of the *Lectionary for Mass for use in the Dioceses of the United States of America* (2002 Edition). On those occasions when the Ritual Mass is prohibited, the readings are taken from the mass of the day.
 - b. If the *Order for the Conferral of Confirmation without Mass* is used, the readings are taken from those found in the *Ritual Mass of Confirmation* as specified above, with the traditional order of readings being followed in choice selection, "that is, from the Old Testament, the Apostle, and the Gospel"².

¹ GIRM, n. 372

² OC 37.

15. All candidates and sponsors must be seated in church 10 minutes before the start of Mass. This will allow the Bishop to address the sponsors and the congregation before the start of Confirmation.
16. After the proclamation of the Gospel, the Pastor/Administrator will go to the ambo and present the candidates to the Bishop **either as a group or by individual name**.
 - a. There will be **no formal response** by the Bishop to the presentation of candidates, since the ritual for Confirmation does not envision it.
 - b. The pastor may ask the congregation to show its approval with a round of applause, followed by an instruction for all to be seated.
17. When the Bishop has finished his homily, he will stand at the chair and invite those to be confirmed to stand for the renewal of baptismal promises.
18. The Bishop will disinfect his hands before the anointing begins. He will **stand** for the anointing with Chrism (1) at the presider's chair; (2) in front of the altar (if space permits) or (3) in another prominent place in the sanctuary (never in the main aisle).
19. The Bishop will use sterilized cotton balls when confirming each candidate. A station should be set up on the bishop's right side that will have the chrism, the clean cotton balls and a bowl in which used cotton balls can be placed.
20. Candidates will stand before the Bishop to receive the sacrament. Music must always be played during the anointing. Appropriate Sacred Music for this particular moment in liturgical ritual is the chant "*Veni, Creator Spiritus*", or an equivalent.
21. The Bishop will **disinfect his hands** after the anointing, using alcohol and a towel that should be placed on a table where he has confirmed, on his left side.
22. **The Universal Prayer of the Faithful:**
 - a. The Universal Prayer of the Faithful follows the *Anointing with Chrism*. The formula contained in the *Order of Confirmation for Use in the Dioceses of the United States of America* (2016 edition) is employed.
 - b. After the minister of Confirmation says the invitatory, the individual intercessions are to be proclaimed by the Deacon of the Word, or in his absence, by the Reader.
23. The candidates should **not** receive Holy Communion prior to everyone else. There should be no distribution of the chalice during the celebration of Confirmation.
24. Only in the absence of Ordinary Ministers of Holy Communion should **Extraordinary Ministers** of Holy Communion be assigned.

ADDITIONAL NORMS

25. The pastor's remarks after Communion, along with thanking those involved in preparing the confirmandi for the sacrament, should include instructions for photographs and, if applicable, any reception that may take place.
26. The Bishop will be available for **pictures** immediately after Mass.
 - a. The Confirmandi should remain in their places at the end of Mass or Service. A designated place should be identified in Church where the photographs will be taken, maintaining a line formation.
 - b. Parents and sponsors who wish to be included in photographs should be instructed to wait until all the confirmandi have been with the Bishop.
27. It is expected that the parish provide a **stipend** for the Bishop and his Master of Ceremonies. These are used for charitable works and business travel. A minimum amount of \$400 per session is suggested for the Bishop and \$100 per session for the Master of Ceremonies. Please make the Bishop's stipend check out to the Most Reverend Frank J. Caggiano and please call the office to confirm the name of the Master of Ceremonies a week prior to the celebration.