

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

Revised March, 2008

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.
- 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.

- 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) for review 2 weeks prior to the date of Confirmation.**

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).

- 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 while the bishop addresses them.
- 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 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 also with you.**"
- 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 It is appropriate that during the prayers of the faithful one or two candidates make the intercessions. It is also appropriate that some of the candidates 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 sacramentary and lectionary arranged for the proper texts
- The bishop will bring the Chrism 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.

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

GENERAL INTERCESSIONS (from the Rite of Confirmation)

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

Bishop My brothers and sisters:
 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 our brothers and sisters,
 confirmed by the gift of the Spirit,
 that with faith and love as the foundation of their lives
 they may be witnesses to Christ the Lord.
 Let us pray to the Lord.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Deacon or minister:
 For the parents and godparents
 who brought these newly-confirmed to the faith,
 that by word and example they may encourage them
 to follow the way of Jesus Christ.
 Let us pray to the Lord.....

Deacon or minister:
 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.
 Let us pray to the Lord.....

Deacon or minister:
 For the whole world,
 that all who have but one Father, one Maker,
 may see beyond racial and national differences
 to their common brotherhood,
 and seek the kingdom of God in the peace of 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 the faith and love that spread everywhere
 when the gospel was first preached
 continue to grow
 through the hearts of all who believe.
 [We ask this] through Christ our Lord. [All: Amen.]