



ARCHDIOCESE OF MIAMI

Office of the Archbishop

GUIDELINES FOR THE PREPARATION OF THE CONFIRMATION LITURGY

The celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation remains an important event in the life of the Church, including those to be confirmed and their families, the sponsors, and the parish community.

“Those who have been baptized continue on the path of Christian initiation through the sacrament of confirmation. In this sacrament they receive the Holy Spirit whom the Lord sent upon the apostles at Pentecost. This giving of the Holy Spirit conforms believers more fully to Christ and strengthens them so that they may bear witness to Christ for the building up of his Body in faith and love” (Rite of Confirmation, Introduction).

Great care should be taken that there is adequate preparation for all those involved.

PREPARATION

Role of the Pastor

- ✦ To welcome the bishop to the parish and provide hospitality.
- ✦ To ensure that the sacristy is prepared with space for the bishop to vest, sufficient hangers for vestments and clothing and water are available.
- ✦ To provide hospitality for visiting clergy.
- ✦ To be seated proximate to the bishop as directed by the Master of Ceremonies.
- ✦ To proclaim the Gospel in the absence of a deacon.
- ✦ To introduce the candidates, attesting to their preparation for the sacrament (see prepared text below).
- ✦ To stand adjacent to the bishop during the rite.

Rehearsal

A rehearsal should be held for all liturgical ministers, the Confirmation candidates, and their sponsors which help ensure familiarity with the movement of the Mass and rite of Confirmation. The rehearsal should include walking through the entire Rite of Confirmation with all participants.

Scripture Readings and Roman Missal Prayers

The Ritual for Confirmation states that the Readings may be taken from the Mass of the Day. The readings of the day will always be used unless stated otherwise in a letter to the Pastor. When Confirmation is celebrated in a Sunday Vigil, Sunday, or Solemnity during the Easter Season, the **readings and prayers prescribed for that day must be used.**

Music

Confirmation is a celebration of faith within the midst of the community of the Church. Music carefully selected and well-rendered can heighten the celebration and strengthen the faith of the assembled believers. Please be sure to plan for music. **Additionally, the Responsorial Psalm MUST always be sung.**

Confirmation Candidates Preparation

Confirmation candidates are discouraged from serving as lectors, ushers, cantors, altar servers, etc., at the Confirmation liturgy so that their role as candidates of the sacrament is clear.

Name Tags

Name tags for the candidates are recommended using a large font (at least 18-point font) for clarity. Please refrain from using sticker-type nametags, use tags that can easily be clipped or pinned. Candidates with long hair should be reminded not to cover their nametag with their hair.

Parking

A place should be reserved for the bishop's car near the church/rectory and should be clearly marked.

Choosing Ministers

Those selected for various ministries within the Confirmation liturgy should be individuals who are prepared and who regularly serve in this capacity for the community.

Lectors

While it may seem desirable to include Confirmation candidates as proclaimers of the Word, it is more effective to encourage their full participation in other ways. Freed from the anxiety of reading well or being in the right place at the right time, candidates are better able to reflect on the importance and meaning of the celebration and even feel supported by the witness of adult members who serve as readers. A fully trained lector from the parish is preferred. A trained lector can proclaim the scriptures with dignity and clarity.

Acolytes

Six trained altar servers for the Confirmation liturgy is ideal.

Deacon

The participation of a deacon (permanent or transitional) is welcomed. The deacon serves as a minister to the bishop, proclaims the Gospel, presents the sacred chrism to the bishop, and assists the bishop as the Mass rubrics specify.

Credence Table

A large credence table is necessary, holding:

- Chalice and paten for the bishop
 - A second chalice and paten with hosts for concelebrating priests
 - Additional chalices or communion cups with purificators for the assembly's communion (*if it is a practice already in place to receive under both species*). These are brought to the altar during the preparation of the altar; the chalices (except for the bishops) should be prefilled with wine.
- Corporals and purificators
- Ciboria – enough for the orderly distribution of the Body of Christ.
- Cruet of water.
- One or two lemons, quartered, two hand towels for the bishop, a pitcher of water, and a bowl for the washing of the bishop's hands after the anointing; bread is no longer used. This is in addition to the small bowl and towel for the lavabo during the offertory.

Table for the Gifts

A table, if there is not one already used for the gifts, should be placed in the nave of the Church. On the table should be one or two large ciboria with a sufficient number of hosts for the Mass and the cruet of wine.

CONFIRMATION LITURGY

Procession of Candidates

If the parish plans to invite the candidates to process into the church, the candidates should be lined up and ready to process fifteen minutes before the start of Mass. The pace of their entrance should not be slow, nor should it resemble a graduation ceremony. The candidates should be in their seats at least ten (10) minutes before the start of Mass to allow a period of silence and prayer. The **bishop** expects to enter the aisle of the church at the time set for the start of the Mass.

The *Confiteor* will always be recited, and a *Kyrie (Lord, have mercy/Señor ten Piedad)* will always be **sung**.

Liturgy of the Word

Within the Liturgy of the Word, the *Responsorial Psalm* and *Gospel Acclamation* should *always* be sung.

Gospel

The deacon proclaims the Gospel. In his absence, the pastor goes to the bishop and asks for the blessing, proclaims the Gospel, and brings the Book of the Gospels to the bishop to be revered.

Presentation of the Candidates

After the Gospel, and before the homily, the Pastor presents the candidates for Confirmation in these or similar words:

The Pastor invites the candidates for Confirmation to **please stand.**

Archbishop (Bishop) <N. name>, the parish community of <N. parish name> wishes to present to you its young men and women [and adult candidates] who have prepared and are ready to receive the fullness of Christian Initiation in the Sacrament of Confirmation. Each candidate has been well-instructed and is accompanied by a sponsor. It is my privilege to present them to you at this time.

Arzobispo (Obispo) <N. nombre>, la comunidad de <N. nombre de the parroquia>, desea presentarle a sus jóvenes que se han preparado y están dispuestos a recibir la plenitud de la Iniciación Cristiana en el Sacramento de la Confirmación. Cada candidato ha sido bien instruido y está acompañado por un padrino. Es un privilegio para mí presentárselos en este momento.

The Confirmation candidates remain standing until the bishop invites them to be seated.

Homily

The bishop will preach the homily at which time there should be no distractions such as walking around or taking photographs. The parish ushers should encourage a sense of respect and decorum.

Procession to the Bishop

Candidates for confirmation are to form **two (2) lines** when approaching the bishop for anointing. It is a good practice to have an adult staff member in the middle of the center aisle helping the candidates to approach as closely as possible to the bishop for the anointing. The staff member should remind the sponsor to place their hand on the shoulder of the candidate as they step before the bishop. Additionally, the staff member should be sure the candidates' name tag is visible and not obstructed. If the parish has an official photographer, it should be noted that there will be two (2) lines and they would need to be on both sides to capture photos.

Anointing with Chrism

The anointing is accompanied by a dialogue between the Bishop and Candidate. Background music should accompany this rite.

General Intercessions

This is the role of the deacon; however, if no deacon is present, it is desirable to have one reader, or if prayers are multilingual then it is desirable to have one reader for each language. The intercessions should include petitions for the Church, civil authorities, those in need, and the needs of the local community related to the celebration. There should be **no more** than five (5) petitions. This is an especially opportune time to include petitions for religious and priestly vocations.

Recessional

If the candidates are to process out, they would do so following the liturgical procession. The candidates would simply bow in the pew step out into the aisle and process following the bishop.

Formal Photographs

Photographs with the bishop and candidates can be arranged before or after the Confirmation liturgy – arrangements need to be made beforehand with the Bishop's Master of Ceremonies. Please rehearse the picture setup for the sake of time and to ensure an attractive memento. No more than two (2) groups – two (2) pictures maximum.