

DIRECTIVES FOR CONFIRMATIONS

2019

Effective: September 1, 2019

The following guidelines will be observed for the celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation in the Diocese of Bridgeport.

GENERAL NORMS

1. **White** gowns will be worn by all Candidates for Confirmation.
2. Each candidate is to **wear a nametag** with his or her **Confirmation name** printed legibly in large script.
3. The **minimum number of candidates** needed for a Confirmation ceremony to be held 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.

PREPARATION FOR MASS

4. Confirmation always takes place during the celebration of **Mass**.
5. **Altar servers:** The Confirmation Mass requires **five** altar servers when a Bishop is the celebrant. (Only **three** altar servers are necessary when the Vicar General is the celebrant.) If this number cannot be met, please inform the Bishop's Master of Ceremonies a few days in advance. They are:
 - a. A cross bearer, two candle bearers and two insignia bearers (miter and crozier).
 - b. All altar servers should be vested and ready for the rehearsal 30 minutes before the ceremony begins.
 - c. White gloves are worn by the insignia bearers and are brought to the parish by the Bishop or the Master of Ceremonies.
6. **Incense is not used during Confirmation Mass.**
7. **Other items to be prepared:**
 - a. A water cruet plus an additional lavabo set;
 - b. A purificator and lemon juice;
 - c. The sacred vessels for Mass with sufficient number of hosts;
 - d. If available, a lapel microphone.

8. **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 the credence table with one purificator.

THE CONFIRMATION MASS

9. **Red vestments** are normally worn when the Ritual Mass of Confirmation is celebrated. However, during the seasons of Advent, Lent, Easter, and all Solemnities, the color of the vestments must correspond to the liturgical day. On Sundays during Ordinary Time, red vestments are worn.
10. The **prayers** for Mass may be taken from the Ritual Mass for Confirmation. However, during the seasons of Advent, Lent, Easter, and on all Solemnities and Sundays, the prayers of the respective day must be used.
11. The **readings** for the Mass need to be chosen in advance of the ceremony and indicated on the planning sheet.
 - a. The readings may be taken in part or in whole from the Rite of Confirmation [i.e., "Lectionary for Mass" 2002 Edition, Volume IV, pages 330 etc.].
 - b. During the weekday celebration of Mass in the seasons of Advent, Lent and Easter, the readings may be taken from either the respective day or from the Rite of Confirmation.
 - c. On all Sundays and Solemnities, the readings of the day must be used.
12. **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 Mass.**
13. After the proclamation of the Gospel, the Pastor goes to the ambo and presents 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.
14. 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.
15. The Bishop will **sit for the anointing with Chrism (1) at the presider's chair; (2) in a chair that is placed in front of the altar (if space permits) or (3) in a chair placed in another prominent place in the sanctuary (never in the main aisle). Confirmandi will kneel before the Bishop to receive the sacrament, kneeling on a pad that will be placed before the chair.** The Pastor will hold the Vessel with the Chrism standing on the Bishop's right. Music **must always** be played during the anointing.

16. The Bishop will **wash his hands** after the anointing. Servers should take the lavabo set and towel, as well as lemon juice and approach the Bishop before he returns to his chair.
17. Ordinarily there should be an **offertory procession** during which the candidates can participate.
18. The candidates should **not** receive Holy Communion prior to everyone else. If Holy Communion is to be distributed under both species, please prepare a sufficient number of chalices with a corresponding purificator.
19. Only in the absence of Ordinary Ministers of Holy Communion should **Extraordinary Ministers** of Holy Communion be assigned.

ADDITIONAL NORMS

20. 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.
21. The Bishop will be available for **pictures** immediately after Mass.
 - a. If those who have been confirmed are processing out of church at the end of Mass, they are always to **follow at the end of the closing procession**. They should immediately walk to the place where the photographs will be taken, maintaining a line formation.
 - b. If those who have been confirmed are not processing out of church at the end of Mass, they are to remain at their places until photographs can begin.
 - c. Parents and sponsors who wish to take or to be included in photographs should be instructed to proceed immediately to the place where the photographs will be taken.
22. 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.