

Confirmation Guidelines

with Archbishop William Lori



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The Sacrament of Confirmation

The Most Reverend William E. Lori has asked that the following guidelines be observed for the celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation:

PREPARATION BEFORE MASS BEGINS:

1. Please indicate on the form where the Archbishop should vest, and please have a lapel microphone ready for him at that location.
2. Confirmation takes place at Mass. The **prayers** may be taken from the Ritual Mass for Confirmation except on the Sundays of Advent, Lent and the Easter season, solemnities, when the prayers of the day must be used.
3. **White** or **red vestments** may be worn when the Ritual Mass of Confirmation is celebrated.
4. The **readings** for the Mass need to be chosen in advance of the ceremony. They may be taken in whole or in part from the Rite of Confirmation which is found in the “Lectionary for Mass” 2002 Edition, Vol. IV, pages 330 and on. On the Sundays of Easter, and on solemnities, the prayers and readings from the day must be used. During the Easter season, Old Testament readings are not used. The first reading is always from the Acts of the Apostles.
5. Normally the Archbishop’s master of ceremonies brings a stock of **Sacred Chrism** for the anointing; however, additional Chrism from the parish is appreciated. The stock of Chrism is placed on the credence table with a purificator.
6. In **preparation for the Mass**, please arrange: a water cruet plus an additional lavabo set, purificators and a lemon sliced on a dish, as well as the sacred vessels for Mass with a sufficient number of hosts. Please make sure that the number of vessels, including ciboria in the tabernacle, corresponds to the number of Holy Communion stations during Mass. If the Holy Communion is to be distributed under both species, please prepare chalices with purificators.
7. Confirmation Mass requires six **altar servers**: cross bearer, insignia bearers (miter and crozier), book bearer, and two candle bearers (acolytes) if possible. Please inform the master of ceremonies a few days in advance. Vimps or gloves are worn by the insignia bearers and are normally brought to the parish by the master of ceremonies. **Incense** is ordinarily not used at this Mass. *It is kindly requested that all altar servers be vested and ready for the rehearsal 30 minutes before the ceremony begins.* This rehearsal is not a “training session,” hence it is expected that the altar servers will already have a good knowledge of their role and function prior to the Confirmation Mass

8. Please have a **missal stand** ready for the Archbishop to use at the altar during the Liturgy of the Eucharist.
9. Only if needed, **extraordinary ministers** of Holy Communion are to be assigned Communion stations in the church. As ordinary ministers of the Eucharist, all concelebrating priests and attending deacons are to be assigned Communion stations.
10. Each candidate is to **wear a nametag** with his or her Confirmation name printed legibly in large script. Candidates should be gathered in an auditorium or the church hall half an hour before the Mass. The Archbishop will visit with them briefly (unless the time and schedule will not permit him to do so). During that session, the Archbishop generally asks the candidates questions on the basics of the faith. **PLEASE NOTE:** *The candidates and their sponsors should be pre-seated in the church before the liturgical procession begins.*
11. Generally speaking, the use of photography during the Mass is discouraged so that the solemnity of the celebration is maintained. **Photography** and **videography** by a professional are acceptable, providing they are done discretely. Moreover, the Archbishop will also be available for pictures immediately after Mass (preferably in the hall or outside the church.)
12. In large group Confirmations, candidates may **be seated** with their sponsors and families throughout the church. In smaller Confirmations, candidates should be seated in pews on one side with their sponsors behind them. In that case, the newly confirmed will be the first to receive Holy Communion.
13. It is requested that if a **program** is prepared, the USCCB Guidelines for the Reception of Holy Communion be included.

THE CONFIRMATION MASS:

14. The liturgical **procession** includes (in this order) the cross bearer, acolytes, [deacon of the Gospel], [attending deacons], concelebrants, pastor, master of ceremonies, archbishop, deacon chaplains, insignia bearers, and the book bearer.
15. If the **Kyrie** is sung, the choir is asked to do so after *Confiteor* and *Absolution*. The **Gloria** follows after the *Kyrie*, except in Advent and Lent.
16. The **Collect** is taken from the ritual Mass or from the Mass of the day.
17. The **Readings** need to be proclaimed from the *Lectionary* rather than from loose sheets.
18. Seasonally appropriate **music** should be selected. For example, during the Easter Season it is recommended that at least the processional and recessional hymns be Easter hymns. The same would apply to Advent and Lent.

19. If the deacon, who ordinarily proclaims the **Gospel**, is not present, the Pastor or another assigned priest does so. *The Gospel Book is brought to the Archbishop to be revered after the Gospel is proclaimed.*
20. The Pastor then goes to the ambo and invites the candidates to **stand**. He **presents** the candidates to the Archbishop as a group. The pastor may choose to read the individual names of the candidates only if there are fewer than 30.
21. The Archbishop will then give his **homily** from the center aisle. It will be necessary that the Archbishop have a lapel or handheld **microphone** both for his homily and for the Rite of Confirmation.
22. When the Archbishop has finished his homily he will stand in front of the altar and invite those to be confirmed to stand for **the Renewal of Baptismal Promises**.
23. The Archbishop will then invite those to be confirmed to kneel for **the laying on of hands** and everyone else to stand.
24. The Archbishop, himself, will stand for **the anointing with chrism**, which is to be administered in silence or with very soft instrumental music, so that the Archbishop's words to those being confirmed (and their responses) are easily heard. **PLEASE NOTE:** It is kindly requested that candidates come up close to the Archbishop for the anointing, allowing him to easily reach the candidate's forehead, and ensuring a smooth flow of the ceremony without any waiting time between candidates.
25. The Archbishop will **wash his hands** at the chair after the anointing. Servers should take the lavabo set and towel, as well as sliced lemon arranged on a dish, and approach the Archbishop at his chair.
26. The **General Intercessions** are to be taken directly from the Ritual for Confirmation with an additional one for vocations (*see attached*). A few other intercessions may be added. If there is Deacon, he should be the one to read them.
27. The Deacon is to **prepare the altar** in the customary manner when the General Intercessions are concluded. According to the local custom, a collection during the preparation of the altar and gifts may be taken.
28. The Archbishop will receive **the gifts** in front of the altar with the deacon and servers.
29. One of the following **prefaces** is to be used: Holy Spirit (in Votive Masses, #9 A or B) or Pentecost Sunday.
30. The Archbishop will say or intone, "***The mystery of faith,***" just as the principal celebrant does at every Mass.
31. It is necessary to know before Mass whether the "***Our Father***" is to be sung.

32. After the Archbishop distributes **Holy Communion** to his deacons, he and the pastor will distribute to the ministers in the sanctuary.
33. Communion under both species is optional. If the Precious Blood is to be distributed, it is appropriate that there be assigned two ministers of the Chalice to every one minister of the Hosts. Those assigned to distribute the **Precious Blood** to the newly confirmed need to go immediately to their assigned stations after they have themselves received Holy Communion.
34. After the Archbishop has concluded distributing Holy Communion, he goes to the chair, where **the servers wash his hands**. The water from this washing is to be poured down the *sacrarium* or on the ground outside.
35. After the Prayer after Communion but before the Solemn Blessing and Dismissal, the Pastor (or another suitable minister) goes to the ambo and makes any general **announcements**, if desired, and also asks that applause be held until the end of the thank-yous.
36. The order of the **recessional** is the same as the opening procession, except that the newly confirmed should follow **after** the Archbishop to the reception area.

Rite of Confirmation:

RENEWAL OF BAPTISMAL PROMISES

After the homily the candidates stand and the Archbishop questions them:

Do you reject Satan, and all his works, and all his empty show?

The candidates respond together: *I do.*

Do you believe in God the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth?

I do.

**Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was born of the Virgin Mary, suffered death and was buried,
rose again from the dead, and is seated at the right hand of the Father?**

I do.

**Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who came upon the Apostles at Pentecost
and today is given to you sacramentally in confirmation?**

I do.

**Do you believe in the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting?**

I do.

The Archbishop confirms their profession of faith by proclaiming the faith of the Church:

**This is our faith. This is the faith of the Church.
We are proud to profess it in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

The whole congregation responds: *Amen.*

THE LAYING ON OF HANDS

The concelebrating priests stand near the Archbishop. He faces the people (*all stand, candidates kneel*) and with hands joined, sings or says:

**My dear friends,
in Baptism God our Father gave the new birth of eternal life
to his chosen sons and daughters.
Let us pray to our Father that he will pour out the Holy Spirit
to strengthen his sons and daughters with his gifts
and to anoint them to be more like Christ the Son of God.**

All pray in silence for a short time.

The Archbishop and the priests who will minister the sacrament with him lay hands upon all candidates (by extending their hands over them). He alone sings or says:

**All-powerful God,
Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
by water and the Holy Spirit
you freed your sons and daughters from sin
and gave them new life.
Send your Holy Spirit upon them
to be their Helper and Guide.
Give them the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of right judgment and courage,
the spirit of knowledge and reverence.
Fill them with the spirit of wonder and awe in your presence.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. R. *Amen.***

THE ANOINTING WITH CHRISM

The deacon brings the chrism to the Archbishop. Each candidate goes to the Archbishop wearing his or her nametag with the confirmation name (which may be the baptismal name) written in a large print. The sponsor places his right hand on the candidate's shoulder and gives the candidate's name to the Archbishop; or the candidate may give his own name.

The Archbishop dips his right thumb in the chrism and makes the sign of the cross on the forehead of the one to be confirmed, as he says:

N.(Confirmation name), be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit.

*The newly confirmed responds: **Amen.***

*The Archbishop says: **Peace be with you.***

*The newly confirmed responds: **And with your spirit.***

General Intercessions

Archbishop:

My dear friends: 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:

1. For **us / these** sons and daughters of God, confirmed by the gift of the Spirit, that **we / they** give witness to Christ by lives built on faith and love, let us pray to the Lord:
R. - Lord, hear our prayer.
2. For **our / their** parents and godparents who led **us / them** in faith, that by word and example they may always encourage **us / them** to follow the way of Jesus Christ, let us pray to the Lord: *R.*
3. For the Holy Church of God, in union with **Pope Benedict XVI**, with **Archbishop William Lori** 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: *R.*
4. For all people, of every race and nation, that they may acknowledge the one God as Father, and in the bond of communion seek his kingdom, which is peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, let us pray to the Lord: *R.*
5. For the young people that Christ is calling to the priesthood and the consecrated life, that they may hear his voice and receive the grace to respond with courage and generosity, let us pray to the Lord: *R.*

Archbishop:

God our Father, you sent your 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.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. *R. Amen.*

These intercessions are required for the Mass, others might be added.