



Confirmation Rite Guidelines

Archdiocese of Los Angeles

The following guidelines include the rite of Confirmation with instructions for celebration in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. This resource is intended to assist priests, Confirmation coordinators, catechists, and liturgical planning teams.

Confirmation is a sacrament of initiation that strengthens Baptism, not a “graduation” or “presentation” ceremony.

Section I: General Instructions

- Candidates for Confirmation:** The bishop’s scheduled visit to the parish during the seasons of Lent or Easter is to confer the sacrament of Confirmation on teenagers, and unless otherwise determined, on adult candidates of the parish. Teenaged Confirmation candidates must have participated in and completed the two-year Confirmation preparation process.

Catechized adult Catholics seeking completion of their initiation through Confirmation will be confirmed either in the parish or at a regional celebration. Adults in the RCIA process baptized at the Easter Vigil are to be confirmed by the presiding priest during the same liturgy.

- Parish Participation:** The catechetical and pastoral preparation should in some way include the entire parish community and not merely the candidates for Confirmation (*The Order of Confirmation*, no. 4). The parish community should be made aware that some of its members are preparing for Confirmation. This may be accomplished through:
 - announcements through the bulletin, website, letters from the pastor, etc.,
 - preaching throughout the year,
 - intercessions for the candidates in the Universal Prayer on Sundays,
 - and ceremonies presenting the candidates to the parish community.

- Sponsors:** A baptismal godparent is not only allowed but is in fact desired as the Confirmation sponsor in order to emphasize the connection between Baptism and Confirmation (Canon 893.2).

Pastors should see that sponsors are spiritually qualified (OC, no. 6). The sponsor for any candidate may be male or female and is to be sufficiently mature (at least 16 years of age), a fully initiated Catholic living a life of faith that befits the role, and is not prohibited by Canon Law from exercising the role of sponsor. A parent may not act as a sponsor for his or her child (Canon 874).

Individuals selected as sponsors must be Catholics who are able to receive the Sacraments of the Church. Sponsors are expected to receive Holy Communion at the Confirmation Mass.



4. **Names:** The *Order of Confirmation* makes no mention of choosing or using a special Confirmation name (neither the Code of Canon Law nor the Catechism of the Catholic Church makes such a mention). The implication is that a candidate is confirmed with the same name by which they were baptized, emphasizing Confirmation as the strengthening of Baptism.
5. **Attire for Candidates:** Candidates should dress appropriately, befitting the solemnity of the Confirmation liturgy. Candidates may wear red or white clothing. A uniform dress code, such as robes, eliminates questionable attire. If robes are used, they must not resemble graduation gowns. Garments resembling a stole should not be worn by Confirmation candidates, since the stole is the distinctive garb of the ordained minister. The economic situations of individuals should be noted when requiring a specific dress code.
6. **Photography:** Please see the current Photography Policy Guide.
7. **Parking:** A place should be reserved for the bishop's car and his Master of Ceremonies (MC) near the rectory and clearly marked. It is requested that the bishop's office should be notified in advance where the reserved parking space will be located.
8. **Rehearsal:** A rehearsal for all liturgical ministers, the Confirmation candidates, and their sponsors is strongly recommended to ensure familiarity with the rite of Confirmation. The rehearsal should include at the least the following:
 - a brief explanation of the Mass and the meaning of Confirmation,
 - an explanation on the importance of the Eucharistic Prayer
 - a reminder to pray,
 - instructions on seating for candidates, families, and guests,
 - a review of the gestures and postures during the different parts of the Mass,
 - a walkthrough of the Confirmation rite, particularly the cues for candidates to respond ("Amen" and "And with you spirit" in the rite),
 - having a singer/music director review of the music that will be used during the mass
 - and an explanation of the photography policy.
9. **Worship/Participation Aids:** A printed booklet or pamphlet to assist with liturgical participation is recommended. The worship aid should include all the music to be sung by the assembly and must include all copyrights, including for the Lectionary if the readings are printed. For more information, please visit: <https://www.usccb.org/es/node/48245>.
10. **Music:** Music carefully selected and well rendered can enhance the celebration and strengthen the faith of the participants. The priority in selecting music is that it should be music known to the Confirmation candidates in order to be sung with spirit and fervor during the liturgy. The music selected should be liturgically appropriate and pastorally suitable. Songs that speak of baptismal dignity, the Paschal Mystery, the call to mission, and empowerment by the Holy Spirit are most appropriate.



When the Confirmation is celebrated during the season of Lent, music should be selected in keeping with the liturgical season (“Alleluia” should **not** be sung).

In the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, music written by David Haas and Fr. Cesáreo Gabaráin are not to be sung.

- 10.1 Prelude Music:** Prior to the liturgy while the candidates are being seated, instrumental or sung music may accompany this action to create a festive and reverent atmosphere. There should be a definite break between the prelude and the entrance song.
- 10.2 Introductory Rites:** If a Rite of Sprinkling is used, priests or deacons may participate, depending upon the design of the Church. Music, either instrumental or sung, should accompany the rite, taking into account the baptismal symbolism of the action. The *Gloria* is sung **AFTER** the Rite of Sprinkling (*Roman Missal*, Appendix II, no. 6).
- 10.3 Liturgy of the Word:** The Responsorial Psalm and Gospel Acclamation should be sung.
- 10.4 Rite of Confirmation:** Anointing with sacred Chrism is accompanied by a dialogue between the bishop and the candidate. Check with the bishop if music will be allowed during the anointing of the candidates. If music is permitted by the bishop, only very soft, background instrumental music should be used—singing renders inaudible the words spoken by the bishop and candidates.
- 10.5 Liturgy of the Eucharist:** The acclamations of the Eucharistic prayer should be sung. The Lamb of God is a litany that accompanies the Fraction Rite; thus, the invocation and response may be repeated as long as the action demands. The communion song should foster a sense of unity, be simple and not demand great effort.

Again, copyright permissions must be obtained and properly acknowledged for all music printed in a worship aid.

Section II: Preparation of the Order for the Conferral of Confirmation

The Order for the Conferral of Confirmation requires careful preparation by a team that should include parish priests, deacons, Confirmation coordinator/youth minister, catechists, members of the liturgical planning committee, music ministers, and some of the candidates themselves.



1. **Readings from the Lectionary and Prayers from the Roman Missal:** The Liturgy of the Word is celebrated in the usual way. The readings may be taken from the Mass of the day or from the Ritual Mass of Confirmation in the Lectionary (nos. 764-768).

When the sacrament of Confirmation is celebrated at a Sunday anticipatory Mass (Mass on Saturday after 4 p.m.), Sunday, or Solemnity during the Lenten or Easter Seasons, **ALL** the READINGS and PRAYERS OF THE MASS OF DAY MUST BE USED.

If Confirmation is celebrated on a weekday during the Lenten or Easter Season, either the readings of the day or alternate readings for the Ritual Mass of Confirmation may be chosen. If Confirmation is celebrated on a weekday during the Easter season, the PRAYERS from the Ritual Mass of Confirmation must be chosen. All daily Easter season readings are most appropriate for the Confirmation liturgy. **If alternate readings are chosen, the confirming bishop must be notified prior to the Confirmation on the form the parishes send to his office.**

2. **Choosing Ministers:** Those selected for various ministries within the Order of Conferral of Confirmation within Mass should be individuals who are prepared and regularly serve in this capacity for the community. **The Confirmation candidates should not serve in any liturgical ministries**—as singer, psalmist, altar server, or lector—during the celebration of the Rite of Confirmation within Mass. However, the newly confirmed may bring forward the gifts.
 - **Lectors:** The scriptures must be proclaimed with dignity and clarity by persons trained as lectors and familiar with the local parish liturgical space and equipment.
 - **Acolytes (Altar servers):** Six trained servers are necessary for the Confirmation liturgy: a thurifer (incense bearer), a cross bearer, two candle bearers, a miter bearer, and a crozier bearer.
 - **Deacon:** The participation of a deacon (permanent or transitional) is highly desired. The deacon proclaims the Gospel, presents the sacred Chrism to the bishop, and assists the bishop as the rubrics specify.
3. **Bishop's Arrival at the Parish:** Upon the bishop's arrival, the pastor/administrator should welcome him and invite him to the rectory.
4. **Bishop's Master of Ceremonies (MC):** The MC will not attend any rehearsal. Please follow his instructions regarding the liturgy, since he knows the preferences of the bishop. The MC will normally arrive earlier than the bishop to work with altar servers; please ask the sacristan, servers, and other volunteers to arrive no later than 30 minutes prior to the start of Mass. When the MC is a Deacon, he will not be serving as deacon for the Mass, either as the Deacon of the Word or Deacon of the Altar. Please inform the MC of any special circumstances (handicapped, special needs etc) so he is prepared to assist and can inform the bishop.



5. **Multilingual Liturgy:** The multicultural nature of the assembly should be considered during the process of planning readings, ritual texts, and music. Please contact the Office for Divine Worship of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles for guidelines on multilingual liturgies.

SACRISTY PREPARATION:

A designated sacristan should attend to the following details:

1. Vestments:

- **Easter Season:** For Sunday vigils (Masses on Saturday after 4 p.m.), Sundays, and Solemnities on which Confirmation is celebrated during the Easter Season, WHITE vestments are to be worn (except on Pentecost). When Confirmation is celebrated during weekdays in the Easter Season, RED or WHITE vestments may be worn. The bishop will normally bring his own vestments.
- **Lenten Season:** For Sunday vigils and Sundays of Lent, VIOLET vestments are to be worn. When Confirmation is celebrated during the weekdays of Lent, RED vestments may be worn.

2. **Presider's Chair:** The presider's chair is to be located in a place that is visible to the entire assembly. Chairs for concelebrating priests may be set in the sanctuary, but preferably not on either side of the bishop. If there is a deacon assisting in the liturgy, he is to be seated to the right of the bishop. Altar Servers do not sit next to the bishop. A chair should be provided for the bishop's Master of Ceremonies and should be located near the servers.

3. **Microphone:** If the parish is equipped with wireless microphones, one should be available for the bishop in the place in which he is to vest. Otherwise, a standing microphone should be in place at the presider's chair with a cord sufficiently long to extend to the first pews of the assembly.

4. **Ritual Books:** The Roman Missal and Lectionary should be set up before the liturgy begins. The Bishop's MC will set the ribbons in the Roman Missal. The Book of the Gospels should be carried in the procession by a deacon and placed flat upon the altar. In the absence of a deacon, a lector carries the Book of the Gospels. The Lectionary should not be carried in the procession. The bishop will provide the *Order of Confirmation* ritual book.

5. **Credence Table:** A large credence table is necessary, holding:

- a large bowl of water and *aspergillum* or special branch if the Rite of Sprinkling Rite is taking place (in place of the Penitential Act),
- a corporal for the altar,
- a chalice and purificator for the bishop,
- extra chalices with purificators for the Communion of the faithful (**at the moment, distribution of the Precious Blood to the lay faithful is suspended**),
- a sufficient number of empty ciboria,



- thurible, charcoal, and incense (if used, please check with bishop's MC)
- cruet of water
- a quartered lemon and bread for the bishop to clean his hands after the anointing
- an ewer (pitcher of water), a large bowl, and two towels for the bishop to wash his hands twice (after the anointing, and during the offertory)

6. **Table for the Gifts:** The table is located in the nave of the Church and should have on it one or two large ciboria with a sufficient bread and container(s) with sufficient wine (**distribution of the Precious Blood to the lay faithful is currently suspended**).

Section III: Liturgy, Order of Celebration

The Confirmation candidates and sponsors should be in their designated places in the pews prior to the scheduled time so that the ceremony is able to begin promptly at the appointed hour.

Order of Procession

1. Thurifer (Incense Bearer) (if used)
2. Cross Bearer
3. Two Candle Bearers
4. Lector(s)
5. Deacon with the Book of the Gospels (if available)
6. Concelebrating Priests
7. Bishop
8. Master of Ceremonies (MC)
9. Crozier Bearer and Miter Bearer

INTRODUCTORY RITES

Entrance Song: When the bishop arrives at the altar, he may incense the altar. The entrance song or background music should accompany the incensation of the altar.

Rite of Sprinkling: When Confirmation is celebrated during the Easter Season and to highlight the connection between Confirmation and Baptism, the Rite of Sprinkling may replace the Penitential Act (*Roman Missal*, Appendix II).



If the Rite of Sprinkling is used, the bishop says this prayer at the conclusion of the action (*Roman Missal*, Appendix II, no. 5):

May almighty God cleanse us of our sins,
And through the celebration of this Eucharist
Make us worthy to share at the table of his Kingdom.

R. Amen.

Gloria: The *Gloria* is sung **after** the Penitential Act or Rite of Sprinkling.

LITURGY OF THE WORD

Scripture Readings: Refer to Part II, Section 2: Scripture Readings and Part II, Section 3: Choosing Ministers - Lectors, for assistance in the planning and preparation of the liturgy of the word. All scripture readings should be proclaimed from the ambo. As in every liturgy, a period of reflective silence should follow each reading, before the responsorial psalm and the gospel acclamation.

Gospel: A deacon or his absent a priest proclaims the Gospel; if a deacon is not available, one of the priests proclaims the Gospel. The priest or deacon receives a blessing from the bishop while the bishop is seated. Incensation of the book normally takes place. The Book of Gospels is brought back to the bishop for reverencing after the proclamation of the Gospel is completed. All remain standing until the bishop has revered the Gospel book. He may also bless the faithful with the book, for which all remain standing.

ORDER FOR THE CONFERRAL OF CONFIRMATION

Presentation of the Candidates

21. After the Gospel, the Bishop and the priests who will be ministers of the sacrament with him take their seats. The pastor or another priest, deacon, or catechist presents the candidates for Confirmation.

The following or similar words may be used:

Bishop <name>, the parish community of <parish name here> 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. I invite the candidates for Confirmation to stand, please.

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

Homily



Renewal of Baptismal Promises¹

23. After the homily, ONLY the candidates to be confirmed stand as the bishop questions them. The candidates respond together: I do.

Bishop: Do you renounce Satan and all his works and all his empty promises?

Candidates: I do.

Bishop: Do you believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth?

Candidates: I do.

Bishop: 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?

Candidates: I do.

Bishop: Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who today through the Sacrament of Confirmation is given to you in a special way just as he was given to the Apostles on the day of Pentecost?

Candidates: I do.

Bishop: Do you believe in the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting?

Candidates: I do.

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

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

People: Amen.

¹ Taken from the *Order of Confirmation (2016)*.



The Laying on of Hands

24. Then the bishop (with priests by his side) standing, facing the people, with his hands joined, says:

Bishop:

Dearly beloved,

Let us pray to God the almighty Father, for these, his adopted sons and daughters, already born again to eternal life in Baptism, that he will graciously pour out the Holy Spirit upon them to confirm them with his abundant gifts, and through this anointing conform them more fully to Christ, the Son of God.

All pray in silence for a short time.

25. The bishop lays hands over all those to be confirmed (by extending his hands over them). The bishop alone sings or says:

Bishop:

Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who brought these your servants to new birth by water and the Holy Spirit, freeing them from sin: send upon them, O Lord, the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete; give them the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and fortitude, the spirit of knowledge and piety; fill them with the spirit of the fear of the Lord. Through Christ our Lord.

People: Amen.

The Anointing with Chrism

26. The deacon (if no deacon is present, a priest) brings the sacred Chrism to the bishop. The bishop pours Chrism into a Chrism container a smaller glass bowl, which the deacon or priest holds at his right side—the bishop will indicate his preference. Each candidate goes to the bishop.

- The bishop stands in the center at the entrance to the sanctuary to anoint the candidates.
- The candidates come forward to the bishop, two by two (shoulder to shoulder) and stand as near to him as possible.
- The sponsor comes forward and stands behind the candidate with his or her right hand on the candidate's right shoulder.
- As one candidate departs, after being anointed, the next one immediately steps forward with sponsor behind him or her. Every effort should be made to prevent gaps in the line. Catechists may be positioned near the front of the line to ensure the smooth flow of the candidates.
- The parish should consider the needs of those with physical limitations and decide the best placement of them in the line. Please notify the bishop before the liturgy if he has to go to a candidate physically unable to come to him.



- The candidates or their sponsors tell the bishop his or her name. Candidates may also wear name tags the bishop can read.

27. The bishop 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:

Bishop: <name of Confirmandi> be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit.

The newly confirmed respond: Amen.

Bishop: Peace be with you.

The newly confirmed respond: And with your spirit.

28. If priests assist the bishop in conferring the sacrament, all the vessels of Chrism are brought to the bishop by the deacon or other ministers. Each of the priests comes to the bishop, who gives him a vessel of chrism.

The oil is left on the forehead of the candidates.

If any individual has received the sacrament of Confirmation at an earlier age but have participated in the two-year Confirmation preparation, the bishop will impart a blessing on them. They should be positioned behind the candidates and should be identified as those who will receive a blessing only when they reach the bishop.

After the last person has been confirmed, two altar servers approach the bishop with the pitcher of water, bowl, lemon, bread, and two towels. At this time, those who will read the Universal Prayer (Prayer of the Faithful) should approach the ambo and be in place.

Universal Prayer or Prayer of the Faithful: The deacon offers the Universal Prayer. Exceptions can with clearance from the confirming bishop's office. If the petitions are multilingual, it is desirable to have one reader for each language. The Universal Prayer is included in the ritual book in both English and Spanish. Please see *Order of Confirmation* ritual book for preset intercessions.

LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

Presentation of the Gifts: It is most appropriate for some of the newly confirmed to present the gifts. Only the bread and wine and money or other gifts that have been collected for the Church or the poor are to be brought forward (GIRM, no. 73); anything other than that which will be consumed or used for the glory of God is not to be included in this procession. Dramatization prolonging the simple offertory procession prescribed by the liturgy is not appropriate.



Eucharistic Prayer: The decision about which Eucharist Prayer to pray is reserved to the bishop. The four forms of the Eucharistic Prayer for Masses for Various Needs and Occasions is particularly appropriate for Confirmation.

Communion: Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion should only be used if there is not a sufficient number of Ordinary Ministers of Holy Communion (priests and deacons) present.

During the procession, communicants should have their hands together in prayer and walk without haste. When receiving Holy Communion, the Communicant bows his or her head before the Sacrament as a gesture of reverence and receives the Body of the Lord from the minister. The host may be received either on in the hand or on the tongue, at the discretion of each communicant (GIRM, no.160). Sponsors are expected to receive communion.

Silent Reflection: Sufficient quiet time should be planned after the distribution of Holy Communion. The use of this time solely for additional music or songs is to be discouraged. If a meditation song is included, sufficient silent time should also be included.

Prayer after Communion: Before the prayer, silence is observed.

Witness Talks: The practice of inviting newly confirmed young people to give “witness talks,” or testimonies, at the Confirmation Mass is not permitted.

CONCLUDING RITE

Announcements: If there are any announcements, they should be brief and follow the Prayer after Communion. Expressions of gratitude to all who have helped in the Confirmation process are more fittingly printed in the worship aid and not voiced during the liturgy.

Final Blessing: The bishop will impart either the “Solemn Blessing” or the “Prayer over the People” from the Rite of Confirmation. The assembly will respond “Amen” to the Blessing.

Recessional: The ministers leave in the order given for the processional. The newly confirmed remain in their seats.

Photographs of the Newly Confirmed: The confirming bishop will take one photograph with each newly confirmed person and his or her sponsor immediately after Mass. See Photography Policy.

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