



Guidelines for Confirmation

1. If Bishop Jacques Fabre-Jeune, CS, is the celebrant, he will usually bring his own vestments. Please have sufficient altar servers to assure a miter and crozier bearer are present in such cases (6 servers if incense is used; 5 servers otherwise, when possible). If a dean or vicar is the celebrant, please inquire with him about vestment choices. In general: one server for incense (if used), one for the cross, two for processional candles (if used), and one each for miter and crozier, respectively, is needed, but if the bishop is not the celebrant, then miter and crozier bearers are not needed.
2. If Bishop Fabre is your celebrant, he will arrive for the ceremony at least 45 minutes beforehand. He likes to spend some time speaking informally with the candidates in small group conversations (8 to 10 at a time) before Mass begins. This meeting time is just for the candidates without parents, catechists and sponsors. Please make sure there two adults present with the youth. If possible, please have the candidates gathered in one place **separate from the church** to facilitate this dialogue. The bishop will conclude these conversations in time for the candidates to process into the church if this is done. If another celebrant is chosen, please contact him for his preferences.

In general, please advise the candidates to be able to answer why they chose the confirmation name they did, why they are requesting the Sacrament of Confirmation at this time in their lives, and how they want to continue their faith journey. Please have the candidates knowledgeable about the renewal of baptismal promises and the anointing with chrism as meaningful and important symbols.

About one month before the ceremony, it would be helpful to have the candidates view the 7-minute “Momentum Studios” video presentation on the Sacrament of Confirmation. It may be found on *The Catholic Miscellany* YouTube channel at [youtube.com/watch?v=-t7oYIHb8Cg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-t7oYIHb8Cg).

3. At Sunday celebrations, on solemnities and major feasts, the vestment color of the season, or the day will be used with the readings of the day.
4. At weekday confirmations (on non-feasts and solemnities) **red vestments should be used**. Please note that the **Gloria** should *always* be included since it is required by use of the Ritual Mass for the Conferral of Confirmation, *even* in Advent and Lent. The

readings may be taken from the texts for Confirmation in the Lectionary for Mass (nos. 764-768).

5. While the church greatly respects the uniqueness and individuality in each of its members, it holds that modesty is a fruit of the Holy Spirit and the “Teaching modesty to children and adolescents means awakening in them respect for the human person.” (Catechism of the Catholic Church). Candidates should dress appropriately, befitting the solemnity of the Confirmation liturgy. Young men are expected to wear a dress shirt with a tie and dress shoe, sport coat/suit jacket are optional. Young women should wear a modes dress, skirt and blouse, pant suit or dress pants and blouse and dress shoes. The following are not appropriate: tennis shoes/sneakers, jeans, tee shirt or polo shirts.
6. After the proclamation of the Gospel, the pastor should introduce the candidates to the celebrant. It is not necessary to call their names at this point, but ***the pastor should testify that the candidates are prepared and ready to receive the sacrament.*** If the pastor wishes, however, the candidates may be called by name.
7. When Bishop Jacques Fabre-Jeune is the celebrant, the candidates are to stand across the front of the church (between the first row of pews and the sanctuary), with the sponsor standing directly behind. If the number of candidates exceeds the space, they should line up in the same manner after the first row of candidates is anointed (repeat as necessary). Sponsors should place their left hand on the candidate’s right shoulder. Bishop will approach the candidates for the anointing.

It is preferable that the candidates wear easily legible name tags, the sponsor says the candidate’s confirmation name to the Bishop. This will enable Bishop to call the candidates by their confirmation name as he anoints them. If names tags are not used, then the candidate should hand the priest or deacon of the parish a name card as they approach the Bishop for the same purpose.

The celebrant will hold the sacred chrism for the anointing.

Some background music or a hymn should be played and/or sung during the anointing.

8. Lemons and bread and/or a bowl of soapy water should be available for the celebrant to remove the sacred chrism from his hands after the anointing. The celebrant will ***stand*** for these ablutions, either at the chair or the place from which he has confirmed.

Note that if lemons and bread are used then one lemon sliced into 4 wedges is sufficient. The bread may be of any quality, but it should be torn into crouton size pieces. It is preferable to have a server pour water over the celebrant’s fingers after this ablution as he/she would at the offertory.

9. Please note that Eucharistic Prayers I, II & III all have special inserts for confirmation Masses. It would be helpful if these inserts would be available/inserted in the missal before the Mass. These inserts may be downloaded at: charlestdiocese.org/divine-worship-and-sacraments/guidelines-for-confirmation. In most circumstances, the

celebrant will use Eucharistic Prayer II and pray the Preface of the Holy Spirit II. Please have the Roman Missal prepared for this. However, if confirmation takes place within a Mass that has a proper preface, i.e., a solemnity such as the Assumption, or All Saints or in a Sunday Mass falling within a privileged season such as Advent, Christmas, Lent or Easter, then one of the prefaces prescribed for that Mass will be used. In general, outside of Advent, Christmas, Lent and Easter seasons, unless “Prop Pf,” (Proper Preface) appears in the ordo, the celebrant will pray the Preface of the Holy Spirit II.

10. After the Prayer after Communion, the pastor is invited to speak, announcing a reception, and/or congratulating the confirmandi. The celebrant usually has some comments of his own to make after the pastor speaks.
11. Usage of incense, choice of music, procession and seating of the candidates and their sponsors are all at the discretion of the individual parish. Note, however, that music should be appropriate to the season/feast/solemnity and occasion. Some parishes seem to include the Litany of Supplication (Litany of Saints) at some point in the Mass. If this is done, please **INCLUDE** the names of both the baptismal and confirmation patron saints of the confirmandi as well as the patron saint of the parish.

Additionally, there should always be some music during the incensations if and when incense is used. This music may be simply instrumental. Please do not expect the celebrant to incense the altar and gifts at the Preparation of the Altar and Gifts in absolute silence. *Please instruct musicians to provide music until the incensations are completed, even if simply instrumental.*

The parish should make sure that the confirmandi have access to a printed program during the Mass (if one is provided), and it is expected that they participate vocally in the Mass (responses, hymns, prayers).

12. Please inform the young people that they should:
 - Know their confirmation name and why they chose it;
 - Know the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit;
 - Listen carefully to the readings during Mass;
 - Offer their responses to the baptismal promises (“I do”), the prayer of chrismation (“AMEN”) and the Sign of Peace (“And with your spirit”) with some **enthusiasm**;
 - Not chew gum before or during the ceremony.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

Usually, a confirmation ceremony should have at least 20 candidates. A smaller number must be approved by the celebrant office when requesting a date. A small number in an average, or large parish *might* be scheduled at a Sunday Mass rather than on a weekday night since a mostly empty church does not support the solemnity of the occasion. Parishes with extremely small numbers might couple with a neighboring parish, or schedule only every other year. On weekday evenings the confirmation Mass might be scheduled at 6:00, 6:30 or 7:00 p.m. While dinner with the celebrant beforehand is appreciated, it is not necessary.