



DIOCESE OF ARLINGTON

Guidelines for Confirmation

Most Rev. Paul S. Loverde

Confirmation Liturgy Form

1. The Liturgy Preparation Form, completed with the aid of these guidelines, should be submitted to the Office of Divine Worship for approval by the **1st of the month in the month *prior to*** the scheduled Confirmation (forms for September Confirmations are due on August 1st, for October Confirmations on September 1st, etc.). The form is available from the Office of Divine Worship and can also be found as a PDF on the diocesan website.

Bishop Loverde sometimes prefers the celebration of Confirmation outside of Mass. For the Order of Confirmation (within Mass or outside of Mass) that is preferred for the date scheduled for your Parish, please contact the Office of Divine Worship. When Confirmation is to be celebrated outside of Mass, insert “N/A” into all sections of the Liturgy Form that are proper to Mass (for example, Offertory Hymn, etc.).

Program

2. The parish is to provide a draft of their program to the Office of Divine Worship for approval by the **15th of the month in the month *prior to*** the scheduled Confirmation (programs for September Confirmations are due on August 15th, for October Confirmations on September 15th, etc.). The full text of the readings should be included in the program. All music should be contained in the program; that is, words and music should be provided in the program rather than the program referring to a hymnal. Bilingual and English only templates of the program are available by request from the Office of Divine Worship.

3. Approximately 5 minutes before the start of the liturgy, a cantor or parish representative should draw the assembly’s attention to the program and encourage its use as a means of active participation in the liturgy.

On the Day of Confirmation

4. Please reserve a parking spot for Bishop Loverde. Parking space is not to be a handicapped spot. Also, please prepare a separate room at the parish where Bishop Loverde may vest.

5. Timeline on the day of Confirmation:

30 minutes before the start of Confirmation

- Master of Ceremonies meets with Sponsors (in a separate room; please provide a translator as necessary)

25 minutes before the start of Confirmation

- Altar servers vested and ready to meet with the Master of Ceremonies in the sacristy

15 minutes before the start of Confirmation

- Final preparations

6. *The liturgy is to start promptly at the scheduled time.* The Candidates should be in place before the liturgical procession begins. If the Candidates will process into the Church, the procession of Candidates, which is not part of the liturgical procession, should be completed before the scheduled time for the liturgy. Usually ten to fifteen minutes is required to seat the Candidates.

Meeting with the Candidates

7. Bishop Loverde does not meet with the Candidates prior to Confirmation (this meeting occurs only when Bishop Burbidge presides).

Reception

8. A reception of light refreshments is to be provided after the Confirmation.

Pictures

9. Professional Photographers and Fees for Pictures: Professional photographers are permitted at the liturgy. However, the Diocese asks that there be no professional photographer at the reception in order to ensure the efficiency of movement in the line for photographs with the Bishop. There should be no fee for photos of the newly Confirmed.

10. At the Liturgy: Photographers should not distract, obstruct or interfere with the liturgy or with those who are participating in the liturgy. Photographers should maintain a respectful distance, and no photography should be taken from the center aisle. Still photography should not be taken during the Readings, the Homily, the Anointing, or the Consecration of the Eucharist.

11. Group Picture: A group picture with the Bishop may be taken when the group of newly Confirmed numbers 40 or less. The picture should be organized in advance.

12. At the Reception: Bishop Loverde will be available for individual pictures at the reception. Bishop Loverde will be seated for the pictures. Please prepare a location where the Bishop can easily greet the newly Confirmed and their families and pose for pictures with them.

Out of respect for those waiting in line, the Bishop will take two pictures per newly Confirmed: one picture with the newly Confirmed and the sponsor and one with the newly Confirmed and the family. After each of the newly Confirmed has been through the line, the Bishop will remain for any additional pictures.

It is essential that a representative (bilingual when necessary) from the parish is available to facilitate the flow of the line for the pictures.

13. Holy Cards: Bishop Loverde has holy cards to be distributed immediately after the liturgy. Please ask the newly Confirmed to remain in two orderly lines as they leave the church so that they can receive the cards from Bishop Loverde.

Preparation of the Candidates and of the Church

14. The Candidates should wear Confirmation Robes. If wearing Confirmation Robes presents a difficulty for the parish, the parish should contact the Office of Divine Worship.

15. Seating for the Candidates should be reserved in the front pews on both sides of the center aisle. The Candidates should be seated as a group in the front pews on both sides of the center aisle. The Sponsors should be seated as a group behind all of the Candidates.

16. The Master of Ceremonies, who is provided by the diocesan Office of Divine Worship, will arrange for the Bishop's vestments, the Chrism vessel, and the ritual text.

17. The Roman Missal is to be set to the appropriate prayers.

18. The Presider's chair should be appropriately arranged with the Deacon(s) beside the Bishop. If there are no Deacons, the Bishop sits alone at the Presider's chair. The concelebrating priests are to be seated together in the Sanctuary.

19. At the beginning of the liturgy, the altar should be clear except for an altar cloth and the necessary candles (GIRM nos. 304 and 307).

20. In addition to other appropriate items needed for the liturgy, the credence table should have the following for the Rite of Confirmation, in particular: a place ready for the Chrism vessel (brought by the Bishop), two clean purificators, a water pitcher, a basin, a hand towel, and one lemon cut in quarters in a bowl.

21. If Communion is to be distributed to the faithful under both Species, chalices other than the main chalice are to be filled with wine prior to the beginning of the liturgy and placed on the credence table. There are to be two stations for the consecrated wine for every one station of the consecrated bread (e.g., if there are four stations for the consecrated bread, then eight chalices must be used).

22. The gifts for the offertory procession should be both bread and wine, but only bread and wine. Four newly Confirmed should bring up the gifts (e.g., one cruet of wine and three ciboria with bread). The gifts should be placed on a table in the church.

23. A checklist to assist with preparations is available from the Office of Divine Worship.

Music

24. Norms set down in the General Instruction of the Roman Missal, the Order of Confirmation, and the USCCB's *Sing to the Lord* are to be followed. The Responsorial Psalm is sung from the Ambo from an appropriate book. Loose sheets of paper are not to be carried to the Ambo.

25. Music chosen for the liturgy should represent the cultures present in the gathered assembly and foster full participation by all present, especially the Confirmation Candidates. Candidates should be familiar with the music chosen and the music should be part of the rehearsal for Confirmation.

26. The following are ordinarily sung: the Responsorial Psalm, the Gospel Acclamation, Sanctus, Memorial Acclamation, Amen, and Lamb of God. In accordance with the Roman Missal, the Gloria is to be sung at celebrations of Confirmation except on Sundays of Lent.

27. If music will accompany the Anointing with Chrism, only soft instrumental music is to be played. If music is played, it is to accompany the entire ritual action of Anointing, and it must never overwhelm. The music should end as the Bishop finishes washing his hands and before he is ready to start the Universal Prayer (Prayer of the Faithful).

28. During the procession with the gifts, a hymn or instrumental music may be used.

29. Please observe the following:

- no verses of the Entrance Hymn are to begin once the Bishop has taken his place at the presider's chair;
- a maximum of three verses of the Responsorial Psalm are to be sung or read;
- the Offertory Hymn is to end at the same time as or before the Bishop has finished washing his hands at the altar during the preparation;
- the final Communion Hymn is to be finished before the altar is cleared after Holy Communion in order to allow for a period of silence.

Ministries

30. Candidates: The role of the Candidates is the reception of the Sacrament. Therefore, Candidates should not be chosen for liturgical ministries such as serving as altar servers, proclaiming Scripture, reading the petitions of the Universal Prayer (Prayer of the Faithful), cantoring, etc.

31. Servers: Five servers are needed for Confirmation with Bishop Loverde. The servers should be experienced and should be dressed appropriately. The servers should be assigned the following roles: cross bearer (who will also serve as book bearer), two candle bearers, miter bearer, and crosier bearer. The Master of Ceremonies will meet with the servers 25 minutes prior to the liturgy. Servers should already be vested at this time.

32. Readers: Readers, both of the Scripture readings and of the petitions (as necessary), should not be chosen from among the Candidates. The Gospel is proclaimed by a Deacon or, in the absence of a Deacon, the Pastor or Parish Administrator. A Deacon, if present, ordinarily reads the petitions of the Universal Prayer (Prayer of the Faithful). If no Deacon is present, a reader reads the petitions.

33. Ministers of Holy Communion: As Ordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, concelebrating Priests and assisting Deacons will distribute Communion. If needed, the Ordinary Ministers may be assisted by Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion. Extraordinary Ministers should be dressed appropriately and not selected from among the Candidates. If Holy Communion is to be distributed under both kinds, then there are to be two stations for the consecrated wine for every one station of the consecrated bread.

34. Ushers: Ushers should be available to welcome and direct people in the gathering space prior to the start of the liturgy, especially for those that may be visiting from other parishes. During the Anointing, Ushers are to assist the Candidates and their sponsors as they approach the Bishop to ensure efficient movement. As on Sunday, Ushers direct the normal flow of people for Communion.

Confirmation Liturgy

Prayers

35. For Confirmation within Mass, the Ritual Mass for Confirmation is used, *except* on the following days: solemnities of precept, Sundays of Advent, Sundays of Lent, Sundays of Easter, Holy Thursday, Easter Triduum, solemnities not of precept, All Souls, Ash Wednesday, weekdays of Holy Week, and days in the Octave of Easter.

Introductory Rites

36. Penitential Act: On the Liturgy Form, please indicate the requested form of the Penitential Act and which ministers will be involved: for example, “Confiteor (Bishop) with Kyrie (Choir).”

37. Gloria: The Gloria is sung or recited when Confirmation is celebrated, *except* on the following days: Sundays of Advent, Sundays of Lent, Easter Triduum, All Souls, Ash Wednesday, and weekdays of Holy Week.

Liturgy of the Word

38. Choice of Readings:

- *1 Corinthians 12:4-13, Psalm 104 (with 3 verses selected), and Luke 4:16-22a are the preferred Ritual Mass readings whenever the Ritual Mass is celebrated. The Ritual Mass is permitted on the following days: weekdays (except during Holy Week, the Triduum, the Easter Octave, on Ash Wednesday, on All Souls, and on Solemnities); optional and obligatory Memorials; Feasts; and Sundays of Christmas and in Ordinary Time. If other readings are selected, they should be chosen from the readings for the Rite of Confirmation (Lectionary for Mass, vol. 4, nos. 765-768).*
- On certain days of the year, the Ritual Mass may not be celebrated. Therefore, on the following days, the readings “of the day” are to be used: Solemnities; Sundays of Advent, Lent, and the Easter Season; Holy Week; the Triduum; the Easter Octave; Ash Wednesday; All Souls; and Solemnities. *However*, on these days, the proper New Testament reading is to be replaced with Acts 2:1-6, 14, 22-23, 32-33 (Lectionary for Mass, vol. 4, no. 765.2). If there is already a proper reading from Acts of the Apostles on such days, care should be taken that only one of the readings is from Acts.
- If Confirmation is celebrated outside of Mass, the readings from 1 Corinthians 12, Psalm 104, and Luke 4 may be used on any day.

39. Notes on the Responsorial Psalm: The number of verses in the Psalm is not to exceed three. The Psalm must be a translation from either the Grail or the New American Bible. Songs or hymns may not be used in place of the Responsorial Psalm (GIRM no. 61). The Psalm is sung or recited from the Ambo.

40. Proclamation: The readings are to be proclaimed from the Lectionary and, if possible, the Book of the Gospels. Binders are not to be used. Loose sheets of paper are not to be carried to the Ambo by the reader. If necessary, the text of the readings may be inserted in the Lectionary or Book of the Gospels. The readings should be clearly marked so that the reader will be able to find them readily.

Rite of Confirmation

41. Presentation of the Candidates: The Pastor or Parish Administrator presents the Candidates to the Bishop and the Assembly with the following words:

Let all to be confirmed please stand. Bishop, I present to you our sons and daughters who are candidates for the Sacrament of Confirmation. Under the guidance of their parents, catechists and sponsors and with the prayerful support and encouragement of this parish, they have been prepared to continue their initiation into the Body of Christ, the Church, which was begun at their Baptism. I ask that you lay hands upon them and anoint them with the Sacred Chrism, sealing them with the gift of the Holy Spirit. And now, I ask you, the community gathered here, to show your support and acceptance of these candidates with your applause.

42. Homily: Bishop Loverde preaches the homily. If possible, a wireless microphone should be available, should the Bishop decide to use one. Please make sure that the wireless microphone is in good working order, has been tested, and has fresh batteries.

43. Renewal of Baptismal Promises: The Candidates alone stand for the renewal of their Baptismal Promises. All others remain seated.

44. Laying on of Hands: The Bishop prays the ritual prayer and lays hands on the Candidates by extending his hands over them. Concelebrating Priests join the Bishop in the laying on of hands by also extending their hands over the Candidates, but the concelebrants say nothing.

45. Anointing with Chrism: The designated place for the Anointing should allow the Bishop, Candidates, and Sponsors to stand on the same level. The Deacon, or in his absence another minister, should hold the Chrism and a purificator for the Bishop. The procedure for the anointing follows (next page):

The Candidates should approach the Bishop so that two individuals are always standing side-by-side before the Bishop. The Bishop will anoint one of the Candidates who is standing before him while the other Candidate remains in place. After the first Candidate is anointed and as he or she departs, the Bishop will turn immediately to the other Candidate who is standing before him. At this time, the next Candidate in line should immediately fill in the place from which the newly Confirmed just departed.

The Sponsor stands immediately behind the Candidate. The Sponsor places his or her right hand on the Candidate's left shoulder. The Sponsor holds in his or her left hand a card with the Candidate's Confirmation name printed in large font; the Sponsor holds the card so that the Bishop can read it. The Sponsor says the Candidate's Confirmation Name at a normal volume; the Sponsor says only the name and nothing else.

After the anointing and the Bishop's words, "N., be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit," the Candidate responds, "Amen."

The Bishop adds, "Peace be with you," and the Candidate responds, "And with your spirit." The Bishop and the Candidate do not shake hands at this exchange of peace.

As the newly Confirmed steps away from the Bishop, the Bishop will begin anointing the other Candidate who is standing before him (as noted above). It is recommended that a few Candidates and their Sponsors be in the aisle in order to facilitate the approach of the Candidates. Every effort should be taken, aided by Ushers, to make sure that there are no gaps in the line.

After the Candidate is anointed, he or she returns to his place and is seated.

45bis. Renewal of Commitment to Witness to Christ: When Bishop Loverde is the Confirming Bishop, the Pastor/Administrator may choose to include the Renewal of Commitment to Witness to Christ for children from a Catholic Eastern Rite, Catholic Latin Rite, or both who have already received Confirmation. The decision to include the renewal should be communicated to the Office of Divine Worship in advance. A list of names with the Catholic rites of each should be submitted along with the Liturgy Form. The Office of Divine Worship will then provide the required text, which should be printed by the parish prior to the Confirmation Mass. Christians who are not in full communion with the Catholic Church should not present themselves for the renewal, even if they have been in formation with their Catholic classmates. However, if any non-Catholic Christians have been in formation at the parish, Bishop Loverde may choose to acknowledge them at the end of the Confirmation.

46. Creed: The Profession of Faith is omitted because the Candidates have renewed their Baptismal Promises, to which the Bishop has given the assent of the Church.

47. Universal Prayer (Prayer of the Faithful): The Universal Prayer (Prayer of the Faithful) provided by the Office of Divine Worship is to be used.

Liturgy of the Eucharist

48. Procession with the Gifts: Four newly Confirmed should each carry a gift in the offertory procession. The gifts should be both bread and wine, but only bread and wine (e.g. one cruet of wine and three ciboria with bread).

49. Eucharistic Prayer: For Confirmation, Bishop Loverde selects the Eucharistic Prayer. When the Ritual Mass is celebrated, Bishop Loverde prefers to use "Preface of the Holy Spirit II."

Communion Rite

50. Distribution of Holy Communion: The host parish determines the procedure for the distribution of Communion, including the location of stations. The pastor should be stationed next to the Bishop. If Communion is to be distributed under both kinds, there are to be two stations for the consecrated wine for every one station of the consecrated bread.

If there are enough Priests to distribute the consecrated bread, the Deacon will either distribute the consecrated wine (if both species are distributed) or will remain in the sanctuary. Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion should minister only if there are not enough ordinary ministers (Bishops, Priests, and Deacons) for the distribution of Communion.

Ushers should be prepared to direct and assist the flow of people at Communion.

51. Period of Thanksgiving: There should be a period of silence after Communion. Thus, the final Communion Hymn should end when the Bishop is seated after Holy Communion. No additional music should begin after the Bishop is seated.

52. Announcement: After the Prayer after Communion, the Pastor or Parish Administrator offers thanks for the Bishop's visit and announces the reception.

Concluding Rites

53. Recessional: Only the liturgical ministers will process in the liturgical recessional. The newly Confirmed do not process with the liturgical procession. If the newly Confirmed are to recess, they should begin to exit their places only after the liturgical procession has fully concluded. After the recessional and after handing out holy cards, Bishop Loverde will proceed to the reception.