



TOOWOOMBA DIOCESAN LITURGICAL COMMISSION

GUIDELINES FOR CELEBRATING **THE RITE OF CONFIRMATION**

“Care will be taken that a festive and solemn quality be given to the sacred action which expresses its significance for the local Church. This is achieved especially if all the candidates gather for a communal celebration. Indeed the entire People of God, represented by families and friends of those to be confirmed and members of the local community, will be invited to participate in this celebration; and it will strive to manifest its faith by the fruits that the Holy Spirit will produce in it.”

Rite of Confirmation: Introduction #4.

The ordinary minister of the sacrament is a Bishop. Please contact Bishop’s Office to arrange a suitable date.

Dates for the upcoming year should be confirmed with Bishop’s Office by December of the current year.

It is preferable to celebrate the Rite of Confirmation in a ceremony outside Mass if the children have not received First Holy Communion.

If the candidates have already received First Holy Communion, Confirmation is celebrated within Mass.

At times and for pastoral reasons, it may be more desirable to celebrate Confirmation and First Holy Communion together within Mass. Please liaise with the Bishop on this matter.

There should be a sponsor for each candidate who will accompany the child to the Bishop for anointing. It is desirable that one of the godparents at baptism, if available, also be the sponsor at Confirmation (CCC#1311). This expresses more clearly the link between Baptism and Confirmation and also makes the function and responsibility of the sponsor more effective (CIC #864.1 no.5). Parents may not be sponsors but can present their child for Confirmation (Rite of Confirmation: Introduction #5).

Within the celebration of Confirmation, the role of those to be confirmed is that of “candidate for Confirmation”. Candidates should not be assigned additional ministerial roles, i.e. reader, altar server. The newly confirmed may carry the gifts in the procession for the Presentation of Gifts.

The Diocesan Liturgy Office can assist parishes in preparing the Confirmation liturgy. Please forward a draft of the liturgy to the Liturgy Officer at least three weeks prior to the date of celebration. Drafts can be emailed to jbriffa@twb.catholic.org.au or posted to P.O.Box 1262 Toowoomba. 4350.

Parishes are asked to send the final draft of their Confirmation liturgy to Bishop’s Office for approval. Please email to bishsec@twb.catholic.org.au or mail to Bishop Robert McGuckin, P.O. Box 756, Toowoomba. 4350.

In preparing the celebration, the following points may be helpful:

1. Familiarise yourself with the Rite of Confirmation. How is it structured? How will the various movements of this ritual be coordinated so that the whole rite flows smoothly?
2. Pray over and study the readings selected and the prayers of the Roman Missal keeping in mind the following points:
 - The proper readings and prayers of the day must be used on all Sundays in Advent, Lent and Easter and on all Solemnities.
 - On other days, the rituals, Rite of Confirmation during Mass and Rite of Confirmation outside Mass may be used. The readings selected by Bishop are listed in the pro-forma. The readings for even the Sundays in Ordinary Time should not be dismissed out of hand; many may prove quite suitable for Confirmation.
3. Due consideration should be given to the liturgical season in which the sacrament is celebrated. Rather than replacing seasonal environment with Confirmation banners and symbols, “*keep the season*” and highlight the significance of the Confirmation liturgy with elements such as water, oil and flame; all symbolic of Confirmation.
4. Music is a very important part of a celebration such as Confirmation. Careful consideration is to be given to the selection of music, both sung and instrumental. If possible, the following are to be sung: Entrance hymn, Responsorial Psalm, Gospel Acclamation, Mass parts, Communion hymn, Recessional hymn. Quiet instrumental music/song may be played during the Anointing with Chrism. (*See for more information, suggestions and copyright provisions see music list*).
5. Prior to his arrival, a suitable table or bench space should be set aside for the Bishop to place his Crosier case, Mitre and vestments.
6. A large white towel or amice should be provided to protect Bishop’s vestments from spills of Chrism during anointing.
7. The altar servers are to be ready for the Bishop to wash his hands as soon as the last candidate has been confirmed. A bowl of warm water, with lemon or soap for washing, and a towel are to be provided.
8. At the end of the ceremony the Bishop should be provided with assistance in returning the Crosier to its case.

PASTORAL NOTES FOR PREPARATION OF RITUAL

RITE OF CONFIRMATION (OUTSIDE MASS)

Prior to his arrival, a suitable table or bench space should be set aside for the Bishop to place his Crosier case, Mitre and vestments.

The vessel containing the Chrism of the year and an empty bowl should be readily available and prepared for use.

The Introductory Rites

ENTRANCE HYMN

All sing an appropriate song. (*see suggested music list*)

SIGN OF THE CROSS

Following the procession, the Bishop begins with the Sign of the Cross and gives the greeting.

GREETING

The Penitential Act is not included in this Liturgy of the Word.

COLLECT (opening prayer)

Please see enclosed pro-forma for options.

The Liturgy of the Word

Readings are chosen from Rite of Confirmation (*see those chosen by Bishop*).

If possible, the Responsorial Psalm is always sung. Alternatively, a cantor may sing the verses with the assembly singing the antiphon (between verses).

First Reading

Responsorial Psalm

(Second Reading) (*optional*)

Gospel Acclamation

Gospel

The Gospel may be proclaimed by pastor or concelebrating priest.

PASTORAL NOTES FOR PREPARATION OF RITUAL

Sacrament of Confirmation

PRESENTATION OF CANDIDATES

Immediately after the Gospel and before the homily, the Parish Priest, Deacon, or catechist presents the candidates for Confirmation, according to the custom of the region. The names of the candidates are called and they stand. All sit before the Bishop begins his homily.

HOMILY

The Bishop gives the Homily.

RENEWAL OF BAPTISMAL PROMISES

When invited by the Bishop at the end of his homily, candidates stand for the renewal of baptismal promises (which takes the place of the Creed). The candidates should be well rehearsed to answer in a loud voice ***'I do'*** to the questions. All respond *"Amen"* after the Bishop proclaims *"This is our faith...."*

LAYING ON OF HANDS

The Bishop invites all to pray in silence.

Following the period of silence, the Bishop (and other Priests if required), who will minister the Sacrament with the laying of hands upon all the candidates (by extending his hands over them). The Bishop alone says the prayer *"All powerful God....."* All respond *"Amen."*

ANOINTING WITH CHRISM

It is suggested that the Bishop is located centrally in front of the altar. Coming to the altar emphasises the connection between Confirmation and the other two sacraments of initiation, Baptism and the Eucharist. The central position also ensures that the whole congregation witnesses the Confirmation of every candidate.

The Bishop will pour the Chrism from the parish's current year's bottle into an empty bowl. A small hand /finger towel should be accessible.

A large white towel or amice should be provided to protect Bishop's vestments from spills of Chrism during anointing.

Each candidate (and sponsor) goes forward to the Bishop. The sponsor places his (her) right hand on the candidates right shoulder and gives the candidates name to the Bishop; or the candidate may give his (her) own name. 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.

The candidates need to be well rehearsed to respond to the Bishop when he anoints them with the words *"N... be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit"* with the response *"Amen"*. Also, when the Bishop offers the greeting of peace to the newly confirmed, saying the words *"Peace be with you"*, the newly confirmed responds, *"And with your spirit"*.

The altar servers are to be ready for the Bishop to wash his hands as soon as the last candidate has been confirmed. A bowl of warm water, with lemon or soap for washing, and a towel are to be provided.

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

The Universal Prayer, or the Prayer of the Faithful (*see suggestions in pro-forma*).

LORD'S PRAYER

At the Bishop's all join in saying the Lord's Prayer.

(**Announcements** – These are printed in the ritual booklet or brief announcements may be made at this time).

The Concluding Rites**SOLEMN BLESSING**

The Bishop imparts the solemn blessing from the ritual. All respond Amen.

Recessional Hymn

A familiar song known to the assembly is most appropriate. (*see suggested music list*).

At the end of the ceremony the Bishop should be provided with assistance in returning the Crosier to its case.