



ADMINISTRATION OF THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION IN THE DIOCESE OF RALEIGH BY BISHOP LUIS RAFAEL ZARAMA

I. CONVERSATION WITH THE CANDIDATES

Before Bishop Luis vests, he will wish to spend some time in conversation with the candidates for the Sacrament. Generally, this could be between twenty and thirty minutes with them to see how they are feeling on this special day. Please have only the candidates assembled in a classroom or parish center. The Bishop wants the candidates to be at ease and relaxed. There will be no questioning of the candidates during the homily; however, Bishop Luis may engage some candidates with other questions about their feelings on receiving the sacrament.

II. PREPARATIONS

Bishop Luis hopes the celebration of Confirmation will be a parish community celebration. Accordingly, all parishioners should be invited if room permits.

Four weeks prior to the date of Confirmation, please send the schema for liturgy and order of worship and ceremony to the attention of the Office of Worship to Paula Zanker through e-mail at Paula.Zanker@raldioc.org. Any questions on the rite or the liturgy itself can be asked of Fr. Jim Sabak, OFM, Director of Worship. He can be contacted at fr.james.sabak@raldioc.org or at 984-900-3109. Unless otherwise arranged, Fr. Jim will be present as MC the celebration of the Sacrament.

(Information desired includes the Scripture readings to be used, the parts of the Mass to be sung, and anything planned which will assist the Bishop in preparing for his visit to your parish.)

Bishop Luis will bring his own alb and vestments and will vest in whatever place you have designated for him. The color of vestments is red or white, unless the rubrics of the day state otherwise. Please indicate the color you have chosen when you send in the order of worship.

Please make the usual preparations for Mass. If there will be a large number of concelebrants, and/or Communion under both species, please have adequate chalices and extra hosts.

Please have a pitcher of warm water, large bowl, liquid soap and/or lemons, and towel for the Bishop to wash his hands after the anointing.

Bishop Luis will bring his own Chrism stock to which we will add Chrism from the parish's ambry. Fr. Jim will bring the Confirmation Ritual on the day of the celebration.

The Mass of Confirmation as found in the Roman Missal can be used on any day (even Sundays) except the Sundays of Advent, Lent and Easter Solemnities. On those days, the Mass will be that of the day. If it is a feast of one of the Apostles, Bishop Luis prefers to offer the Mass of the Feast.

Readings to be proclaimed at the liturgy of Confirmation should be taken from the suggested texts provided in the Lectionary for Confirmation (Volume IV). During the Easter Season (Easter Sunday to Pentecost) all the Readings should be selected from the New Testament.

Please note: If Confirmation is to be held on a Saturday after 4:00 p.m. or on a Sunday, the readings are to be those of Sunday, since the Saturday evening Mass is an anticipatory Mass of Sunday. Please do not use the incorrect terminology of "vigil" to describe this Mass.

The commentator, readers, and song leaders should be well prepared, and the readings and songs proclaimed so everyone can hear what is read and sung. It is VERY APPROPRIATE that candidates for the Sacrament serve as readers for the liturgy of Confirmation.

III. "CONFIRMATION NAME" AND NAME TAGS

In the United States many persons are confirmed under a new name. Catechists often encourage candidates to adopt a patron saint on this occasion. However, the practice was not included in the reform of the Rite of Confirmation by the Second Vatican Council, has never appeared in the law or liturgy of the Church, and is unknown in many other countries. The Church presumes that Confirmation – as all the other sacraments – will be administered using the baptismal name.

If the practice is retained as a local custom, it would be helpful to offer some justification for its continued use.

Those to be confirmed should wear name tags. The name tags should be fastened high on the right shoulder of the candidates. This will be the baptismal name (or confirmation name chosen by the candidate if custom warrants it). Even though the candidate wears a name tag, the sponsor will introduce him/her to the Bishop.

IV. SERVERS' INSTRUCTIONS

Ideally, five servers would be useful - cross bearer, two acolytes, miter bearer and crosier bearer. Fr. Jim can work with less than that number. If you are having incense, you may need another server.

V. ORDER OF PROCESSION

The servers and candidates for the Sacrament, including the adults if you wish, meet the Bishop and the clergy outside the place of vesting.

THE ORDER OF PROCESSION IS AS FOLLOWS:

Thurifer and Boat bearer (if you choose to have incense)

Cross bearer and acolytes

The Cross bearer remains in front of the altar until all the candidates have processed in, then she/he places the Cross in its stand and goes to her/his seat

Candidates for Confirmation

Additional servers should you opt to have more than the three at the front

Deacon carrying the Book of Gospels (if you have a deacon in your parish or have invited one to participate) - or a Lector carrying the Book of the Gospels

Visiting clergy and concelebrants

Pastor and Associate Pastors

Bishop Luis

Miter and Crosier bearers (the Bishop will bring the white gloves)

The procession moves directly into the Church and the candidates go to their pews.

VI. THE MASS AND RITE OF CONFIRMATION

The pastor/associate(s) are seated near the Bishop's chair. If there is a deacon, he assists the Bishop at the chair. If there is room, the concelebrants and visiting clergy are seated in the sanctuary; otherwise in the pews. However, care should be taken that the clergy do not block the view of the candidates or the congregation.

The deacon (or pastor or associate pastor if no deacon is present) proclaims the Gospel. After the Gospel, the Pastor, a representative of the Parish Pastoral Council, or a Catechist presents the candidates to the Bishop. The following text or similar wording may be included:

*"Bishop Luis, the candidates of the parish community of **N.** have been properly prepared to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. The pastor (and associate), parents, catechists, and the members of our parish community ask you, Bishop Luis, to confer the gift of the Holy Spirit upon them. Bishop, it is my privilege to present these candidates to you at this time. Candidates please stand."*

IF the candidates are few in number, they may be named individually, and will stand as their name is called without making any response. Otherwise, the candidates will all rise. Bishop Luis and the assembly will recognize them with applause and then the candidates will be seated for the Bishop's homily.

After Bishop Luis concludes the homily, the candidates **ALONE** will be asked to stand, and he will renew with them their Baptismal promises. The candidates answer "**I do**" five times (loudly and clearly) and the entire congregation responds with "**Amen**" at the conclusion. The assembly may sing a short song or acclamation of faith.

Bishop Luis will then invite the assembly to prayer and pray the prayer of the gifts of the Holy Spirit over the candidates.

The anointing with Chrism will occur in this way:

Candidates and their Sponsors will come forward, directed by catechists and Fr. Jim, to ring the sanctuary facing the assembly. If the sanctuary is raised, the Sponsor will stand on the first step, behind the Candidate, with his/her hand on the right shoulder of the Candidate. The Candidate will stand on the floor in front of the sanctuary.

Bishop Luis will then come to each of the candidates and anoint them.

When Bishop Luis comes before the Candidate and Sponsor, the Sponsor says:

"I am pleased to introduce [baptismal name or confirmation name]"

The Bishop says:

"BE SEALED WITH THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT."

The newly confirmed answers:

"Amen."

Then the Bishop says:

"Peace be with you."

The newly confirmed answers:

"And with your Spirit."

N.B. Bishop Luis will shake hands with each person confirmed at this time and possibly converse briefly with her/him. Please inform the candidates and their sponsors. If there is a large group of candidates, then this arrangement will occur in shifts that permit for a comfortable spacing of Candidates and Sponsors until all candidates have been anointed.

In order that everyone in the pews may witness the ceremony, candidates should remain seated in the pews until it is time to come up. After each group has been anointed, the newly confirmed and her/his sponsor will return to their seats and sit.

Prior to beginning the anointings, Bishop Luis will hand the Crosier to the Pastor, who, holding the Crosier for Bishop Luis, will accompany Bishop during the anointings. Once all candidates have been anointed the Pastor will give the Crosier back to Bishop Luis

The oil on the forehead of the Newly Confirmed is left on as a visible sign of the matter and form of the sacrament.

Soft instrumental music may be played during the anointing, but not so loudly as to obscure what Bishop Luis is saying to those being confirmed.

VII. GENERAL INTERCESSIONS

The Creed is omitted whenever the Sacrament of Confirmation is administered because of the renewal of Baptismal promises, including weekend Masses.

The general intercessions follow. The Bishop will give an invitation to pray before the intentions are read and he will offer the concluding prayer. A maximum of six petitions would be appropriate. It is **VERY APPROPRIATE** that one or more of the Newly Confirmed offers the petitions.

VIII. LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

The Liturgy of the Eucharist begins as some of the Newly Confirmed bring up the gifts of bread and wine and any other symbolic gifts to the Bishop in front of the altar.

If four (4) or more chalices are to be used for distribution of the Precious Blood, they should be prepared before Mass and brought to the Altar from the credence table as the gifts are brought forward.

For the distribution of Holy Communion, it is appropriate for Bishop Luis to distribute to Newly Confirmed, if this can be arranged without difficulty, confusion, or inconvenience. If communion is distributed under both species, the Ministers of the Blood of Christ should be ready to go to their stations when the Bishop begins to distribute the Body of Christ.

While the Bishop is distributing to the Newly Confirmed, other priests or Eucharistic Ministers may begin to distribute on the side aisles or in other designated parts of the church.

If Communion is distributed under both species, please make all necessary preparations in advance. Please inform Fr. Jim of the details of the distribution before Mass.

IX. RECESSIONAL

The cross bearer (preceded by the thurifer if there is one) and acolytes lead the clergy and Bishop Luis out of the Church.

The Newly Confirmed, if they are to recess, should precede the clergy and Bishop Luis. Bishop Luis will greet the Newly Confirmed and members of the congregation at the reception if one is scheduled.

X. PHOTOGRAPHS

Many pastors have found an advantage for the group picture to be taken before the Confirmation liturgy because it allows more time for the reception afterwards. If the parish has contracted with a professional photographer to take a group picture of the candidates the picture must be taken before the time that Bishop Luis will meet with the candidates, so as not to delay the reception and the Bishop's time with the newly confirmed and their families.

The Bishop would be happy to have individual pictures taken with the newly confirmed and their sponsors and families at the reception if there is one; if no reception, right after Mass in the sanctuary or wherever you have planned.

XI. PEERS WHO HAVE ALREADY BEEN CONFIRMED

Some parishes have young people who have already been confirmed when they were received into the church at the time of their baptism or prior to coming to the parish and may want to participate with their peers at the time of their Confirmation. We suggest that something be written into the liturgy that acknowledges their presence. They should certainly renew their baptismal promises with the group at the liturgy. Perhaps they could come forward for a blessing after the group has been confirmed or rise as a group to be acknowledged. Exactly how they are recognized is a local parish decision. Simply inform Fr. Jim at the time of the ceremony.

XI. POSSIBLE PANDEMIC PROTOCOLS

While the Pandemic continues to impact our lives of faith, there is also evidence that it is more fluid in its cases of severity and infection. As we continue to learn how to live with the presence of Covid-19 in our lives, we can return to celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation as it is presented in the ritual texts.

For those for whom it would benefit or as is the custom of the parish community masking may be encouraged. Since requirements for social distance are no longer in effect, we can return to bringing up the candidates for the sacrament in the previously usual manner.

Bishop Luis uses his thumb to anoint, as is prescribed in the rite.

XII. QUESTIONS

Any other questions that you may have concerning the implementation of these guidelines or on the continued and adapted pandemic protocols please address to Fr. Jim at the contacts listed above.