

## Diocese of San Diego

### GUIDELINES FOR CELEBRATION OF THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION

#### Candidates/Newly Confirmed

Those receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation should be called **candidates** before they are confirmed and **newly confirmed** after they have been confirmed, i.e. anointed with chrism.

#### Attire

Confirmation gowns are optional. Every effort should be made, especially when gowns are not worn, to ensure that the candidates and their sponsors are dressed appropriately and modestly.

#### Ministers

**The Bishop** will ordinarily be the sole minister of the sacrament. Therefore, he alone extends his hands over the candidates and says the prayer before anointing. However, if the pastor is delegated to assist in administering the sacrament, that is, anointing the candidates, he joins the Bishop in extending his hands over the candidates, while the Bishop alone says the prayer.

**The Pastor and Associate Pastors** should concelebrate the Mass. If there is not a deacon to proclaim the Gospel, the pastor or associate pastor should do so, requesting and receiving the Bishop's blessing beforehand.

**The Deacon** proclaims the gospel, assists the Bishop during the preparation of the gifts and the eucharistic prayer, and serves as a minister of the cup at communion. He may be helpful in keeping the candidates in a tight line at the time of their anointing.

It is recommended that the **lectors, extraordinary ministers of Communion** and **servers** be selected from those who regularly exercise well these ministries in the parish.

#### Music

Music should be selected that fosters an atmosphere of prayer and encourages participation by the candidates, sponsors and entire assembly. Anything akin to performance and entertainment should be avoided.

Accompaniment should sustain song and never drown out voices, thereby discouraging "full, conscious and active participation." For this reason, use of percussion instruments, especially drum ensembles, is not recommended.

During the anointing of the candidates there should be neither vocal nor instrumental music, but silence, in order for the assembly to pray quietly for each of the candidates by name during the conferral of the sacrament.

Silence is preferred to a meditation song after the distribution of Communion.

## **Procession and Recession**

Since candidates and their sponsors are not liturgical ministers, they should not be part of the liturgical procession. They should be in their places before the time the Mass is scheduled to begin and may do so either at random, or by way of a very simple pre-Mass procession in which case there may be instrumental accompaniment, but nothing is to be sung. Once in their places, they should join the assembly in the entrance song.

Similarly, the newly confirmed and their sponsors should not be part of the liturgical recessional. They should remain in their places joining with the assembly in the closing song, and they may be the first to leave thereafter.

## **Pictures**

No pictures are to be taken during the Mass of Confirmation. However, with the permission of the Bishop, a single photographer may be designated to take pictures of the candidates as they are anointed, provided that this can be done without flash and in an inconspicuous manner.

The Bishop will usually have time after the ceremony to pose for one picture with each of the newly confirmed alone or with their sponsors.

The Bishop will not participate in any pictures under the direction of professional photographers.

## **Bilingual Celebrations**

If it is appropriate for certain prayers or readings to be prayed or proclaimed in Spanish or another language, they should not be repeated in English.

## **Witness Talks**

Witness talks or other types of sharing by candidates should not be inserted into the Mass of Confirmation.

## **Certificates or Gifts**

If the newly confirmed are to receive certificates of Confirmation or gifts from the parish, these should not be distributed during the Mass.

## **Liturgical Books and Planning Sheet**

The sacramentary, lectionary, book of the Gospels and planning sheet should be available for the Bishop to review before he vests.

## **THE MASS OF CONFIRMATION**

The Ritual Mass for Confirmation yields to the Masses prescribed for Easter Sunday and Easter Week, the Sundays of the Easter Season, Solemnities and Feasts of the Lord. The Ritual Mass for Confirmation calls for red vestments. When the Ritual Mass yields to other Masses the color of vestments changes accordingly.

In the Ritual Mass for Confirmation, the Gloria is optional. The Creed is always replaced by the Renewal of Baptismal Promises.

## Presentation of the Candidates

After the Gospel, the assembly is seated. The Bishop puts on his miter. The pastor, an associate pastor, deacon or catechist presents the candidates. This should be done very briefly and without reviewing the formation program.

A formula such as the following may be used:

**Bishop \_\_\_\_\_, the parish community of \_\_\_\_\_ wishes to present to you its candidates for Confirmation. Their parents, their sponsors and their teachers attest to their readiness to be confirmed, and the candidates, themselves, have freely asked to receive the sacrament.**

**Will all the candidates for Confirmation, just the candidates, please stand.**

*(or when the number of candidates is small)*

**Candidates alone please stand when called by name and remain standing.**

**The Bishop may invite the assembly to affirm the candidates for Confirmation by reverent applause.**

## Homily

The candidates are seated and the Bishop then gives a homily.

## Renewal of Baptismal Promises

After the homily only the candidates stand for their renewal of baptismal promises which the entire assembly concludes with "Amen." They do not hold lighted candles at this time.

Bishop: Do you reject 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,  
was crucified, died, and was buried,  
rose from the dead,  
and is now 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 came upon the apostles at Pentecost  
and today is given to you sacramentally in Confirmation?

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.

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

All: Amen.

### **The Laying On of Hands with Prayer Before Anointing**

The candidates remain standing for this part of the ritual.

The Bishop addresses the assembly which remains seated. He may use the following or something similar:

My dear friends:  
in baptism God our Father gave the new birth of eternal life  
to his chosen sons and daughters  
Let us pray to our Father  
that he will pour out the Holy Spirit  
to strengthen his sons and daughters with his gifts  
and anoint them to be more like Christ the Son of God.

After a moment of quiet prayer, the Bishop extends his hands over all the candidates who may bow their heads as the Bishop says:

All-powerful God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
by water and the Holy Spirit  
you freed you sons and daughters from sin  
and gave them new life.  
Send your Holy Spirit upon them  
to be their Helper and Guide.  
Give them the spirit of wisdom and understanding,  
the spirit of right judgment and courage,  
the spirit of knowledge and reverence.  
Fill them with the spirit of wonder and awe in you presence.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

### **The Anointing with Chrism**

The Bishop wearing his miter and carrying his staff administers the sacrament of Confirmation. He is assisted by the pastor who holds the chrism.

Candidates and their sponsors, one sponsor for each candidate, should approach the Bishop immediately after one another and without gaps between them first from one side and then from the other, according to the appended diagram.

Sponsors place a hand on the shoulder of their candidate; they do not verbally introduce them.

Candidates should come right up to the Bishop and vocally give him their Confirmation name in an audible and clear fashion. **Name tags are recommended as a backup.**

The Bishop dips his right thumb into the chrism and laying his hand on the forehead of the candidate makes the sign of the cross while saying: **N., BE SEALED WITH THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.**

The newly confirmed responds audibly: **AMEN.**

The Bishop says: **PEACE BE WITH YOU.**

The newly confirmed responds audibly: **AND ALSO WITH YOU.**

This dialogue is very important and should be carefully rehearsed. If the Bishop's hand is moist with chrism, he will not shake hands at the exchange of peace.

After candidates are anointed, they and their sponsors should return to their places and immediately be seated so as not to obscure the vision of the assembly from any action still taking place.

Following the anointing, the Bishop goes to the chair where he purifies his hand in a manner he has predetermined. He may invite the assembly to join him in offering congratulations to the newly confirmed.

### **General Intercessions**

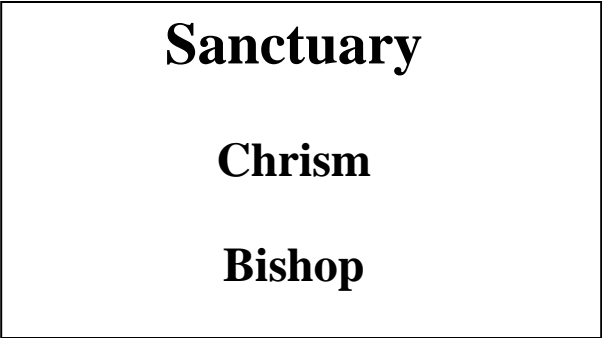
It is recommended that the petitions be taken by the deacon or one of the lectors who should approach the ambo while the Bishop is purifying his hands. Suggested intercessions from the ritual are appended.

### **Preparation of the Gifts**

It is recommended that several of the newly confirmed bring the gifts of bread and wine and nothing more to the Bishop. There should be a sufficient number of hosts to consecrate for all in the assembly who will come to Communion and enough wine to consecrate for at least the newly confirmed and their sponsors to have the opportunity for reception from the cup.

### **Concluding Comments**

Brief concluding comments and expressions of gratitude may be made after the Prayer after Communion by the pastor or person designated by him. This is not the time for repeated applause.



Side I

Side II

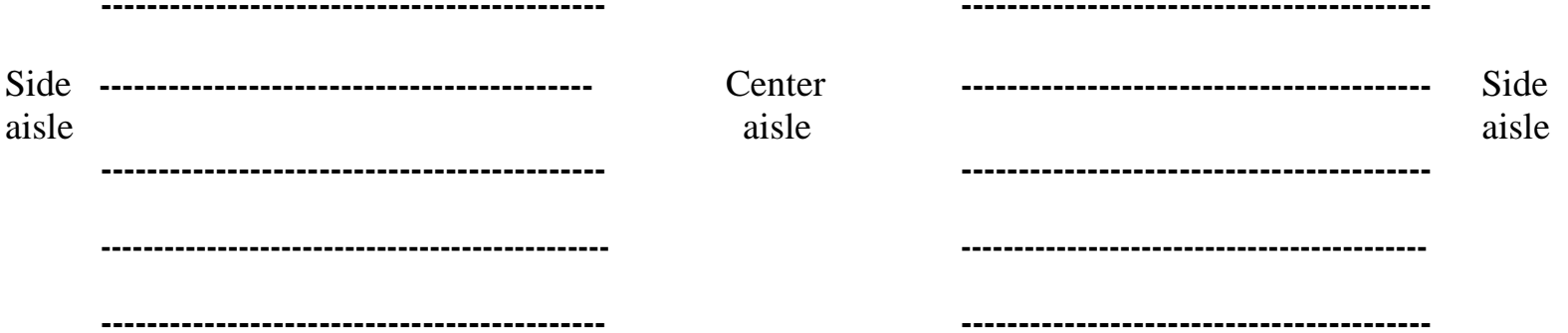
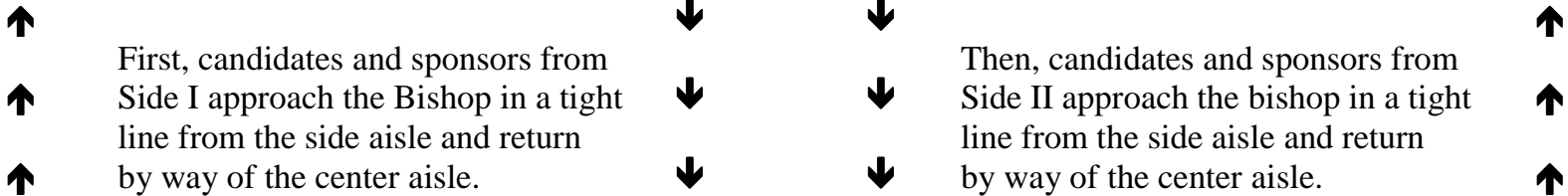


Diagram for Approaching the Bishop for Anointing

## **INTERCESSIONS FOR CONFIRMATION SUGGESTED IN THE RITUAL**

- 1. For these sons and daughters of God,  
confirmed by the gift of the Spirit,  
that they give witness to Christ  
by lives built on faith and love:  
let us pray to the Lord.**
- 2. For their parents and godparents  
who led them in faith,  
that by word and example they may always encourage them  
to follow the way of Jesus Christ:  
let us pray to the Lord.**
- 3. For the holy Church of God,  
in union with Benedict, our pope, and our bishops,  
that God, who gathers us together by the Holy Spirit,  
may help us grow in faith and love  
until his Son returns in glory:  
let us pray to the Lord.**
- 4. For people of every race and nation,  
that they may acknowledge the one true God  
and seek his kingdom –  
a kingdom of justice, love and peace in the Holy Spirit:  
let us pray to the Lord**

## Sample Optional Petition for the Sacrament of Confirmation

I \_\_\_\_\_, a member of \_\_\_\_\_ Parish

in \_\_\_\_\_, wish to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit who came upon the apostles at Pentecost and is given sacramentally in Confirmation.

I want to receive the sacrament of Confirmation because:

I have prepared for the Sacrament of Confirmation by:

I have chosen \_\_\_\_\_ to be my sponsor. I have made this choice because:

The ways I am presently putting my faith into practice are:

I understand that the gift of the Holy Spirit will help me to be a better Christian and Catholic with responsibility to share in the mission of Jesus. Some ways I plan to do this are:

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_