

**Archdiocese of Halifax-Yarmouth**  
**Guidelines for the Celebration of Confirmation**  
**March 2023**

**Please share this information with all are involved in the celebration of Confirmation, e.g., Catechists, Pastoral Ministers, Liturgical ministers, and parents.**

**Preparation:**

- Each parish offers a series of evenings or particular days to assist the young people in preparing for confirmation. This preparation usually begins with an enrollment ceremony.
- Some parishes ask parishioners to pray as prayer partners for the individual candidates. These candidates may also be remembered at Sunday liturgies.
- Some parishes have special ceremonies (often connected with the gifts of the Spirit). These ceremonies would work well as the closing liturgy of the preparation classes where parents and guardians could be invited. These ceremonies do not fit well in the Confirmation Liturgy.
- Stoles: Some parishes use stoles for those getting confirmed. Since stoles symbolize ORDAINED ministry, it would be better if those getting confirmed did not wear stoles.

**Choosing a Sponsor**

- Normally, the godmother or godfather from baptism would be the best sponsor, in order to highlight the connection between baptism and confirmation.
- If the godmother or godfather are not able to be the sponsor, please consider the following. A confirmation sponsor must:
  - Be designated by the one to be confirmed
  - Be at least 16 years old
  - Be a confirmed Catholic
  - **Not be the father or mother of the one confirmed**
  - Sponsors should serve as role models and mentors helping the candidates to respond to God's call and live the Christian life in the faith community and in the world.

**Letters:**

All candidates are asked to write a letter to the Archbishop indicating why they want to be confirmed. It defeats the purpose if the catechist gives a form letter to the candidates. Once the letters are written, the catechist could collect these letters and forward them in one package to the Archbishop in sufficient time so that they will be received before the date of the celebration.

**Music:**

Since the celebration of Confirmation is a solemn occasion in the parish, it calls for as much singing as possible. Although a choir is always appropriate, care must be taken that the assembly has full opportunity to share in the singing. Music and singing may be included at every proper place in the liturgy (not during the Rite of Confirmation itself), but at least the following parts of the Mass must always be sung: Entrance song; Gloria; Alleluia/ Gospel Acclamation; Acclamations at the Eucharistic Prayer: Holy, Holy, Holy; Memorial Acclamation; and the Great Amen; Communion processional;

Recessional (sung or instrumental).

**Procession:**

Entrance Procession consists of Ministers and Celebrants. If the candidates and sponsors are going to process in, they may do so immediately before the liturgy begins, so that they all will be seated and ready to participate as the liturgy begins.

**Mass Texts:**

- If confirmation takes place during a Solemnity or a Sunday or the weekdays of Easter or Advent, please use the Mass of the day.
- If confirmation takes place during the weekdays of Ordinary Time, please use one of the Masses for the “Mass for Conferral of Confirmation” (pages 1126-1130 in the *Roman Missal*).
- The ORDO may provide some assistance in this matter.

**Scripture Readings:**

- Three scripture readings will always be proclaimed. A few days before the celebration, please let the Archbishop know which readings have been selected.
- For the psalm, please use the NRSV translation of the psalm from the Ritual Lectionary, not a song that is based on a psalm.
- If confirmation takes place during a Solemnity or a Sunday, please use the readings of the day.
- If confirmation takes place during the weekdays of Easter or Advent, please use the readings of the day as well as a second reading from one of Paul’s letters or the Acts of the Apostles (depending on the season). The Old Testament is not read during the Easter Season.
- If confirmation takes place during the weekdays of Ordinary Time, please use three readings from the ritual Lectionary for the Mass of Confirmation.
- The ORDO may provide some assistance in this matter.
- The Gospel is proclaimed by a Deacon or one of the concelebrating priests.

**Reader:**

- Two of the candidates for confirmation may proclaim the scriptures, but only if they are well prepared and able to proclaim the text. Trained readers from the parish may also read.

**Rite of Confirmation:**

- Presentation of Candidates: The candidates are named only if there are not too many candidates. Form C in the former Ritual (pp. 94-95) will usually be used. See Appendix 1 below.
- Candidates move toward the bishop as in the procession for communion; their names are not called out from the ambo at this time.
- Communicating the Candidate’s Name to the Bishop: Either the candidates may say their name or the sponsor may say “I present N. for confirmation.” In either case, candidates and sponsors are often nervous and do not speak loudly. Therefore, **name tags** with the names printed in large letters need to be used. Or candidates could present a card with the name clearly printed to the Pastor who then says the name aloud to the bishop.
- While the Rite of Confirmation suggests some music, I would like that the Anointing be done in

silence, with no music, singing, or instrumental music.

- Please prepare some lemon and hot water on the credence table so that the bishop can wash his hands after confirmation. The bishop will normally bring his own container of oil for confirmation.

- Prayer of the Faithful: Please use one of the Readers or one newly confirmed person to offer the Prayer of the Faithful, unless you have a deacon in the parish. Customarily there is only ONE person who offers these prayers at the Mass. Please formulate these prayers according to the intentions expressed in the official Rite of Confirmation.

### **Presentation of the Gifts:**

- Several newly confirmed could present the gifts of bread and wine and, where appropriate, the collection.

### **Photos:**

- The bishop will gladly pose after the ceremony for individual photos with the candidates. If there are to be group photos, please use one photographer. Photos may also be taken at the reception. Please refrain from taking photos during the confirmation celebration.

### **Certificates:**

- Please decide, in light of the number of candidates, when certificates can be best given to the candidates. In order not to prolong the time in the Church, certificates might be given at the reception. Some parishes have passed certificates to the candidates immediately after they are confirmed.

## **Appendix 1**

### **Presentation of Candidates: Form C from the former Ritual**

The presentation of the candidates may take the following form:

Pastor:

**Bishop,  
on behalf of our parish community  
I present these candidates for the sacrament of confirmation.**

Bishop:

**God's holy Church wishes to be certain  
that these candidates are ready to celebrate this sacrament.**

The parents stand. The bishop speaks to them:

**Parents,  
at baptism you accepted the responsibility  
of raising your children in the practice of the faith,  
and of guiding them to love God and neighbour.  
Do you now consider that they are ready**

**to be confirmed in the faith of the Church?**

Parents:

**We do.**

The parents are seated. Then the teachers and catechists stand.

Bishop:

**Teachers and catechists,  
you have proclaimed the Good News  
and shared the riches of our Catholic tradition  
with these young people.  
Do you consider that they have faithfully listened  
to God's word proclaimed by the Church?**

Teachers and catechists:

**We do.**

The teachers and catechists are seated, and the sponsors stand. The bishop speaks to them:

**Sponsors,  
by word and example you have helped these candidates  
to walk in God's presence.  
Do you consider that they have shared the company  
of their Christian brothers and sisters  
and joined them faithfully in prayer?**

Sponsors:

**We do.**

The sponsors are seated. then the bishop speaks to the members of the parish community:

**People of N. Parish,  
we have heard the testimony in favor of these candidates,  
and welcome them to complete their initiation into the life of Christ  
and to be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit.  
Are you willing to continue to sustain them in faith  
by your prayer and example?**

All:

**We are.**