

Diocese of Cork and Ross

Celebrating the Sacrament of Confirmation



In Confirmation it is Christ who fills us with his Spirit, consecrating us as his witnesses. I wonder: How can one see that we have received the Gift of the Spirit? If we fulfil the works of the Spirit, if we speak the words instructed by the Spirit. Christian witness consists in doing only and all that the Spirit of Christ asks of us, giving us the strength to accomplish it.

Pope Francis, General Audience, 23rd May 2018

These guidelines are intended as a resource for all those who are responsible for preparing and co-ordinating the celebration of the sacrament of Confirmation in our diocese. We are grateful for the time and energy you put into helping our young people prepare for this important step on their journey of faith and we hope that these resources will be useful to you in planning and preparing your celebration.

May God bless you in all that you do with and for our young people.

+ Fintan Gavin
Bishop of Cork & Ross

CONFIRMATION AND THE LITURGICAL YEAR

There are slight variations in the celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation depending on when it is celebrated during the liturgical year.

- The spirit of Lent is penitential in nature as we prepare to celebrate the Passion and Death of our Lord in Holy Week. Therefore the praying and singing of the ‘Gloria’ is omitted during Lent.
- ‘Alleluia’ is the great song of Easter that proclaims and celebrates the resurrection of Jesus. Therefore during Lent, hymns and prayers featuring ‘*Alleluia*’ are not part of our liturgies. The ‘*Alleluia*’ in the Gospel Acclamation is replaced by the refrain: ‘*Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of eternal glory.*’

BEFORE THE CELEBRATION BEGINS

- A few minutes before the ceremony begins it is useful for the priest or other nominated person to begin preparing the congregation for the celebration that is to follow. This is an opportunity to quieten the gathering, to remind them of the need to switch off their phones, not to take pictures during the ceremony and to invite them to be prayerfully present by participating fully and actively in the prayers and the hymns that are part of the ceremony. It is also an opportunity to ask the congregation to take a moment in quiet prayer for the candidates who are to be confirmed.

ENTRANCE PROCESSION

- An entrance hymn that focuses on the theme of Confirmation and the gift of the Holy Spirit should accompany the entrance procession. All the candidates should participate in the singing of this hymn and, where possible, the congregation should be encouraged to join them.
- If the candidates take part in the procession they are followed in the procession by the priests and finally by the Bishop.

PROCESSION OF SYMBOLS [*Optional*]

If the candidates have symbols to present of their giftedness or of their work and preparation for receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation – now is the time in which to bring them forward to the sanctuary. Have a space or table arranged in the sanctuary or to one side of it where these symbols can be placed and be visible, but preferably not in front of the altar or ambo and not on top of the altar. If a commentary accompanies the bringing forward of these symbols, it should be simple and brief.

PENITENTIAL RITE

Option A:

The Bishop leads the congregation in praying the Confiteor *I confess to almighty God and to you my brothers and sisters.* The bishop then leads the

congregation to respond: *Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy* or these responses can be sung as one of the following: *Lord have mercy* or *A Thiarna, déan trócaire* or *Kyrie elesion*.

Option B.

The Bishop leads the Penitential Rite and the congregation responds. The responses may be either spoken or sung.

Bishop: Lord Jesus, you raise us to new life: *Lord have mercy / A Thiarna déan trócaire*

Bishop: Lord Jesus, you forgive us our sins: *Christ have mercy / A Chriost déan trócaire*

Bishop: Lord Jesus, you feed us with your body and blood: *Lord have mercy / A Thiarna déan trócaire*

GLORIA

- Where possible the Gloria should be sung. However the Gloria is ***omitted*** when the Confirmation ceremony takes place during the season of Lent.

† LITURGY OF THE WORD †

See:  [SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR THE LITURGY OF THE WORD](#)

FIRST READING

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

The Responsorial Psalm should ideally be sung and is to be taken from the Biblical Psalms. Please try not to replace the Responsorial Psalm with another hymn.

Suggestions for Responsorial Psalms are included **here.**:

 [SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR THE LITURGY OF THE WORD](#)

 [SUGGESTED MUSIC AND HYMNS FOR THE CELEBRATION OF CONFIRMATION](#)

SECOND READING

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION.

The *Alleluia* should be sung by the entire congregation. The antiphon/ short verse can be spoken or sung and then the Alleluia is repeated once more. Suggestions for the Gospel acclamation are included in the resource for music and hymns.

During the Season of Lent, the response '*Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ, King of Eternal Glory*' is sung in place of the Alleluia.

GOSPEL READING

The reading from the holy gospels is proclaimed by the Bishop.

HOMILY

† RITE OF CONFIRMATION †

[!\[\]\(21199eb166cc97331a0c54c649195dcc_img.jpg\) TEXT OF THE RITE OF CONFIRMATION](#)

PRESENTATION OF CANDIDATES

- + *A teacher or another nominated person from the parish community calls the candidates by name. Each candidate stands when their name is called.*
- + *An appropriate hymn invoking the power of the Holy Spirit may be sung by the candidates. Suggestions are available here:*

[!\[\]\(e78f798d4ea5c530c9db49e7d26e6b95_img.jpg\) SUGGESTED MUSIC AND HYMNS FOR THE CELEBRATION OF CONFIRMATION](#)

RENEWAL OF BAPTISMAL PROMISES

- + *The candidates stand for the Renewal of Baptismal Promises. See*

[!\[\]\(ec9132f1d27c8919987d92907322654d_img.jpg\) THE RITE OF CONFIRMATION](#)

LAYING ON OF HANDS AND PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

- + *The candidates are invited to kneel.*
- + *The Bishop, accompanied by the concelebrating priests, extend their hands as a sign of blessing and the Bishop prays the Prayer of Consecration.*

ANOINTING WITH CHRISM

- + *The Bishop takes his place at the front of the sanctuary. The Bishop normally administers the anointing **with both he and the candidates standing**. This better expresses the symbolism of the candidate stepping into a new moment on their journey of faith.*
- + *Sponsors stand behind the candidate and place their right hand on the right shoulder of the candidate as a sign of their commitment to support the candidate in their journey of faith.*
- + *The candidate may carry a card with their Confirmation name written on it*
- + *The words spoken by the Bishop and the candidate's responses are as follows:*
 - Bishop: [Name of candidate] Be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit.
 - Candidate: Amen.

 - Bishop: Peace be with you.
 - Candidate: And with your spirit.
- + *Gentle hymns or instrumental music can accompany the rite of anointing.*

GENERAL INTERCESSIONS / PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

- + Candidates come forward to lead the prayers. The readers of the intercessions remain on the sanctuary until the Bishop reads the concluding prayer.

† LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST †

PRESENTATION OF THE GIFTS

- The gifts of Bread and Wine are brought in procession by some of the candidates and presented to the Bishop.
- An Offertory Hymn or an instrumental piece of music may accompany the Offertory Procession.

EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

During the Eucharistic Prayer, the following responses may be sung by the candidates and the congregation:

- Holy, Holy. [Sanctus]
- Acclamation of Faith.
- The Great Amen.

COMMUNION RITE

- The Lord's Prayer may be spoken or sung.
- A suitable hymn to accompany the Sign of Peace may be sung.
- The Lamb of God [Agnus Dei] may be spoken or sung.
- Suitable Communion Hymns may be sung by candidates and congregation during the distribution of Holy Communion. Suggestions are available here.

 [SUGGESTED MUSIC AND HYMNS FOR THE CELEBRATION OF CONFIRMATION](#)

POST-COMMUNION REFLECTION [*Optional*]

- An appropriate spoken reflection, hymn or instrumental piece can be used.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

WORDS OF THANKS [*Optional*]

- A brief word of thanks may be offered, if it is considered appropriate.

FINAL BLESSING

RECESSIONAL HYMN

- A suitable hymn with a Confirmation theme should be sung to conclude the liturgy. Suggestions are available here:

 [SUGGESTED MUSIC AND HYMNS FOR THE CELEBRATION OF CONFIRMATION](#)