

TRADITIONAL CATHOLIC RITE OF CONFIRMATION

(Father Philip Weller, 1950)

At the time a priest endowed with the faculty granted by the Holy See (see above) purposes to administer confirmation, he vests in surplice and stole or also white cope, and takes his place standing before the altar and facing the people (they are arranged males to the right and females to the left). He reminds them that a bishop alone is the ordinary minister of confirmation, and that he himself is going to confer it only by delegation of the Holy See. Hereupon, if the delegation was granted by indult, the respective decree is read loudly and intelligibly in the vernacular. Then the priest admonishes the bystanders that no one, after he is confirmed, shall leave until he has received the blessing which the minister will impart after all have been confirmed. Moreover, he explains that the infants, if he has decided for a good reason (as explained above in I, 3) that such are to be admitted to confirmation, should be held in the right arm of the sponsors, and that the adult candidates should place one foot on the right foot of the sponsor; or that the sponsor should place his right hand on the right shoulder of the subject, whether child or adult.

After this second admonition, he remains standing and facing the candidates, having his hands joined; the candidates kneel and also have their hands folded. Then the priest says:

V. May the Holy Spirit come down upon you, and may the power of the Most High keep you from sin.
R. Amen.

Then signing himself with large sign of the Cross he says:

V. Our help is in the name of the Lord.
R. Who made heaven and earth.
V. O Lord, hear my prayer.
R. And let my cry come unto thee.
V. The Lord be with you.
R. And with thy spirit.

Then with hands extended over the ones being confirmed, he says:

Let us pray. **Prayer**
Almighty, everlasting God, Who hast deigned to beget new life in these thy servants by water and the Holy Spirit, and hast granted them remission of all their sins, send forth from heaven upon them thy Holy Spirit, the Consoler with His sevenfold gifts.

R. Amen.
V. The Spirit of wisdom and of understanding.
R. Amen.
V. The Spirit of counsel and of fortitude.
R. Amen.
V. The Spirit of knowledge and of piety.
R. Amen.

Fill them with the Spirit of fear of the Lord, and seal them with the sign of Christ's Cross, plenteous in mercy unto life everlasting. Through the selfsame Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with thee in the unity of the same Holy Spirit, God eternally.

R. Amen.

Then the priest confirms them as they kneel in line, first the males, then the females. When one row has been confirmed all rise, and others kneel in place, and so on until the end. As he comes to each candidate who is kneeling and presented by the sponsor, he inquires for the name. And dipping the tip of his thumb in the holy Chrism, he confirms the person as he says:

N., I seal thee with the sign of the Cross, during these words he has his right hand resting on the head of the subject, while with his thumb he traces the sign of the Cross on his brow, then continues: And I confirm thee with the Chrism of salvation. In the name of the Father, and of the Son. and of the Holy Spirit.

R. Amen.

And he lightly strikes the confirmed upon the cheek, saying: Peace be with thee.

Hereupon a linen band is fastened around the forehead of the newly confirmed. But if this practice is not observed, the priest carefully wipes the brow with cotton as soon as he has anointed them. This cotton is later burned.

After all have been confirmed, the priest cleanses his fingers with bread and washes them over a bowl. The water together with the bread is poured into the sacarium, and the same is done with the ashes of the burnt cotton.

During the washing of hands the assisting clergy sing or recite the following antiphon; or if there are no assistants the priest himself says it later:

Strengthen, O God, what thou hast wrought in us, from out thy holy temple which is in Jerusalem.

V. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be, world without end.
R. Amen.

The antiphon is repeated. And then the priest, standing with hands joined and facing the altar, says:

V. Show unto us thy mercy, O Lord.
R. And grant us thy salvation.
V. O Lord, hear my prayer.
R. And let my cry come unto thee.
V. The Lord be with you.
R. And with thy spirit.

Keeping his hands joined, the while the newly confirmed are devoutly kneeling, the priest continues:

Let us pray. **Prayer**
O God, thou didst give the Holy Spirit to thine apostles, and didst will that He should be handed down through them and their successors upon the rest of the faithful. So now behold with favor our lowly ministration, and grant that the same Holy Spirit may come and abide in the hearts of them whose brow we have anointed with holy Chrism and sealed with the sign of the holy Cross. And by His indwelling, may He graciously cause them to become a perfect temple for His divine majesty. Thou Who livest and reignest together with the Father and the selfsame Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever.
R. Amen.

He then adds:

Behold, thus shall every man be blessed that lives in the fear of the Lord.

And turning toward the confirmed, he says as he makes the sign of the Cross over them:

From Sion hence may the Lord send you His blessing, so that all your days you may gaze upon the prosperity of Jerusalem, and may come to possess life everlasting.
R. Amen.

In conclusion the priest is seated, and he counsels the sponsors to foster within their godchildren right living, that they may shun evil and do good; moreover, he instructs the sponsors to teach their godchildren the Apostles' Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Hail Mary, since such is their obligation. This sacrament may be conferred with less solemnity, especially when administered in a private home or outside a church or oratory to sick children or even adults, who for some legitimate reason cannot come to church. In such a case the priest may not omit to use at least a stole, even though a surplice is not available. And let him take heed not to administer confirmation in the presence of heretics or schismatics; much less should the latter act in capacity of assistants.

CATHOLIC ORDER OF CONFIRMATION

(USCCB, 2016)

PRESENTATION OF THE CANDIDATES

After the Gospel the Bishop receives the miter and lays aside the pastoral staff. Then, together with the ministers and congregation, is seated. The pastor should begin the presentations in these or similar words. If a pastor is presiding, a Deacon, the Director of Religious Education or other suitable person makes the presentation of the Candidates.

“Bishop [NAME], we would like to present to you our young men and women who have been prepared and are ready to receive the fullness of Christian Initiation in the Sacrament of Confirmation. Each candidate has been well instructed and is accompanied by a sponsor.”

Candidates are to stand when their parish is named.

If more than one parish, the following text is used as each Pastor presents his candidates as a parish group. This takes place after the host pastor says the previous text.

“From the parish of N., I present these candidates for confirmation...”

Candidates are seated.

HOMILY

After the Homily, the Bishop receives the pastoral staff and proceeds immediately into the Renewal of Baptismal Promises.

If the Presider is one other than a bishop, it is fitting for him to mention in the homily that the Bishop is the ordinary minister of the Sacrament and to explain the reason why even Priests receive the faculty to confirm from the law or by an indult.

RENEWAL OF BAPTISMAL PROMISES

The Bishop stands with miter and the pastoral staff. The Master of Ceremonies asks the candidates to stand. The Bishop questions them:

Bishop: Do you renounce Satan, and all his works and all his empty promises?

The candidates respond together: I do.

Do you believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth?

Candidates: I do.

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary, suffered death and was buried, rose again from the dead, and is seated at the right hand of the Father?

Candidates: I do.

Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who today through the Sacrament of Confirmation is given to you in a special way just as he was given to the Apostles on the day of Pentecost?

Candidates: I do.

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.

This is our faith. This is the faith of the Church. We are proud to profess it in Christ Jesus our Lord.
The whole congregation responds: Amen

LAYING ON OF HANDS

Then, removing the miter and handing off the pastoral staff, the Bishop is joined by any priests who will assist with the administration of the Sacrament of Confirmation. With hands joined, says:

Bishop: Dearly Beloved: let us pray to God the almighty Father, for these, his adopted sons and daughters, already born again to eternal life in Baptism, that he will graciously pour out the Holy Spirit upon them to confirm them with his abundant gifts, and through his anointing conform them more fully to Christ, the Son of God.

All pray in silence for a short time.

The Bishop lays hands upon all the candidates (by extending his hands over them) and says:

Bishop: Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who brought these your servants to new birth by water and the Holy Spirit, freeing them from sin: send upon them, O Lord, the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete; give them the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and fortitude, the spirit of knowledge and piety; fill them with the spirit of the fear of the Lord. Through Christ our Lord.
R. Amen.

The Bishop receives the miter and pastoral staff. He is assisted by a deacon (or server) holding the chrismatorium to his right. Any priests with whom the Bishop has associated himself for the administration of Confirmation receive a vessel of sacred chrism from the Bishop.

THE ANOINTING WITH CHRISM

Confirmands should line up two by two in the center aisle for the reception of the anointing. However, they will approach the Bishop one at a time for the anointing with Sacred Chrism.

The sponsor who presents the candidate places his or her right hand on the candidates [sic] shoulder. The candidate announces in a loud, clear voice his/her name to the Bishop. During the anointing, a suitable hymn may be sung and the congregation should be seated.

The Bishop dips his right thumb in the sacred chrism and makes the sign of the cross on the forehead of the one to be confirmed, as he says:

Bishop: N., be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit.
The newly confirmed responds: Amen.
Bishop: Peace be with you.
The newly confirmed responds: And with your spirit.

Assisted by servers, the Master of Ceremonies sees that the Bishop's hands are properly washed using lemon, bread, and a basin and ewer.

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