

The Order of Confirmation

CHAPTER I – THE ORDER FOR THE CONFERRAL OF CONFIRMATION WITHIN MASS

20. The Liturgy of the Word is celebrated in accordance with the rubrics. The readings, however, may be taken in whole or in part from the Mass of the day or from the texts for Confirmation in the *Lectionary for Mass* and listed below (nos. 61-65).

21. After the Gospel the Bishop (as do the Priests who are associated with him) take assigned seats. The candidates for Confirmation are presented by the Pastor or another Priest, or by a Deacon, or even by a catechist, in accordance with the custom of each region, in this way: if possible, each of those to be confirmed is called by name and individually approaches the sanctuary; but if they are children, they are accompanied by one of their sponsors or parents and stand before the celebrant.

If there are very many candidates, they are not called by name; but they are assigned to a suitable place before the Bishop.

The Homily or Address

22. The Bishop then gives a brief homily, by which, shedding light on the readings, he leads, as if by hand, those to be confirmed, their sponsors and parents, and the whole gathering of the faithful to a deeper understanding of the mystery of Confirmation.

He may do so in these or similar words:

The Apostles, who had received the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost in fulfilment of the Lord's promise, had power to complete the work of Baptism by the giving of the Holy Spirit, as we read in the Acts of the Apostles. When Saint Paul had laid his hands on certain people who had been baptised, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied.

The Bishops, as successors of the Apostles, possess the same power and, either in their own right or through Priests lawfully appointed to fulfil this ministry, they confer the Holy Spirit on those who have already been born again in Baptism.

Even if today the coming of the Holy Spirit is no longer widely made manifest by the gift of tongues, we know by faith that the Spirit, through whom the love of God has been poured into our hearts and through whom we are gathered in unity of faith and in diversity of callings, is received by us and is working invisibly to make the Church holy and one.

Dearly beloved, the gift of the Holy Spirit, which you are about to receive, will be a spiritual seal, by which you will be conformed to Christ and will be made more fully members of his Church. For Christ himself, anointed by the Holy Spirit in the baptism he received from John, was sent forth for the work of his ministry, to pour out on the earth the fire of the same Spirit.

Therefore, you who are already baptised will now receive the power of his Spirit and be signed with his Cross on your foreheads. And so, you must always bear witness to his Passion and Resurrection before the world, so that your manner of life, as the Apostle says, may be in every place the pleasing fragrance of Christ. His Mystical Body, which is the Church, the People of God, receives from him diverse graces, which the same Holy Spirit distributes to individuals for the building up of that Body in unity and love.

Be living members of this Church, therefore, and, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, seek to serve all people like Christ, who came not to be served but to serve.

And now, before you receive the Spirit, call to mind the faith which you professed in Baptism or which your parents and godparents professed with the Church.

The Renewal of Baptismal Promises

23. After the homily the Bishop questions those to be confirmed, who stand, as he says:

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

Together, all those to be confirmed reply:

I do.

Bishop:

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

Those to be confirmed:

I do.

Bishop:

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?

Those to be confirmed:

I do.

Bishop:

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?

Those to be confirmed:

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?

Those to be confirmed:

I do.

The Bishop gives his assent to the profession by proclaiming the faith of the Church:

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

The gathering of the faithful gives its assent by replying:

Amen.

For the formula This is our faith, it is permitted to substitute, if appropriate, some other formula or even some suitable chant, by which the community is able to express its faith.

The Laying On of Hands

24. Then the Bishop (while the Priests associated with him remain by his side) standing, facing the people, with hands joined, says:

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.

And all pray in silence for a while.

25. Then the Bishop lays hands over all those to be confirmed (as do the Priests who are associated with him). But the Bishop alone says:

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 Anointing with Chrism

26. The sacred Chrism is brought by the Deacon to the Bishop. Each of those to be confirmed goes to the Bishop; or, if appropriate, the Bishop goes to each of those to be confirmed. The sponsor who presents the person to be confirmed places his (her) right hand on his (her) shoulder and says the name of the one to be confirmed to the Bishop; or the one to be confirmed alone says his (her) own name.

27. The Bishop dips the tip of the thumb of his right hand in the Chrism and, with the thumb, makes the Sign of the Cross on the forehead of the one to be confirmed, as he says:

N., BE SEALED WITH THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

The newly confirmed replies:

Amen.

The Bishop adds:

Peace be with you.

The newly confirmed:

And with your spirit.

28. If Priests assist the Bishop in conferring the Sacrament, all the vessels of sacred Chrism are brought to the Bishop by the Deacon or by the ministers. As each of the Priests comes to the Bishop, he gives each a vessel of Chrism.

Those to be confirmed go to the Bishop or to the Priests; or, if appropriate, the Bishop and Priests go to those to be confirmed. The anointing is done as described above (no. 27).

29. During the anointing a suitable chant may be sung. After the anointing the Bishop washes his hands (as do the Priests).

The Universal Prayer

30. The Universal Prayer follows in this or a similar form determined by the competent authority.

Bishop:

My dear brothers and sisters,
let us humbly pray to God the almighty Father
and be of one mind in our prayer,
just as faith, hope and charity,
which proceed from his Holy Spirit, are one.

Deacon or minister:

For these his servants,
whom the gift of the Holy Spirit has confirmed:
that, planted in faith and grounded in love,
they may bear witness to Christ the Lord by their way of life,
let us pray to the Lord.

R. Lord, we ask you, hear our prayer.

Deacon or minister:

For their parents and sponsors:
that by word and example
they may continue to encourage
those whom they have sponsored in the faith
to follow in the footsteps of Christ,
let us pray to the Lord.

R. Lord, we ask you, hear our prayer.

Deacon or minister:

For the holy Church of God
together with N. our Pope, N. our Bishop and all the Bishops:

that, gathered by the Holy Spirit,
the Church may grow and increase in unity of faith and love
until the coming of the Lord,
let us pray to the Lord.

R. Lord, we ask you, hear our prayer.

Deacon or minister:

For the whole world:
that all people, who have one Maker and Father,
may acknowledge one another as brothers and sisters,
without discrimination of race or nation,
and with sincere hearts seek the Kingdom of God,
which is peace and joy in the Holy Spirit,
let us pray to the Lord.

R. Lord, we ask you, hear our prayer.

Bishop:

O God, who gave the Holy Spirit to your Apostles
and willed that through them and their successors
the same Spirit be handed on to the rest of the faithful,
listen favourably to our prayer,
and grant that your divine grace,
which was at work when the Gospel was first proclaimed,
may now spread through the hearts of those who believe in you.
Through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

The Liturgy of the Eucharist

31. After the Universal Prayer the Liturgy of the Eucharist is celebrated according to the Order of Mass, with these changes:

a) the Creed is omitted, since the Profession of Faith has already taken place.

b) some of the confirmed may join those who bring forward the offerings;

c) when the Roman Canon is used, the proper form of the *Hanc igitur* (Therefore, Lord, we pray) is said, no. 58. When Eucharistic Prayer II or Eucharistic Prayer III is used, the proper forms for these Prayers are said, no. 58.

32. Adults who are confirmed, and, if appropriate, their sponsors, parents, spouses, and catechists may receive Communion under both kinds.

The Blessing

33. Instead of the usual blessing, the following blessing or Prayer over the People is used at the end of Mass.

The Deacon or, in his absence, the minister of Confirmation himself, says the invitation: Bow down for the blessing.

The Bishop, with hands extended over the newly confirmed, says:

May God the Father almighty bless you,
whom he has made his adopted sons and daughters
reborn from water and the Holy Spirit,
and may he keep you worthy of his fatherly love.

R. Amen.

May his Only Begotten Son,
who promised that the Spirit of truth would abide in his Church,
bless you and confirm you by his power
in the confession of the true faith.

R. Amen.

May the Holy Spirit,
who kindles the fire of charity in the hearts of disciples,
bless you and lead you blameless and gathered as one
into the joy of the Kingdom of God.

R. Amen.

And he blesses all the people, adding:

And may almighty God bless all of you, who are gathered here,
the Father, † and the Son, † and the Holy † Spirit.

R. Amen.

The Prayer over the People

Instead of the preceding formula of blessing, the Prayer over the People may be used.

The Deacon or, in his absence, the minister of Confirmation himself, says the invitation: Bow down for the blessing.

The Bishop, with hands extended over the people, says:

Confirm, O God,
what you have brought about in us,
and preserve in the hearts of your faithful
the gifts of the Holy Spirit:
may they never be ashamed
to confess Christ crucified before the world
and by devoted charity
may they ever fulfil his commands.
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

R. Amen.

The Bishop adds immediately:

And may the blessing of almighty God
the Father, † and the Son, † and the Holy † Spirit
come down on you and remain with you for ever.

R. Amen.