

# **CONFIRMATION**

# **BASICS**

FOR THE

## ***DIOCESE OF ORANGE***



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*Holy Spirit, share Your wisdom,  
that they will find the solution to problems and  
use their energy to solve them, instead of complaining.  
Fill them with understanding of God's Word  
and how it applies to their lives and untangle the  
confusion of the decisions that they face.  
Teach them to have good and right judgment,  
show them the way to Christian living, and make them  
strong against the temptations that surround us all.  
Grant them courage,  
especially when their efforts seem to fail and they feel  
like giving up.  
Give them a thirst for knowledge,  
to see the truth about themselves, their families and  
friends, our world and our loving God.  
Give them a spirit of reverence,  
that they will build rather than tear down,  
will reconcile more than polarize,  
and will think of others before themselves.  
And when they are in Your wonderful and awesome presence,  
help them praise Your greatness and unlimited love,  
through their thoughts, words, actions and lives. Amen.*

# ***Objectives and Requirements of the Sacrament of Confirmation Preparation & Experience in the Diocese of Orange***

The Parish Confirmation Experience brings Christ into every aspect of the participant's life in two years.

## **The Requirements of the Confirmation Preparation Experience**

- † Attend Catechetical Classes/Instruction/Meetings
- † Choosing a Sponsor
- † Letter to the Bishop
- † Engagement of the Student into the Parish
- † Engagement of the Parish about the Student
- † Offering experiences of community and conversion

### **Choosing to be Confirmed**

Through the process of the Preparation, candidates are prepared to learn, understand and be challenged by their faith. Through this experience of "living" faith, they are given the opportunity to choose whether they feel they are freely choosing to be an active and engaged Catholic.

### **Choosing to write a letter to the Bishop**

Upon completion of the Confirmation Preparation process, candidates are to write letters to the particular Bishop celebrating their sacrament of Confirmation. This letter should express their desire to be confirmed and may contain thoughts about what they learned and how their faith has grown over the two year preparation process.

### **Choosing a Sponsor**

Through the process of the Preparation, candidates are to choose a person whom they deem appropriate to guide, support them in this process. This person is to be an active and engaged Catholic who with word and action lives out their faith. When possible and as a way to connect baptism to confirmation, it is recommended to choose the God Parent who baptized the candidate.

### **Choosing a Saint Name**

Through the process of the Preparation, candidates are to choose a saint that they feel is someone that they can look up to and can continually ask for intercession.

## **Objectives of a Confirmation Preparation Experience**

- To guide young people in the call to holiness by developing a personal relationship with Jesus Christ by meeting him in the Scriptures, in the life and teachings of the Catholic Church, and in their own prayer lives.
- To help young people recognize the movement of the Holy Spirit in their lives.
- To develop a deeper appreciation for the importance of the Scripture and the teachings of the Church.
- To nurture in young people an understanding of and active participation in the sacramental life of the Church, and especially to have an awareness of, a desire for Eucharist.
- To foster development of a personal spirituality and prayer life in young people.
- To empower young people with the knowledge and skills for active participation in the life and ministries of the Church, in particular youth ministry.
- To help young people realize they have a place in the Church now.
- To nurture in young people positive, Catholic values of love, honesty, courage, peace, and nonviolence, fidelity, chastity, generosity, tolerance, respect for life from conception to natural death, care and compassion toward others.
- To help young people to serve those in need, to develop skills that foster social changes to secure justice and equality for every human being, and to live a life of Christian service modeled on Jesus' Life.
- To help young people to love their faith and to apply their Catholic faith to daily life experiences, nurture in young people a lifelong commitment to the Catholic Faith.
- To empower young people to live moral and theological virtues and apply these virtues in making decisions, especially valuing chastity and sexual restraint.
- To cultivate the gifts and talents of young people, and empower them to utilize these gifts and talents in leadership and ministry.

# Essential *Catechetical Components* of the Confirmation Preparation & Experience

The Parish Confirmation Experience goes beyond the “program” mentality that requires the organizers to not create but offer an experience that leads to exploration and transformation.

**The Goal of the Confirmation Preparation Experience is to celebrate and acknowledge that the Spirit of Jesus given in Baptism to us all is truly alive and at work in the each and every Christian. Through this Sacrament, the Church also affirms the view that growth in the Spirit is a continual, life-long journey celebrating and deepening the ongoing initiation into a new life with Jesus which began at Baptism.**

**The following components have been provided in order to help you create a well-balanced program in preparing candidates for their sacrament.**

## **The Ten Basic Components**

- † A two year experience with the participation of both parents and sponsors
- † Sunday Eucharistic Liturgy
- † Community Life of the Church
- † Liturgical Celebrations of Support
- † Retreats
- † Prayer Life of the community
- † Service Projects/Experiences
- † Spiritual Guidance
- † Days of Renewal
- † Confirmation classes (\*\*class topics)

† **A Two Year Experience with the participation of Both Parents and Sponsors.**

*"Do not forget the things your eyes have seen, nor let them slip from your heart all the days of your life: rather, tell them to your children and to your children's children..." (Dt 4:9)*

*As primary educators of their children, parents along with sponsors, are to be intimately involved in Catechesis for confirmation. This will help them renew and strengthen their faith, besides enabling them to set a better example for their children and godchildren. (Sharing the Light of Faith, #119)*

**Parents and sponsors should be involved with the candidate in the sacramental preparation through:**

- 1) Participating in service projects with them.
- 2) Attending Mass with them.
- 3) Attending special days of faith formation, prayer and reflection with them.
- 4) Helping in the program with driving, chaperoning, and other tasks.

† **Sunday Eucharistic Liturgy**

*During the meal Jesus took bread, blessed it, broke it, and gave it to his disciples. "Take this and eat it," he said, "this is my body." Then He took a cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them. "All of you must drink from it," he said, for this is my blood" (Mt 26:26-28)*

*The celebration of the Mass, as an action of Christ and the people of God hierarchically ordered, is the center of the whole Christian life for the universal Church, the local Church and for each and every one of the faithful. . (Vatican II, Gen. Instruct. on the Missal, SCDW, Mar. 26, 1970, chap 1 par 1)*

**All candidates should be participating in Sunday liturgies on a weekly basis and the Holy Days of Obligation that are:**

Immaculate Conception:	December 8
Christmas Day:	December 25
Mary, Mother of God:	January 1
Ascension Thursday:	40 days after Easter

Assumption of Mary  
All Saint's Day:

August 15  
November 1

### † **Community Life of the Church**

*"The community of believers were of one heart and mind. None of the ever claimed anything as his own; rather, everything was held in common." ( Mt. 4:32-35)*

*To this end the catechesis for Confirmation should strive to awaken a sense of belonging to the Church of Jesus Christ, the universal Church as well as the parish community. The latter bears special responsibility for the preparation of the confirmands. (Catechism, #1309)*

**Youth should show participation in the community life of the diocese and parish church.**

#### Suggestions:

- Parish Events (social, spiritual, multicultural)
- Youth Ministry Events (socials, retreats, fundraisers, fellowships, bible studies, service projects)
- Campus Ministry (retreats, service projects, prayer services)
- Diocesan Events (Teen Bible Study, Winter Joy, Summer Joy, Dances...etc.)

### † **Liturgical Celebrations of Support**

*Maturing in faith is a life-long journey for everyone.... The journey from accepting the faith of the community to owning their own faith within the community is a time of deeper questioning. (Vat 11, On Catechesis in Our Time, Chap 3, #23)*

**These rituals should be used to celebrate the various stages of spiritual progress of the candidates through the two-year preparation. Feel free to work with your Pastor to come up with the appropriate Rites for your own parish. Some examples include**

- **First Liturgical Celebration of Support – First Year**  
This ritual is celebrated with the candidates and sponsors one month after the program has started to welcome the candidates into the two-year process and to pray for them.
- **Second Liturgical Celebration of Support – First Year**  
This ritual celebrates with the candidates and sponsors the completion of one year of catechesis, service, prayer, and community involvement.
- **Liturgical Celebration of Acceptance – Second Year**  
This ritual is celebrated with the candidates and sponsors at the end of the two-year program where the Pastor accepts the candidates for the

Sacrament of Confirmation after completing two years of catechesis, service, prayer, and community involvement. This should be celebrated one or two weeks before the Confirmation Rehearsal.

## † **Retreats**

*"At once the spirit drove him out into the desert, and he remained in the desert for forty days"*  
(Mk1:12-13)

*This life of intimate union with Christ in the Church is nourished by spiritual aides which are common to all the faithful.* (Doc of Vat,II, Decree on the Apost. of the Laity, Chap 3, #2).

**A one day or weekend retreat should be offered yearly for the candidates.**

## † **Prayer Life of Community**

"They devoted themselves to the apostles' instruction and the communal life, to the breaking of the bread and prayers." Mt.2:42

*The ministry of prayer and worship celebrates and deepens young people's relationship with Jesus Christ through the bestowal of grace, communal prayer and liturgical experience;...(Renewing the Vision, NCCB)*

**The program should offer different opportunities to learn and experience the many approaches and styles of prayer.**

### Suggestions:

- Mass + Holy Days of Obligation
- Youth Ministry Prayer Services
- Eucharistic Adoration
- Stations of the Cross
- Sacrament of Reconciliation
- Rosary
- Advent and/or Lent Prayer Services
- Other Parish Prayer Services

## † Service Projects

*"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives and recovery of the sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, and to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord." (Luke 4:18-19)*

*"A renewed consciousness of the demands of the Gospel make it the Church's duty to put herself at the service of all, to help them grasp the serious problem in all its dimensions, and to convince them that in solidarity in action at this turning point history is a matter of urgency."  
(Pastoral Constitution on the Church and World –Gaudium et Spes. 1)*

**The program should offer different opportunities to serve others. These service projects should always have a reflective component.**

Suggestions:

- Parish Service Projects
- Adopt a Family
- Food Pantry Programs/St. Joseph's Kitchen
- Catholic Charities – Doris Cantlay Center
- Catholic Worker/Isaiah House
- Convalescent Hospitals
- City or Beach Clean ups

## † Spiritual Guidance

*He guides the humble to justice, he teaches the humble his way." (Ps 25:12)*

**The program should offer ongoing spiritual guidance through such things as:**

Suggestions:

- Sacrament of Reconciliation with sponsors
- Invitation from Seminarians, Spiritual Directors, Religious, Priests
- Opportunities to have one on one conversation about prayer life
- Interviews with candidates
- Sponsors as role models

## † Days of Renewal

"When he sent them away, he went up on the mountain by himself to pray" ... (Mt 14:23)

*Many of the faithful are led to gather in small groups to hear the Gospel, to meditate in depth and practice contemplation.* (Vat II, chap p.221)

**Days of prayer and reflection should be offered for the candidates and their sponsors during this two-year process.**

## † Confirmation Classes (curriculum)

*"They devoted themselves to the teaching of the apostles and to the communal life, to the breaking of the bread and to the prayers.* (Acts 3:42)

*"Catechesis is an esteemed term in Christian tradition. Its purpose is to make a person's faith become living, conscious, and active through the light of instruction."* (Sharing the Light of Faith, #32)

**All classes should have catechesis that includes both faith-sharing and theology.**

The classes should include these topics:

- The Church and Its mission
- Discipleship/Stewardship
- Fruits/Gifts of the Holy Spirit
- Jesus and Faith
- Morality and Decision Making
- Scripture and Tradition
- The Trinity
- Sacraments
- Social Justice
- Prayer/Liturgy

# Pastoral commentary and details on the *Rite of Confirmation*, as put together by the Liturgy Office and approved by Bishop Tod D. Brown

DIOCESE OF ORANGE

## PART I GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

The Rite of Confirmation more properly takes place within the celebration of the Mass “in order to express more clearly the fundamental connection of this sacrament with the entirety of the Christian initiation” (CSL 71). Attention should be paid to the festive and solemn character of the liturgical service. The people of God represented by the families and friends of the candidates and by members of the local community, should be invited to take part in the celebration and express their faith in the fruits of the Holy Spirit.

The catechetical and pastoral preparation should include the entire parish community and not merely be presented to the candidates. Thus, as a parish celebration, it can be an occasion of prayer and grace for the entire parish family. This preparation could include preaching, bulletin announcements, and special requests for prayers for the candidates and their sponsors.

The responsibility for having the candidates prepared is placed with the pastor of the parish.

The following are *practical* items regarding the celebration of Confirmation:

1. **SIZE OF CLASS:** Parishes with over 200 candidates and parishes with a large class and small church should schedule two Masses of Confirmation.
2. **SPONSORS:** Pastors must ascertain the spiritual qualifications of sponsors. The sponsor for any candidate may be male or female, and is to be a sufficiently mature, practicing Catholic, who has him/herself been confirmed and has not been prohibited by law from exercising the role of sponsor. A baptismal sponsor is not only allowed, but is in fact desired as the Confirmation sponsor, so as to emphasize the relationship between Baptism and Confirmation (Canon 893, #2). A parent may not act as a sponsor for his or her child, but may “present” the child for Confirmation with another qualified person being the sponsor (Canon 893 with reference to Canon 874, #5).

\***NOTE:** The Bishops have observed that lately a number of sponsors approach at Communion for a blessing only. This indicates (with an occasional exception) that these sponsors might not be practicing Catholics and this requirement is to be especially emphasized with the Confirmands.

3. **NAMES:** The use of the baptismal name on the occasion of Confirmation better expresses the relationship between Baptism and Confirmation. If a new name is taken it should be the name of a recognized saint. Candidates should be guided in choosing a name.
4. **PHOTOGRAPHS:** The taking of photographs during the Confirmation Mass should be discouraged, and in no case may one leave his/her seat to do so. It would be most helpful if the Confirmation candidates and sponsors were informed of this at the time of the rehearsal. The confirming Bishop will be happy to have his picture taken with the candidates after the Confirmation Mass.
5. **KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS:** Knights of Columbus should be seated to one side so as not to obstruct the participation of the candidates and sponsors. If they are in the procession, they follow the cross-bearer and acolytes, and precede the concelebrants both in and out of the Church. They will not draw their swords during Mass; their heads should remain uncovered throughout.
6. **RESERVED PARKING:** A place should be reserved for the Bishop's car near the rectory or the vesting area.

The following are liturgical points regarding the celebration of Confirmation:

1. **SACRAMENTARY TEXTS:** The Ritual Mass for Confirmation (A-B-C) should be used except on Sundays of Advent, Lent, and the Easter Season, or on Solemnities and Feasts, when the proper prayers and readings of the day are to be used.
2. **SCRIPTURE READINGS:** Scripture or readings appropriate for Confirmation may be used for the Confirmation Mass, except on the days noted above in #1.
3. **LECTORS:** This ministerial function may be assigned to one of the parish lectors or to one of the Confirmation candidates who can proclaim the scriptures with dignity and clarity.
4. **GENERAL INTERCESSIONS:** The General Intercessions should include petitions for the Church, civil authorities, those in need, the confirmandi, and the specific needs of the parish community. There is a model form presented in the

Rite which may be used. The proper minister to lead the petitions is the deacon. In his absence, one of the candidates or the lector may read the petitions.

5. **COMMUNION:** It is permissible for the faithful to receive communion for a second time in one day if they are attending the Confirmation Mass.
6. **WIPING OF CHRISM:** So that the fullness of the sacramental signs may be evident in the celebration of this sacrament, there is no need to wipe off the chrism from the foreheads of the candidates.
7. **CONCELEBRATION:** On the occasion of Confirmation, it is especially recommended that those priests involved in the preparation of the candidates should concelebrate with the Bishop. It is entirely proper that all priests share in the celebration by concelebrating the Mass. No one is ever to be admitted to concelebrate Mass which has already begun.
8. **DEACON OF THE MASS:** The participation of a deacon (permanent or transitional) is highly desired in the Mass of Confirmation. The deacon walks either in front of the concelebrants, carrying high the Book of Gospels (Lectionary), or to the right and one step behind the Bishop when he is not carrying the Book of Gospels. He proclaims the Gospel, presents the Sacred Chrism to the Bishop, and assists the Bishop as the rubrics specify. The Office of the Permanent Diaconate will schedule permanent Deacons whenever possible.
9. **PROCESSION OF CANDIDATES AND SPONSORS:** All candidates and their sponsors should be in their places prior to the procession off the ministers of the liturgy. They follow the Bishop out of the Church during the recessional.
10. **MUSIC:** Please refer to the attached section dealing with pastoral planning of music for the Rite of Confirmation.
11. **SACRISTY DETAILS:** The following items should be prepared prior to the celebration of the sacrament:
  - a. Mass vestments (Chasuble and stole).  
Bishop McFarland brings an alb.  
Color: Red, unless the Ritual Mass for Confirmation is not permitted, then the color of the day.
  - b. Lectionary and Book of Gospels ( if one is present)

- c. Sacramentary (latest edition) marked to the Mass for Confirmation or to the appropriate Mass for the day, as well as the Preface of the Holy Spirit (P-54, P-55).
  - d. Chair, preferably with arms, in which the Bishop will sit while he confirms the candidates.
  - e. Pitcher of water and basin with sliced lemon.
  - f. Two small towels.
  - g. Purificators and corporal.
  - h. Ciboria prepared for consecration. If at all possible communion is not to be distributed from the reserved chair.
12. **ALTAR SERVERS:** There are to be five altar servers to assist at the Confirmation Mass. They are:
- a. Cross-bearer
  - b. Two candle-bearers
  - c. Miter and Crozier bearers

A place should be reserved on one side of the sanctuary area for the servers to sit, the vessels to be placed, and for the Master of Ceremonies. The servers should be at the Church thirty minutes prior to the beginning of Mass.

## **PART II RITE OF CONFIRMATION WITHIN MASS**

### **PRESENTATION OF THE CANDIDATES**

After the Gospel, read by the deacon or, in his absence, by one of the concelebrants, the Bishop and the priests take their seats. The pastor or priest delegated by him presents the candidates for Confirmation in these or similar words:

#### **FORM A**

Bishop \_\_\_\_\_, the parish community of \_\_\_\_\_ wishes to present to you its young men and women who have prepared and are ready to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. Each candidate has been well instructed and is accompanied by a sponsor. It is my privilege to present them to you at this time; I invite the candidates for Confirmation to please stand.

## FORM B

Bishop \_\_\_\_\_, the members of the parish community of \_\_\_\_\_ welcome and express sentiments of thanks for your coming here so that the young men and women of the parish may receive the Holy Spirit in Confirmation. Just as the apostles Peter and John journeyed from Jerusalem to Samaria in order that the neophytes of that town might receive the Holy Spirit, so you have journeyed here on a similar apostolic mission. These candidates have been baptized in the Lord Jesus and have been nourished at His Eucharistic banquet. In preparation for this day they have received and carefully assimilated the Word of God with an ever-deepening commitment of faith. The parish community has joined them in prayer that the seal of the Holy Spirit, with the abundance of His seven-fold gifts, may confirm them, that by your ministry they may receive the Holy Spirit in Confirmation. I invite the candidates for Confirmation to please stand.

### HOMILY

The Bishop gives the homily. He may do this in dialogue form (Rite of Confirmation, #18).

After the Homily, the candidate's only stand to profess their faith in the presence of the Church assembled. The following form is used:

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

Assembly: Amen.

### **IMPOSITION OF HANDS**

During the Imposition of Hands the candidates will kneel. The Bishop with hands joined, says:

My dear friends: In baptism God our Father give 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 His daughters with his gifts and anoint them to be more like Christ the Son of God.

All pray in silence for a short time.

The Bishop **alone** extends his hands over the candidates and says:

All-powerful God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, by water and the Holy Spirit you freed your 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 wonder and awe in your presence. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

**Assembly:** Amen.

### **THE ANOINTING WITH CHRISM**

The anointing is performed by the Bishop, seated in a chair placed prominently in the sanctuary, before whom the candidates will approach two by two, with their sponsors. The candidates kneel in pairs with their sponsors placing their right hand on the shoulder of the candidate. As soon as one is confirmed, he/she leaves at once without waiting for his/her partner to be confirmed, and his/her place is immediately taken by the next line so that there is no delay.

The Bishop dips his right thumb in the 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.

**Newly Confirmed:** Amen.

**Bishop:** Peace be with you.

**Newly Confirmed:** And also with you.

During the anointing suitable songs may be sung. They should be sung in a soft tone. After the anointing the Bishop washes his hands.

### **GENERAL INTERCESSIONS**

The General intercessions follow, in this or a similar form:

**Bishop:** My dear friends, let us be one in prayer to God our Father as we are one in the faith, hope and love His Spirit gives.

**Deacon:** 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. Lord hear our prayer.

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. Lord hear our prayer.

For the holy church of God, in union with John Paul, our pope, Norman, our Bishop, (\_\_\_\_\_, his assistant Bishop), and all the Bishops, that God, Who gathers us together by the Holy Spirit, may help us grow in unity of faith and love until his Son returns in glory, let us pray to the Lord. Lord hear our prayer.

For men and women of every race and nation, that they may acknowledge the one God as Father, and in the bond of common charity seek His kingdom, which is peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, let us pray to the Lord. Lord hear our prayer.

(Other petitions may be added.)

**Bishop:** God our Father, you sent your Holy Spirit upon the apostles, and through them and their successors you give the Spirit to your people. May his work begun at Pentecost continue to work in the hearts of all who believe. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

**All:** Amen.

## LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

After the general intercessions the liturgy of the Eucharist is celebrated according to the Order of Mass, with these exceptions.

1. the profession of faith is omitted, since it has already been made;
2. some of the newly confirmed may join those who bring the gifts to the altar; (n.b. "It is fitting that the participation of the faithful be expressed by their offering the bread and wine for the celebration of the Eucharist, together with other gifts for the needs of the Church and of the poor" GIRM 3101).
3. when Eucharistic Prayer 1 is used, the special form of "Father, accept this offering" is said.

## COMMUNION

Communion may be distributed under both the forms of bread and wine. If communion will be distributed in this manner it is important that those who minister both the Body and the Blood of the Lord be thoroughly familiar with where they will stand so that the Eucharist may be distributed in an orderly and reverent manner. The common rule is that there be two ministers of the cup to every one minister of the Body of Christ. Extraordinary ministers of the Eucharist are not to be used when there are sufficient ordinary ministers present.

## BLESSING

Instead of the usual blessing at the end of Mass, the following blessing or prayer over the people is used:

**Bishop:** God our Father made you His children by water and the Holy Spirit; may He bless you and watch over you with His fatherly love.

**All:** Amen.

**Bishop:** Jesus Christ the Son of God promised that the Spirit of Truth would be with his church forever: may he bless you and give you courage in professing the true faith.

**All:** Amen.

**Bishop:** May almighty God bless you, the Father, and the Son, n, and the Holy Spirit.

**All:** Amen.

### **PRAYER OVER THE PEOPLE**

Instead of the preceding blessing, the prayer over the people may be used. The deacon or minister gives the invitation in these or similar words:

**Deacon:** Bow your heads and pray for God's blessing.

**Bishop:** God our Father, complete the work You have begun and keep the gifts of your Holy Spirit active in the hearts of your people. Make them ready to live His Gospel and eager to do is will. May they never be ashamed to proclaim to all the world Christ crucified living and reigning for ever and ever.

**All:** Amen.

**Bishop:** And may the blessing of almighty God the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit come upon you and remain with you forever.

**All:** Amen.

### **PART III MUSIC FOR THE RITE OF CONFIRMATION**

Confirmation is a celebration of faith within the midst of the community of the Church. Music carefully selected and well rendered can heighten the celebration and strengthen the faith of the assembled believers.

The selection of music should be based on the principles set forth in Music in Catholic Worship and Liturgical Music Today (Bishop's Committee on the Liturgy: United States Catholic Conference, Washington, D.C., 1972-1982). The music selected should be artistically good, liturgically appropriate and pastorally suitable.

ARTISTICALLY GOOD – Aesthetically and technically good music is found in a variety of styles. Hence the music selected may include contemporary and traditional, choral and congregational, etc.

LITURGICALLY APPROPRIATE – Songs that speak of our baptismal dignity, the paschal mystery, the Lordship of Jesus, our call to

Christian witness, and empowerment in the Holy Spirit are appropriate for the Confirmation liturgy. While there has traditionally been a preoccupation with "Spirit" songs, it should be kept in mind that Confirmation "seals" the baptismal experience and hence should be seen intimately tied to an overall theology of initiation in which the Spirit is at work both in Baptism and Confirmation. Music should be carefully selected to highlight those parts of the liturgical rite that are more significant: I.E., Word, Eucharist, and the Rite of Confirmation. The following pastoral comments relative to the place of music within the Confirmation liturgy might prove helpful in your planning:

Gathering Music: Prior to the liturgy and while the candidates are being seated, instrumental or choral music may be played to accompany this action and to create a festive atmosphere. There should be a definite break between this gathering music and the entrance song.

Entrance: The Entrance song should create an atmosphere of celebration. It serves the function of putting the assembly in the proper frame of mind for listening to the Word of God. Its style can vary from hymnody to an antiphonal psalm setting. If a well-known hymn is selected it can be enriched through the use of choral descants and added instrumentation. It is particularly appropriate during the Easter Season to select anthems that reflect the nature of this liturgical season.

Introductory Rites: The "Lord have mercy" and "Glory to God" may be sung. However, their setting should be brief and simple so as not to give undue emphasis to the introductory Rites. It is best to select a musical setting for one and not both in the same liturgy; e.g., sung "Lord have mercy" during Advent and Lent; sung "Glory to God" during the Easter Season.

Responsorial Psalm: This unique and very important song is the response to the first lesson. Ideally, the text should be that of the psalm appointed for the day in the Lectionary. It should always be sung. The style of singing can vary between cantor and assembly; choir and assembly; small vocal ensemble and assembly.

Gospel Acclamation: This acclamation of paschal joy is both a reflection upon the Word of God proclaimed in the liturgy and a preparation for the Gospel lesson. By its very nature, it should always be sung. The ICEL Lectionary Music: Psalms and Alleluia

and Gospel Acclamations for the Liturgy of the Word (GIA Publications, Inc. 7404 South Mason Avenue, Chicago, Ill.60638) provides suitable musical resources for this chant. During the Lenten Season, the Alleluia is replaced by the Verse before the Gospel. The Alleluia is never sung during Lent, neither at this point in the liturgy nor in any hymn text which might be selected.

## **THE RITE OF CONFIRMATION**

The Rite calls for music at two points:

1. Profession of Faith: After the candidates for Confirmation have completed the Renewal of Baptismal Promises, witnessed by the assembly, the assembly affirms the Church's faith. This can be done in several ways:
  - a. By responding with a sung "Amen" to the Bishop's declaration "This is our faith..." There are a number of sung "Amen" settings that could be used effectively.
  - b. By singing an acclamation or hymn: e.g., "There is One Lord" by Lucian Deiss.
2. Anointing: Instrumental music or suitable songs are appropriate during the anointing. It is noted that music and/or singing should never unduly delay the liturgy **at any time**.

## ***LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST***

Preparation of the Gifts: Instrumental music is appropriate during the presentation and preparation of the gifts. This gives the choir and assembly a rest after the activity of the Liturgy of the Word and Confirmation Rite and helps to prepare them for the Eucharistic Prayer.

Holy, Holy, Holy: This is the people's acclamation of praise concluding the preface of the Eucharistic Prayer. It should always be sung by the entire assembly. It should never be sung by the choir alone. Settings which add harmony or descants are appropriate, but since this chant belongs to priest and people, the choir parts must facilitate and make effective the people's parts.

Memorial Acclamation: As one of the primary acclamations within the Eucharistic Liturgy, it should always be sung by all.

Amen: The assembly gives its assent to the Eucharistic Prayer and make it their own in the "Amen" that concludes this prayer. To be most effective, the "Amen" may be

repeated or augmented. Choirs may harmonize and expand upon the people's acclamation.

Lord's Prayer: This prayer need not always be sung. However, when sung, the melody should be familiar to all. There is no "Amen" said or sung as part of the liturgical text. Hence, melodies which include an "Amen" should not be used. The doxology to the Lord's Prayer, "For the kingdom..." is fittingly sung by all, especially when the Lord's Prayer is sung. Here too the choir may enhance the acclamation with harmony.

Lamb of God: The Agnus Dei is a litany song to accompany the breaking of the bread, in preparation for Communion. The invocation and response may be repeated as the action demands. The final response is always "grant us peace". Unlike the "Holy, Holy", the "Agnus Dei" is not necessarily a song of the people. Hence, it may be sung by the choir alone or choir and people.

The Communion Song: The Communion song should foster a sense of unity. It should be simple and not demand great effort. It gives expression to the joy of the unity in the body of Christ and the fulfillment of the mystery being celebrated. Most benediction hymns, by reason of their concentration on adoration rather than on Communion, are not acceptable. The singing of a psalm or a hymn of praise after the distribution of Communion, a congregational song may well provide a fitting expression of oneness in the Eucharistic Lord. Since no particular text is specified, there is room for creativity.