



Guidelines for Confirmation Liturgies - 2025

1. During Eastertide and on the Solemnities of Trinity Sunday, Corpus Christi and the Sacred Heart, the prayers and readings for Mass will be those designated for that Feast or Sunday (White vestments, except on Pentecost).
2. During Ordinary Time, the prayers will be from the Ritual Mass for Confirmation and the readings may be chosen from the readings listed in the Order of Confirmation.
3. Confirmations that are celebrated during a Vigil or Sunday Mass must follow the prescribed liturgical readings as listed in the Ordo.
4. There is no need for incense, unless that is the usual practice of the Parish.
5. The candidates and their sponsors take part in the Entrance Procession.
6. It is desirable that the *Responsorial Psalm*, *Alleluia*, *Holy, Holy*, *Acclamation* after the Consecration, *Amen* at the end of the Doxology and *Lamb of God* are sung, if possible, as well as appropriate hymns or music for the *Entrance Procession*, *Procession with the Gifts*, *Communion and Recessional*. The *Responsorial Psalm* ought not be a hymn substituted for the *Psalm* but the actual *Psalm*.
7. The Readings that are proclaimed during the Liturgy of the Word ought to be proclaimed from the Lectionary and not individual pieces of paper even if they are inserted into a folder. This preserves the dignity of the Word of God.
8. For comments about who ought be a Lector at Confirmation, please see No 3 of Additional comments.
9. The Liturgy of the Word proceeds in the usual way until the Gospel is proclaimed. The Parish Priest then presents the candidates to the Bishop. They stand up in their places as their names are called, then sit again for the homily.
10. After the homily, remaining in their places, the candidates renew their baptismal promises, according to the formula for Confirmation.
11. In so far as this is practical, the Bishop then invites the candidates to come to the sanctuary with their sponsors. They form a semi-circle in front of the altar, leaving enough space for the actions which follow. (If space does not permit, it may be carried out in two or three movements).
12. After inviting the people to silent prayer, the Bishop and concelebrants move along the semi-circle, laying hands on each candidate. This is best done in silence. The Bishop then prays the prayer.
13. The sponsor then places their right hand on the candidate's right shoulder. The Bishop once again moves along the semi-circle with the Oil of Chrism. As he stops at each candidate, the sponsor tells him the Confirmation name and the Bishop anoints, saying "N, be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit." The newly confirmed replies "Amen." The Bishop touches him or her on the cheek, saying "Peace be with you," to which the newly confirmed replies "And with your spirit." Please ensure, before the ceremony,

that the sponsor is aware of their role in the celebration and that the candidate knows their responses. While all this seems so simple, many candidates seem to freeze at this moment, preventing the sacramental action and dialogue from flowing naturally.

Some soft music during the Confirming, such as the Taizé chant or “Veni Sancte Spiritus” to allow a prayerful atmosphere to be open to the coming of the Holy Spirit.

14. The card, with the details of the confirmed person, is then given to the assisting minister.
15. Please provide a single slice of lemon, some soap and water for the Bishop to clean his hands of the Chrism.
16. The newly confirmed remain in place until the conclusion of the Prayer of the Faithful, if the layout of the sanctuary of the church permits.
17. The Mass then continues as usual, with a time for silent prayer after Communion.
18. After the Final Blessing and during the Final Hymn, the newly confirmed, without their sponsors, come forward and, being directed by one of the teachers, take up a position in front of the altar if possible, ready for a group photo. After this group photo is taken, there will be an opportunity for individual photos to be taken.

Flash photography during the Rite of Confirmation is discouraged. A designated photographer may take photos from a fixed point without interfering with the liturgy.
19. Certificates ought not be presented as such, but given directly to those having been confirmed as they come forward at the end of Mass in preparation for the group photo. The Bishop will not be signing certificates so please feel free to insert his name into the certificate using a suitable font. His signature should simply be Bishop Greg Bennet
20. If Confirmation takes place outside a Sunday Mass, it is advisable to take up a collection for the support of the Clergy. We wouldn't wish to deprive people of the opportunity to be generous.
21. Safeguarding – Prior to the commencement of the Mass, Parish Safeguarding Protocols and instructions regarding photography are to be announced.
22. Participation & Reverence - All present, especially candidates and sponsors, are reminded to participate actively in the liturgy with reverence—this includes responding at appropriate moments, standing or sitting as directed, and avoiding distractions like *mobile phone use* during the ceremony.

**Please email the Mass proforma to the Bishop's Office
(pa@sale.catholic.org.au) at least three weeks prior to your Confirmation
ceremonies to enable us to send to the Diocesan Master of Ceremonies for
review.**

Additional Notes on the Celebration of Confirmation in the Diocese of Sale

1. Sponsors

The minimum requirement for a sponsor is that he or she be over 16 and a Catholic who has been confirmed and received First Holy Communion. I would ask Parish Priests and those who share in the ministry of preparation to ensure that this is observed.

The role of the sponsor is twofold: to testify to the readiness of the candidate to receive the Sacrament; and to help the newly confirmed lead a Christian life and fulfil the obligations connected with it. It is not simply an honour conferred by the candidates and their families, but an office undertaken on behalf of the Christian community. The law states that sponsors should "lead a life in harmony with the faith and the role to be undertaken."

This requirement is more difficult to assess and implement, but it should be clearly communicated to all concerned. At the very least, sponsors ought to try and participate, as far as possible, in preparation programs.

At times candidates may ask for more than one sponsor come up for the Confirmation. In your preparation sessions I ask that you please remind people that there is to be only 1.

2. Confirmation Name

The name of a special patron saint is added to our baptismal name at Confirmation to signify the special step of Confirmation. The Order of Confirmation presumes that Confirmation confirms the baptismal name. Candidates wishing to adopt a saint's name for Confirmation are, in fact, choosing a patron or mentor for Christian life. Learning about the life and example of the saint whose name is taken is part of the candidate's preparation. Candidates may, if they wish, choose the name of a saint of either gender.

3. Lectors (Readers) at Mass - Liturgical Participation

Candidates for Confirmation do not exercise additional liturgical ministries within the liturgy. They participate fully, actively, and consciously in the liturgy as members of the assembly and as candidates for Confirmation. It is not appropriate that the readings be proclaimed by those about to be confirmed. Any member of the parish community, who is capable of proclaiming clearly and confidently in public; and who is willing to prepare prayerfully the Scriptures assigned, may carry out this ministry. One of the sponsors, or catechists, or a young person who was confirmed the previous year, may be thought especially suitable for this ministry.

Please note: Any candidates baptised in Maronite, Ukrainian, Chaldean or Melkite Eastern Rite Catholic Rites have usually already been confirmed at Baptism and cannot be presented to receive Confirmation again, even though they will benefit from, and share in, the preparatory catechesis available to other candidates. I am happy to give them a blessing which would occur in the usual place of confirming the children during the ceremony.

Sadly, those checking Baptism certificates are still not always alert to this, so please double-check Lebanese names and Ukrainian children. A recent complaint by Eastern Rite Catholic Bishops in Australia highlights the sensitivity needed here, as well as awareness of a possible invalid celebration of Confirmation. In the Syro-Malabar Rite, Confirmation is sometimes conferred at Baptism. Any children of Indian parents from Kerala who were not confirmed at Baptism, may be confirmed.

Bishop of Sale