**PREPARATION FOR THE RITE OF CONFIRMATION**

**WITH BISHOP BAMBERA IN THE SPRING OF 2021**

***Please note that the adaptations to the usual preparations for Confirmation with the Bishop because of the COVID-19 pandemic are listed in bold. Kindly distribute copies of these guidelines to those involved in the planning of the parish celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation.***

**PREPARATIONS IN GENERAL**

* The usual examination of the candidates for Confirmation should be conducted by the Pastor or Parish Life Coordinator on a day prior to the celebration of Confirmation.
* The Bishop usually arrives about twenty to thirty minutes before the Mass is scheduled to begin.
* The Bishop would be happy to be greeted by the Pastor or Parish Life Coordinator, if this is possible.
* Please set aside a room for the Bishop to vest.
* **Given current health concerns and the unevenness of clergy and staff having been vaccinated, it is preferable that a meal NOT be prepared for the bishop and other clergy and/or staff members at this time. If particular circumstances necessitate the preparation of a meal, it should take place following the celebration of the sacrament, except for the rare celebrations that have been requested to take place at 6:30 p.m. The meal should be simple in order not to protract the length of time for the dinner.**

**PREPARATION FOR THE LITURGY**

* **All of the usual prevention protocols for signage, distancing of six feet, mask wearing by all of those in attendance, sanitization, and restricting persons with COVID-19 or flu-like symptoms must be followed for Confirmations.**
* The ritual Mass for Confirmation with its readings is the Mass usually celebrated at the Sacrament of Confirmation. However, on Solemnities, Sundays of Lent and Easter, as well as days within the Octave of Easter, the Mass of the day with its proper readings must be used. If in the ***Ordo*** a votive mass or ritual mass is allowed on the day of your parish’s Confirmation this will be indicated on the left hand side of the day under the color of the vestment.
* If worship aids are being provided to the assembly, the Bishop should have a worship aid at his chair.
* The Bishop prefers to use the parish vestments (chasuble and stole) for the Mass and so does not bring them with him.

*Whenever the Ritual Mass of Confirmation is permitted, white or red vestments may be worn.*

*White vestments are to be worn when Confirmation is celebrated during the Easter Season*.

* **Since the Bishop will be using an instrument to anoint the candidates with the Sacred Chrism, the host pastor is asked to procure enough cotton balls or cotton swabs for each candidate. In the past, the Bishop brought the Sacred Chrism to the Confirmation, but this year host pastors are asked to provide a small bowl filled with the Chrism that the Bishop can dip the instrument in. A small table is needed to place the bowl of Sacred Chrism and a receptacle to discard the used instruments after each anointing. This table will need to be placed where the Bishop will be doing the anointing.**
* The Bishop always has a Master of Ceremonies accompany him.
* **Altar servers are not to be used for Confirmations at this time. The Master of Ceremonies will assist the Bishop.**
* **Hand sanitizer should also be available for the Bishop to use during the Mass.** A small bowl with water and a piece of lemon should be made available so that the Bishop may wash his hands after the anointing.
* **Because of social distancing requirements, it is not expected that Confirmation candidates be seated together in a group with boys and girls seated on each side. Each candidate may be seated at the end of a pew with his or her family.**
* Sufficient hosts, wine, chalice and ciboria, as well as purificators and corporals should be prepared in advance of the Mass by the pastor, parish life coordinator or the sacristan. The Bishop respectfully requests that the reserved Eucharist not be used for the communion of the faithful. **If there are priest concelebrants at the Confirmation, they must receive Holy Communion through intinction and the parish must provide a purificator for each priest to use when communicating.** Please prepare accordingly.
* **The distribution of Holy Communion is to take place under one species only.**

**LITURGICAL MINISTERS**

**Priests**

* Concelebrants should wear the diocesan chasuble and stole.
* **The Bishop and any concelebrants should be socially-distanced of at least 6 feet when arranging seating in sanctuary except those priests living in the same rectory. Consider seating concelebrants in the pews of the church if available to avoid over-crowding in the sanctuary.**

**Deacons**

* **Deacons who are functioning liturgically should wear dalmatics, if they are available, and be seated in the Sanctuary area but socially distanced from the Bishop or any concelebrants.** If a deacon is not present, a concelebrant proclaims the *Gospel*. The deacon will carry the Book of Gospels in procession. **The deacon does not assist the Bishop at the altar at this time.**

**Other Liturgical Ministers**

* The cantor and lectors should be those trained members of the parish who normally carry out these roles in the parish.

* **The Cantor should sing the hymns and acclamations from the sanctuary area but should be distanced at least 10 feet from any other ministers in the sanctuary or members of the assembly.**
* The Cantor/Psalmist should chant the psalm from the ambo if possible.
* The lectors should be adults, and no confirmand is to be a lector or reader of the *Universal Prayer*
* If a deacon is present, he should read the *Universal Prayer*.
* **Congregational singing is not recommended at this time, but if a worship aid is prepared, members of the assembly may prayerfully reflect on the lyrics of the hymns.**

**THE LITURGY**

**Introductory Rites**

* **Liturgical processions are to be kept to a minimum at this time. The Entrance Procession may consist of the Pastor(s) of the confirmands and the Deacon carrying the Book of the Gospels with the Bishop’s Master of Ceremonies leading the procession with the cross. Any other concelebrants should be seated at their places before Mass.**
* If there is a *Book of the Gospels* it should be carried in the procession by the deacon, or in the absence of a deacon, the concelebrant who will proclaim the Gospel. *The Book of the Gospels* is to be placed flat and closed upon the altar. *The Book of the Gospels* is not carried in the procession at the end of Mass.
* The *Entrance Hymn* accompanies the procession and introduces the congregation to the mystery of the season or the Sacrament of Confirmation. It is not necessary for all the hymns at this celebration to be strictly associated with the Holy Spirit. In fact, any hymn to the Holy Trinity is most appropriate and seasonal hymns, especially during the Easter season, should be sung.
* The *Gloria* should be sung at a Confirmation. The text must be faithful to the translation in the *Roman Missal.*

**Liturgy of the Word**

* The Lectionary for Mass provides the Scripture readings and the chants between the readings for the celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation. The Responsorial Psalm and the Gospel Acclamations are to be sung. The text of the sung Responsorial Psalm must be faithful to the translation found in the Lectionary. Silence follows the First Reading, the Second Reading, and the Homily. The readings are to be proclaimed by experienced adults and not by the candidates. **N.B. In the Easter Season, all the readings are from the New Testament with the first being from the Act of the Apostles. (*CF #74, Introduction to the Lectionary for Mass.)***
* If possible the deacon will proclaim the Gospel. (In his absence a concelebrant should be chosen to perform the deacon functions.) **The deacon or concelebrating priest asks for the Bishop’s blessing before the Gospel standing from a suitable distance away from the Bishop. After reading the Gospel, the deacon or concelebrant reverences the Book of the Gospels in the usual way and is not returned to the Bishop.**

**Sacrament of Confirmation**

* After the proclamation of the Gospel, the *Presentation of the Candidates* is made by the pastors and parish life coordinators. The host pastor provides a general introduction, while the individual pastors and parish life coordinators present the candidates from his or her parish. A model for this presentation (which may be adapted) is included in this mailing. The candidates alone stand as they are presented for the Sacrament of Confirmation. The congregation meanwhile is seated. After the Presentation of the Candidates, the host pastor should ask the candidates to be seated.
* The Bishop will deliver the Homily and will enter into dialogue with the confirmandi at this time.
* The *Renewal of Baptismal Promises* takes place between the Bishop and the candidates. The candidates alone stand with the Bishop, who will extend his hands at the Laying on of Hands. The congregation remains seated.
* For the *Anointing with Chrism,* **the candidates are to remain masked and are either to hold or to wear a tag with their Confirmation names so that the Bishop can read each name. Each candidate will come forward one by one and stand in front of the Bishop since he will stand for the anointing. The procession of candidates for the anointing should respect the same social distancing guidelines as established for the reception of Holy Communion.**
* **Sponsors do not accompany the candidate as he or she is anointed—they are to remain in place.**
* All candidates should know by heart their responses to the Bishop’s words for the Sacrament of Confirmation:

Bishop: [Name], be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit. C**andidate:** ***Amen*.**

Bishop: Peace be with you. **Candidate:** ***And with your spirit.***

* During the anointing, a suitable hymn should be sung or instrumental music may be played.
* The *Universal Prayer*, prepared by the parish, follows the anointing with Chrism and is introduced and concluded by the Bishop. The deacon or lector reads or sings the petitions.

**Liturgy of the Eucharist**

* **The practice of bringing forward the gifts of bread and wine is suspended at this time.** A hymn or instrumental music may accompany the *Preparation of the Altar and the Gifts*.
* **If concelebrates are speaking one of the parts in the Eucharistic Prayer, they may approach the altar to offer the prayer.**
* **Only the Bishop and other priest concelebrants should distribute Holy Communion. The Communion procession should respect all social distancing guidelines.**
* **If, because of the pandemic, the parish is accustomed to the reception of Holy Communion taking place after Mass, the parish should follow this same practice for Confirmations. If Holy Communion will be distributed after the Prayer after Communion and Concluding Rites, the Recessional Hymn can be sung during the distribution. Please indicate when the reception of Holy Communion should take place on the Mass Response form.**

**Concluding Rite**

* Any remarks that are made by the Pastor are to take place only *after* the post-communion prayer is completed. If such remarks are to be made, the Pastor is kindly asked to inform the Master of Ceremonies before Mass.

**Recessional**

* **When the Recessional Hymn begins, the Bishop will reverence the altar and process out of the sanctuary and down the middle aisle through the church, led by the Master of Ceremonies carrying the cross and accompanied only by those ministers who participated in the Entrance Procession. The procession will move outside and then back to the sacristy. The newly-confirmed do not recess behind the liturgical procession. Because of the pandemic, the Bishop is unable to greet people at the doors of the church after Mass.**

**PHOTOGRAPHY**

**Group Picture**

* **The Bishop prefers that if a photographer is present to take a group picture, the picture is to be taken 15 minutes before the Mass begins, preferably outdoors at the front of the church or in the parish hall in the case of inclement weather. All social-distancing guidelines must be followed when taking a group photograph.**

**Pictures During Mass**

* A photographer or other members of the assembly may take pictures during the Mass if this is able to be done discreetly and in cooperation with the directives of the Master of Ceremonies. Please ask that no flash be used during the ceremony.

**Individual Pictures after Mass**

* **Due to the current health crisis, NO individual photos will be taken with the Bishop following the Confirmation.**

**Cell Phones**

* Prior to the start of Mass, an announcement should be made asking all present to silence cell phones.

**Response Form**

* Please complete the enclosed Response Form and return by mail, email or fax two weeks before the celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation.

*If a Worship Aid is being prepared it must include the secured copyright permissions*

*for the music reprinted in it.*