



The Diocese of Motherwell

The Sacrament of Confirmation



Preparing the Confirmation Liturgy

Guidance Notes for Confirmations
celebrated from
January to Easter 2025



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Bishop of Motherwell

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Dear Fathers and Head Teachers,

As we look to the celebrations of the Sacrament of Confirmation in the first months of 2025, this booklet will provide you with guidance to assist you in preparing for the celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation. After the guidance notes you will find the readings for the Confirmation Mass and the current 'Order for the Conferral of Confirmation within Mass'.

While the guidance notes follow, please note in particular: the texts from the new translation of the lectionary for the readings must be used. The correct texts are shown in this booklet.

Please have the Universal Prayer (Bidding Prayers) as they are part of the Rite. Alternative or additional prayers can be used but should be constructed in the required way.

At the reception of Holy Communion I will stand at the front with the communicants coming to receive from me or the other ministers, either in the hand or on the tongue.

I am happy to visit the schools and the confirmandi before they receive the sacrament, I would ask that Parish Priests co-ordinate this visit between the school and the chancellor and also to arrange transport for me for the visit.

Should you have any questions or would like advice regarding the liturgy for the Sacrament of Confirmation please contact Fr Stuart Parkes, Diocesan Director of Liturgy, at Sacred Heart Church, Bellshill on 01698 842709 or by email frparkes@rcdom.org.uk

I thank you in advance for all that you do in assisting our young people make this important step in their journey of faith.

Yours in Christ,

+ Joseph Toal

Guidance Notes

These notes provide some assistance in preparing for the Sacrament of Confirmation and provide some guidance on preparing the Liturgy; they are arranged largely in the Order of the Mass.

Illness or Holidays

If a child misses or is unable to attend the celebration at their parish, arrangements should be made for them to attend a Confirmation Celebration at another parish that the Bishop may confer on them the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Confirmation Name

Boys are encouraged to choose a male Saint and girls a female Saint for their Confirmation name, it should, however, be noted that if a candidate has a *good* reason for choosing otherwise this should be allowed. The candidate should be able to reflect how the saint used the Gifts of the Holy Spirit and lived the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy.

Confirmation Sponsor

The confirmation sponsor is chosen by the candidate for confirmation along with their parents. Sponsors should be at least 16 years of age and be a Catholic who has been confirmed and received the Eucharist and leads a life of faith in keeping with the role. The sponsor should not be the father or mother of the one to be confirmed. The sponsor, who presents the person to be confirmed, places his (her) right hand on the candidates shoulder. It is easier if the children are seated on the right facing the altar and the sponsors on the left.

The Ministries at Mass

The Confirmandi are present at the Confirmation Mass to receive the Gift of the Holy Spirit in the Sacrament, so attention should be drawn to the Rite itself and what is happening to them rather than them having to perform other ministries and roles during the Mass. The celebration of Confirmation is a parish celebration and it is appropriate to include family members and members of the wider parish and school communities in fulfilling the various liturgical ministries that are required.

Choosing the Mass

The Mass is usually the Ritual Mass of Confirmation from the Missal with readings as directed by the Bishop and Mass celebrated with red vestments.

On Feasts, a decision can be made to use the prayers of that celebration or from the Rite of Confirmation. When Confirmation is celebrated on a Solemnity, then the prayers and readings of the solemnity are used.

The Liturgy of the Word

The readings for confirmation celebrated before Easter 2025 are: Ephesians 2:19-22 or Acts 2:1-11 and the Gospel is Luke 6:12-19 (*The Ephesians 2:19-22 and Luke 6:12-19 can be found in Vol 3 of the new Lectionary on page 1196, the feast of Ss Simon and Jude. Acts 2:1-11 if it is chosen can be found in Vol 1 of the new Lectionary on page 427*)

The best practice is for these readings to be read from the Lectionary or Book of the Gospels during the celebration of Mass, rather than from a card. The text of the readings are shown for convenience in this booklet.

When choosing a Responsorial Psalm to sing it should be the words of a psalm or canticle and not just a hymn and is usually better sung by a cantor.

New Translation of the Lectionary

The new Lectionary which uses the ESV-CE translation must be used from the 1st Sunday of Advent, 1st December 2024. Each Parish is free to decide when to start using the new translation when they have received the new books, before the 1st December. Schools and Parishes should liaise on the choice of translation.

Request of the Sacrament

Some schools have opted to have a request for the Sacrament, which takes place at the start of mass, after the sign of the cross and the “Peace be with you” from the bishop. The request should be kept simple and last no more than 3 or 4 minutes. As in previous years this should not be a production or a theatrical presentation; but a public witness of the experiences and insights gained by the children during the program of preparation.

If a calling or presentation of the candidates for Confirmation is adopted, it replaces a request at the beginning of Mass.

The Sacrament of Confirmation

As there is no expectation of candles in the Order of Confirmation, the Confirmandi do not hold candles for the Renewal of Baptismal Promises. However, the paschal candle should be lit before mass and placed near the Ambo.

Following the renewal of baptismal promises all the candidates remain standing for the laying on of hands and the prayer of Confirmation. At the end of the prayer of Confirmation, the confirmandi sit before coming forward for the anointing.

For the Anointing with Chrism the sponsor and the candidate approach the Bishop and stand in front of with the sponsor's right hand on the candidate's right shoulder. It is important that the Confirmandi stand as close as possible to the Bishop, ideally with their feet touching the bottom step; so the Bishop can reach their foreheads for the anointing. After the anointing the celebrant exchanges the sign of peace (*hand shake*) with the candidate.

The candidates should wear a badge with his/her confirmation name printed clearly for the Master of Ceremonies to read.

Responses

In preparing for the sacrament, the importance of the responses during Mass and in particular at the time of anointing, which can often be the weakest, should be emphasised to the confirmandi. The anointing involves two very simple but important responses of 'Amen' and 'And with your Spirit'. The 'Amen' expresses our affirmation of the content of the prayer and so is an important response not only at Confirmation but also at communion and the end of prayers. The 'And with your spirit' invites and recognises the grace and presence of Christ in the celebrant of the sacrament.

Universal Prayer

The text provided for the Universal Prayer (*intercessions*) in 'The Order for the Conferral of Confirmation within Mass' may be used or they may be adapted to local needs. However, the Universal Prayer should not be omitted from the rite of Confirmation.

The Preparation of the Gifts

At the Procession of Gifts the bread and wine for the celebration of Mass are carried forward. The only additional items may be money or other gifts for the poor or for the Church, these items should be placed away from the Altar after they have been received.

The Sign of Peace

While during the pandemic the Sign of Peace was often restricted, the bishop will now invite the congregation to share the Sign of Peace during the Communion Rite.

Holy Communion

As the Sacrament of Confirmation completes the sacraments of initiation in our diocese, it is expected that those who have been confirmed will also receive Holy Communion during the celebration of the Confirmation Mass. This allows the fundamental connection of the Sacrament of Confirmation with all of Christian Initiation, which reaches its culmination in the Communion of the Body and Blood of Christ.

If a confirmation candidate has not received First Holy Communion, they should be suitably prepared that they may receive the Eucharist for the first time at the Confirmation Mass and thus complete the Sacraments of Initiation.

Music at the Confirmation Mass

Most of the hymns and parts of the mass should be familiar to the parish to enable those present to join in the singing. If the school is choosing music it is best done in consultation with the parish clergy and musicians to ensure as many people as possible are familiar with what will be sung.

The singing of hymns during Mass is for the praise and glory of God, therefore if the children are to sing on their own at any point it should be done from their seats and not the steps of the sanctuary, they should also face the Altar for this and not the congregation. All music should be of a religious nature.

Music should always be chosen in keeping with the Liturgical Season or Feast and the Sacrament of Confirmation. During the season of Lent nothing should be said or sung containing Alleluia.

For the celebration of confirmation, the Responsorial Psalm, Gospel Acclamation, Holy Holy, Memorial Acclamation and the Lamb of God should be sung. During Lent, an appropriate Lenten Gospel Acclamation should be used that does not include 'Alleluia!'

The bishop requests that the Confirmation Mass should start with a Hymn to the Holy Spirit and the Final Hymn should be a Hymn to Our Lady.

The following are normally sung, Entrance Hymn, Hymns during the anointing (which should have a Holy Spirit or Confirmation theme), Hymn during the procession of gifts, communion hymns (these should have a Eucharist theme and not be hymns to the Saints or the Blessed Virgin Mary), and Recessional Hymn. It is also possible to sing the Gloria, the Penitential Rite, and the Our Father.

During Lent the Gloria is only sung on the feasts of Saints John Ogilvie, Patrick and Joseph and the Solemnity of the Annunciation.

If you require some assistance choosing a psalm to be sung some examples can be found at: <https://www.rcdom.org.uk/other-resources>

Musicians

If you need assistance arranging musicians or music please contact the Master of Ceremonies who will be happy to provide assistance and contacts.

The Liturgy of the Word - ESV-CE Translation

This Translation must be used from 1st December 2024.

These Scripture readings are used in Confirmations from January to Easter 2025.

*A choice is provided for the First reading of Ephesians 2 or Acts 2,
only one of these readings should be used.*

Ephesians 2:19-22

A reading from the Letter of Saint Paul to the Ephesians.

Brothers and sisters:

You are no longer strangers and aliens,
but you are fellow citizens with the saints
and members of the household of God,
built on the foundation of the Apostles and prophets,
Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone,
in whom the whole structure, being joined together,
grows into a holy temple in the Lord.
In him you also are being built together
into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

The word of the Lord.

Or

Acts 2:1-11

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

When the day of Pentecost arrived,
the Apostles were all together in one place.
And suddenly there came from heaven a sound
like a mighty rushing wind,
and it filled the entire house where they were sitting.
And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them.
And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues
as the Spirit gave them utterance.
Now there were dwelling in Jerusalem
Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven.
And at this sound the multitude came together,
and they were bewildered,
because each one was hearing them speak in his own language.
And they were amazed and astonished, saying,
'Are not all these who are speaking Galileans?
And how is it that we hear, each of us in his own native language?

Parthians and Medes and Elamites and residents of Mesopotamia,
Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia,
Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya
belonging to Cyrene,
and visitors from Rome,
both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians —
we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God.'

The word of the Lord.

If it is impossible for the psalm to be sung, the psalm is spoken:

Psalm 104

Response: Send forth your Spirit, O Lord, and renew the face of the earth.

Bless the Lord, O my soul!
O Lord my God, how great you are!
How many are your works, O Lord!
In wisdom you have made them all.
The earth is full of your creatures.

All of these look to you
to give them their food in due season.
You give it, they gather it up;
you open wide your hand, they are well filled.

You send forth your spirit, and they are created,
and you renew the face of the earth .
May the glory of the Lord last for ever!
May the Lord rejoice in his works!

I will sing to the Lord all my life,
sing psalms to my God while I live.
May my thoughts be pleasing to him.
I will rejoice in the Lord.

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

In these days Jesus went out to the mountain to pray,
and all night he continued in prayer to God
And when day came, he called his disciples
and chose from them twelve, whom he named Apostles:
Simon, whom he named Peter, and Andrew his brother,
and James and John, and Philip, and Bartholomew,
and Matthew, and Thomas, and James the son of Alphaeus,
and Simon who was called the Zealot,
and Judas the son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor.

And he came down with them and stood on a level place,
with a great crowd of his disciples
and a great multitude of people from all Judea and Jerusalem
and the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon,
who came to hear him and to be healed of their diseases.
And those who were troubled with unclean spirits were cured.
And all the crowd sought to touch him,

The Gospel of the Lord.

The Order for the Conferral of Confirmation within Mass

The Liturgy of the Word

Homily

Renewal of Baptismal Promises

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.

The Laying on of Hands

Then the Bishop 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.

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.

Amen

The Anointing with Chrism

The Master of Ceremonies will read the Confirmation name to the bishop displayed on the badge worn by the candidate. The bishop dips his right thumb into the Chrism and makes the sign of the cross on the forehead of the one to be confirmed saying:

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.

The Universal Prayer

The Universal Prayer follows in this or a similar form.

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 reader:

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 reader:

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 reader:

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 reader:

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.

After the Universal Prayer, the Procession of Gifts follows, and the Liturgy of the Eucharist is celebrated.