The following pages contain detailed information about each element of the celebration of Confirmation. If you have additional questions, contact Grace Garza-Ayala at 209-466-0636, or via email at ggayala@stocktondiocese.org. Scheduling questions are to be directed to Hedy Yurong-Olaso at holaso@stocktondiocese.org

Preparations for the Celebration of Confirmation

1. **Servers:** At least five (5) experienced servers are required. There are roles for up to seven (7) servers. If the Confirmation is delegated to someone other than the Bishop, there should be (5) five servers.

   Experienced servers are to be assembled, vested in albs, and ready to rehearse with the Master of Ceremonies at least thirty (30) minutes prior to the start of Confirmation. The Master of Ceremonies will assign and review with them their duties prior to the ceremony. Adequate seating is to be reserved for the servers and the Master of Ceremonies.

2. In addition to the vessels and items normally prepared for Mass, the following are also to be prepared:
   a. Chrism, poured into a bowl/dish adequate for the Bishop to use and purificator
   b. A pitcher of water, a large bowl and a lemon cut into quarters in the bowl
   c. A couple of hand towels

   **Sufficient bread and wine for the assembly are to be prepared** in one (1) plate and one (1) or more flagons prior to Mass. (Communion is not to be distributed from the Tabernacle)

3. **Confrimandi** are to be seated with their sponsors before the Liturgy is scheduled to begin. If the Confrimandi process in during the Prelude, they are to be in their places five minutes before the Mass is scheduled to begin.

4. All Confrimandi are to have a nametag with ONE Confirmation name clearly printed & large. The nametag should be visible when they come forward.
5. There should be some basic **announcements** before Mass, to ensure that this is a welcoming experience of church for those to be confirmed and all of their family and guests, as well as the community that gathers with them. There are several things that should be particularly pointed out to those who are gathered:

a. Welcome! Please use the worship aid to participate fully in the liturgy and the singing, to help make this a vibrant and joyful celebration.
b. Please remain standing after the proclamation of the Gospel until the Bishop has blessed the assembly with the Book of the Gospels.
c. Everyone also remains standing after the Great Amen, until the last person has received the Body and Blood of Christ. There will then be silence for personal prayer and reflection.
d. Confirmation is a solemn rite. We have an official photographer to take pictures of the Confirmations. No one is to use flash photography or move through the Church to get pictures during the Mass. Thank you for your respect of this solemn event.
e. We invite you to take a moment of silence as we prepare ourselves to celebrate these sacred mysteries.

**Introductory Rites**

6. Before the procession begins, if incense is to be used, the Thurifer presents the thurible to the Bishop, who places incense in the thurible.

7. The order of the procession is as follows:
   - Thurifer
   - The server carrying the cross **between** two (2) servers carrying lighted candles
   - The Deacon (or Lector) carrying the Book of the Gospels
   - Concelebrating Presbyters, with the Pastor of the parish at the end
   - Master of Ceremonies
   - Bishop
   - Behind the Bishop, the Deacon(s) assisting him, if there is more than the one Deacon carrying the Book of the Gospels
   - Servers who assist with the miter and crozier
8. The Penitential Act:

1) The Bishop leads the Confiteor (“I confess . . .”) with the people and the Cantor/Choir then sings the *Lord Have Mercy, Christ Have Mercy, Lord Have Mercy*

   - or-

2) The blessing and sprinkling of water as a reminder of Baptism is done with a song appropriate to Sprinkling/Baptism

9. Following the Penitential Act, the *Gloria* is sung at all Confirmation Masses, including those Confirmations that take place during Lent. (Do not sing the Gloria during the Sprinkling)

**Liturgy of the Word**

10. The readings of the day are used during the Easter season. During Lent or Ordinary Time, appropriate readings from the *Lectionary for Mass* may be substituted for the readings of the day if the readings of the day are not appropriate for the Sacrament.

11. Lectors are to be assigned to proclaim the readings before the Gospel. *Confirmandi*, as a rule, should not exercise this ministry at their Confirmation.

12. A Deacon, if present, proclaims the Gospel, otherwise a concelebrant proclaims the Gospel, both after receiving a blessing from the Bishop. After the proclamation, the Book of the Gospels is taken to the Bishop for veneration and blessing the people.

13. The worship aid must indicate that people are to remain standing until the Bishop has blessed the assembly with the Book of the Gospels. *(See Paragraph 41 for further information)*

**Rite of Confirmation**

14. After the proclamation of the Gospel, the Pastor presents the *Confirmandi* to the Bishop in the following manner:
   a. The Pastor asks the *Confirmandi* to please stand
   b. The Pastor indicates to the Bishop that the *Confirmandi* are well prepared
   c. The Pastor then presents the *Confirmandi*. If they number fewer than ten (10), their names should be called individually; otherwise, they are presented as a group
   d. The Bishop will say a few words
   e. All will be invited to be seated
15. The Bishop will preach the Homily

16. After the Homily, the Confirmandi stand and renew their Baptismal promises. They should be instructed to respond as a group to the Bishop’s question with an enthusiastic “I do”

17. Following the renewal of Baptismal promises, the concelebrating Priests stand near the Bishop. The Bishop, along with the concelebrating Priests, lays hands on (or extends hands over) the Confirmandi. The Bishop alone says the prayer, “All Powerful God . . . .”

18. The Bishop stands during the anointing of the Confirmandi. Parishes have two choices for where the anointing can take place.

1) If it is possible based on the architecture of the space, the Confirmandi and their sponsors may come up into the Sanctuary and be confirmed in front of the Altar, or at the Bishop’s Chair. In this case, they would come up and go down from the side. The advantage of this procedure is that the assembly can better see the conferral of the Sacrament.

2) The anointing may take place at the front of the center aisle. Whichever method you choose, please practice this with every Confirmandi and sponsor.

In either circumstance, Candidates and sponsors need to be ready to step in as soon as the Candidate and sponsor ahead of them depart. The sponsor is to keep their hand on the RIGHT shoulder of the Candidate, stand close to the Candidate, and present the Candidate to the Bishop. They present the Candidate by saying, “Bishop, I present N.” The name used is the Confirmation Name and should be spoken loudly and clearly, and should match the nametag, which is printed with the Confirmation name only. The Confirmation name may be either the Candidate’s Baptismal name or the name of a chosen Saint.

IMPORTANT REMINDER: Soft instrumental music should be played during the anointing of the Candidates. There is to be no singing at this time. Please remind your Musical Director, your DRE, Choir, and Sacristan of this custom.

The Confirmandi are to be instructed on their parts of the ritual dialogue with the Bishop. They are to respond with a confident “Amen” and “And with your spirit”.

As they step away, the next candidate and sponsor IMMEDIATELY step forward and continue the process. Only one Candidate and sponsor should be directly in front of the Bishop at any point in time.
19. Only the official parish photographer may take photos. No other photographs or videos are to be taken during the Mass, including during the actual Confirmation. There is to be only one professional or semi-professional photographer. There should be no more than one person moving around to take pictures.

While the Bishop is confirming the Confirmandi, the official photographer may take one picture of each person being confirmed. The photographer should NOT ask the sponsors to step back or stay out of the picture. The photographer should never be in the Bishop’s way.

Photos are to be made available to all participants, regardless of ability to pay, and the expense is to be absorbed by parish in the upfront cost of the program. Photographers who require those confirmed to buy photo packages after Confirmation are not appropriate.

The Bishop encourages a Group Photo before or after the Confirmation Mass but it must be rehearsed and organized beforehand, especially if a parish has two Confirmations scheduled back-to-back.

20. After the anointing, the Bishop will return to the chair, where servers with pitcher, bowl, lemon, and towels will assist him with washing his hands.

21. The General Intercessions are announced by the Deacon, a Lector, or a Cantor. In composing the intercessions, the Confirmation Rite or the model provided in the General Instruction to the Roman Missal, 69-71, are to be followed. The prayers should include intercessions for the increase of vocations in our Diocese, for the Church, civil authorities, those in need, and the needs of the local community related to the celebration. It is recommended that there are no more than five (5) petitions. NOTE: At this point, the Confirmandi (those to be confirmed) are now the Confirmati (the confirmed). They should NOT be referred to as the Confirmandi in the Intercessions. Examples of formularies can be found in Appendix V of the Roman Missal, Third Edition.
Liturgy of the Eucharist

A collection is taken up at the Confirmation Mass. The newly confirmed and their sponsors are encouraged to participate in the offering. Envelopes for this purpose should be distributed to the Confirmandi and their sponsors in the weeks prior to the Confirmation Mass.

Some of the newly confirmed may present the gifts of bread and wine. The processional cross does not lead the gift procession (at this or any other Mass). If desired for the solemnity of the occasion, one or two of the candle bearers can lead the gift procession forward. Procession begins once he Bishop stands. It is not necessary to wait for the offertory.

22. Communion is to be distributed under both kinds, with two (2) cups for each distribution of the consecrated bread. The Eucharistic bread distributed for Holy Communion is to be consecrated within the Confirmation Mass. No one should approach the tabernacle prior to the distribution of Holy Communion.

If there are not sufficient concelebrating presbyters or deacons available for the distribution of Communion, commissioned Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion should be ready to serve.

23. With Confirmandi and sponsors, kindly review the prominence of the Communion procession and the appropriate posture and act of reverence made when receiving Communion, including the “Amen” affirming we are one Body of Christ.

Concluding Rite

24. Any announcements, if necessary, are to be made following the Prayer after Communion. The Bishop will thank those involved in the preparations for and execution of the event.

25. The Recessional follows the same order as at the beginning of the Mass, with the exception of the Deacon of the Gospels who is to follow the Bishop.
**Varia**

26. **Dress for Confirmandi and Sponsors:** Candidates and sponsors are to dress modestly. Shorts, bare midriffs, and plunging necklines are examples of inappropriate dress.

Because the stole is the sign of ministerial office of a Priest or Deacon, it is not permitted for Confirmandi to wear any type of stole for Confirmation. Robes are discouraged.

27. **Confirmation Names:** Candidates may use their Baptismal name or the name of a Saint as the Confirmation name. Candidates whose Baptismal names are not those of Saints are to be encouraged to select a Saint as his or her patron(ess). All Confirmandi should then research the life of the chosen patron and identify the virtues of his or her sainthood.

28. **Sponsors:** Insofar as possible, each candidate for Confirmation is to have his or her sponsor present. It is recommended that one of those who acted as a sponsor at Baptism should also serve as the sponsor at Confirmation. Parents may not serve as Confirmation sponsors for their children. All sponsors must meet the requirements in the Code of Canon Law.\(^1\) Sponsors should not be individuals who are in a romantic relationship with the one being confirmed.

29. **Music:** The music selected should be artistically good, liturgically appropriate, and pastorally suitable. The music should be well known by the Candidates and their families so that they can fully participate. A Cantor—not a music group—should lead the assembly in singing so that there is full, active, and conscious participation.

Because of the importance of the sung participation of the Confirmandi and sponsors cannot be overstated, the songs to be sung at the Confirmation Mass are to be selected a year in advance so that all can learn them during their catechetical sessions throughout the year. At the very least, the Confirmandi and their sponsors should know the acclamations for the Eucharistic Prayer (Holy, Holy, the Memorial Acclamation, and the Great Amen), the Gospel Acclamation, and the Communion Song.

---

\(^1\) Can. 874 §1. To be permitted to take on the function of sponsor a person must:
1/ be designated by the one to be baptized, by the parents or the person who takes their place, or in their absence by the pastor or minister and have the aptitude and intention of fulfilling this function;
2/ have completed the sixteenth year of age, unless the diocesan bishop has established another age, or the pastor or minister has granted an exception for a just cause;
3/ be a Catholic who has been confirmed and has already received the most holy sacrament of the Eucharist and who leads a life of faith in keeping with the function to be taken on;
4/ not be bound by any canonical penalty legitimately imposed or declared;
5/ not be the father or mother of the one to be baptized.
30. **Stipend:** It is recommended that a stipend of at least $75.00 per a Confirmation Mass be offered to the Bishop’s Master of Ceremonies in gratitude for his/her ministry. The Deacons and lay people who accompany the Bishop do so at their own expense and without remuneration from the Diocese.

31. An appropriate financial offering is presented to the Bishop which he will use for charitable purposes. Checks are to be made payable to **Roman Catholic Bishop of Stockton**.

32. The **Confirmation Information Form** is to be faxed or emailed to the Pastoral Center no later than twenty-one (21) days prior to the date of your Confirmation Mass. The form will be sent when the current Guidelines are distributed and are accessible on the diocesan website:  
https://stocktondiocese.org/diocesan-departments/liturgy-worship/sacraments/confirmation/  
Email forms to holaso@stocktondiocese.org or fax it to 209-464-3775.

   **One form** is to be submitted for each liturgy.

33. The Bishop only uses the **Rite of Confirmation** (which the Bishop will bring) and the **Roman Missal** and/or the **Misal Romano**. Do not prepare a binder with anything other than the intercessions. A copy of the worship aid should be available for the Bishop. Readings are to be proclaimed from the **Lectionary** and, if available, the **Book of the Gospels**. If the Mass will be in both English and Spanish, both Missals are to be available.

34. The Bishop will review all parish **sacramental registers** on the occasion of Confirmation in a parish. They are to be out for the Bishop to review and sign.

35. **Confirmation certificates** are not signed by the Bishop. They are to be signed by the pastor of the parish. Confirmation certificates are not to be distributed during or after Mass in the church. It is preferable that certificates be given out following the Liturgy.
36. The custom whereby the Bishop shares a meal with the priests of the parish is encouraged. The Confirmation catechists would be most welcome. The Bishop’s Master of Ceremonies should be invited also. This meal can be either before or after the Liturgy, depending on the time of the Mass. It is before the Mass, it should be 2 hours before the Mass begins.

37. **Parking Space for the Bishop:** A place is to be reserved for the Bishop’s car near the rectory or the vesting area.

38. **Vestments:** The parish provides the chasuble and stole for use by the Bishop. They are to be clean and in good repair.

39. The celebration of Confirmation is not an occasion for witness talks or acknowledgements by the candidates as if it was a graduation ceremony, or for other non-liturgical rituals, which are best left to Confirmation retreats and preparation programs.

40. Religious articles, rosaries, medals will be blessed by the Bishop during an appropriate time chosen by the Bishop.

41. It is appropriate for a **worship aid** to be prepared for the celebration to assist with the full and active participation of the faithful who are present. A sample outline is provided for your reference. Please note the following guidelines for preparing worship aids:

1. Please ensure that all names (including Bishop Myron J. Cotta) are spelled correctly.

2. All headlines should match the titles given the sections of Mass in the *Roman Missal*.

3. All music must be reprinted within copyright law: please see the Diocesan website for more information on this.  
   https://stocktondiocese.org/diocesan-departments/liturgy-worship/musical-resources/

4. It is the assembly’s rightful place to sing during the Liturgy. Music should especially be provided for the Opening Hymn, Sprinkling (if done on a Sunday), Gloria, Psalm Response, Gospel Acclamation, Eucharistic Acclamations and Communion Hymn.

5. Readings are only reprinted in the worship aid if a large segment of the assembly does not speak the language in which the reading is proclaimed. Any readings that are reprinted must be official translations and not an individual’s translation from one language to another.
6. After the Gospel in the worship aid, the following should be included as a note:

*Please remain standing until the Bishop has blessed the assembly with the Book of the Gospels | Favor de permanecer de pie hasta que el Obispo bendiga la Asamblea con el Evangelario*

7. Before the Communion hymn, the following should be included as a note: *The assembly is reminded to remain standing until everyone has received the Body and Blood of Christ | La asamblea se queda de pie hasta que todos hayan recibido el Cuerpo y las Sangre de Cristo*

8. If you have questions about what is and is not appropriate for the worship aid, please contact the Office for Worship for further direction.