

APOSTOLIC CONSTITUTION
ON THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION

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SERVANT OF THE SERVANTS OF GOD
FOR AN EVERLASTING MEMORIAL

The sharing in the divine nature given to individuals through the grace of Christ bears a certain likeness to the origin, development, and nourishing of natural life. Born anew by Baptism, the faithful are strengthened by the Sacrament of Confirmation and ultimately are sustained by the food of eternal life in the Eucharist. By means of these Sacraments of Christian Initiation, they thus receive in increasing measure the treasures of divine life and advance toward the perfection of charity. It has rightly been written: ‘The flesh is washed, that the soul may be cleansed; the flesh is anointed, that the soul may be consecrated; the flesh is signed, that the soul too may be fortified; the flesh is overshadowed by the laying on of hands, that the soul too may be enlightened by the Spirit; the flesh is fed on the Body and Blood of Christ, that the soul too may be richly nourished by God.’¹

Conscious of its pastoral charge, the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council devoted special attention to these Sacraments of Initiation, prescribing that the rites should be suitably revised and more accommodated to the understanding of the faithful. Since, therefore, the *Ordo Baptismi parvulorum*, revised at the mandate of the same universal Synod and published at Our command, is already in use, it is now fitting to publish a Rite of Confirmation, so that the unity of Christian Initiation may be shown in its true light.

In fact, careful work and study have been devoted in these last years to the task of revising the manner of celebrating this Sacrament. The aim of this work has been that ‘the intimate connection which this Sacrament has with the whole of Christian Initiation may be more clearly set forth.’² Moreover, the link between Confirmation and the other Sacraments of Initiation is more easily perceived not only because the rites have been more closely conjoined, but it is also noticeable from the gesture and words by which Confirmation itself is conferred. For it so happens that the rite and words of this Sacrament ‘should express more clearly the holy things which they signify and the Christian people, so far as possible, should be enabled to understand them with ease and take part in them fully, actively, and as befits a community.’³

To that end, it has been Our wish also to include in this revision what concerns the very essence of the Rite of Confirmation, through which the Christian faithful receive the Holy Spirit as Gift.

1 Tertullian, *De resurrectione mortuorum*, VIII, 3: *Corpus Christianorum Series latina*, 2, p. 931.

2 Cf. Second Vatican Council, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, no. 71: *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, 56 (1964), p. 118.

3 *Ibid.*, no. 21: p. 106.

The New Testament shows how the Holy Spirit was with Christ to bring the Messianic mission to fulfillment. For Jesus, on receiving the baptism of John, saw the Spirit descending on himself (cf. Mk 1:10) and remaining with him (cf. Jn 1:32). He was led by that Spirit to undertake his public ministry as the Messiah, relying on the Spirit's presence and assistance. Preaching salvation to the people of Nazareth, he showed by what he said that the oracle of Isaiah, 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,' referred to himself (cf. Lk 4:17-21).

He later promised his disciples that the Holy Spirit would help them also to bear fearless witness to their faith even before persecutors (cf. Lk 12:12). On the day before he was to suffer, he assured his Apostles that he would send the Spirit of truth from the Father (cf. Jn 15:26) to remain with them 'forever' (Jn 14:16) and help them to be his witnesses (cf. Jn 15:26). Finally, after his Resurrection, Christ promised the coming descent of the Holy Spirit: 'You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you; and you will be my witnesses' (Acts 1:8; cf. Lk 24:49).

On the feast of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit did indeed descend in a marvellous way on the Apostles as they were gathered together with Mary the Mother of Jesus and the group of disciples. They were so 'filled with' the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:4) that by divine inspiration they began to proclaim 'the mighty works of God.' Moreover, Peter regarded the Spirit, who thus descended upon the Apostles, as the gift of the Messianic age (cf. Acts 2:17-18). Then those who believed the Apostles' preaching were baptized and they too received 'the gift of the Holy Spirit' (Acts 2:38). From that time on the Apostles, in fulfillment of Christ's will, imparted to the newly baptized, by the laying on of hands, the gift of the Spirit that completes the grace of Baptism. This is why the Letter to the Hebrews listed among the first elements of Christian instruction the teaching about baptisms and the laying on of hands (cf. Heb.6:2). This laying on of hands is rightly recognized by Catholic tradition as the beginning of the Sacrament of Confirmation, which in a certain way perpetuates the grace of Pentecost in the Church.

This makes clear the specific importance of Confirmation for sacramental initiation, by which the faithful 'as members of the living Christ are incorporated into him and conformed to him through Baptism and through Confirmation and the Eucharist.'⁴ In Baptism, the newly baptized receive forgiveness of sins, adoption as children of God, and the character of Christ, by which they are made members of the Church and for the first time become sharers in the priesthood of their Saviour (cf. 1 Pt 2: 5,9). Through the Sacrament of Confirmation those who have been born anew in Baptism receive the ineffable Gift, the Holy Spirit himself, by whom 'they are endowed... with special strength.'⁵ Moreover, having been signed with the character of this Sacrament, they are 'more perfectly bound to the Church'⁶ and 'they are more strictly obliged to spread and defend the faith, both by word and by deed, as true witnesses of Christ.'⁷ Finally, Confirmation is so closely linked with the Holy Eucharist⁸ that the faithful, after being signed by Holy Baptism and Confirmation, are incorporated fully into the Body of Christ through participation in the Eucharist.⁹

4 Cf. Second Vatican Council, Decree on the Missionary Activity of the Church, *Ad Gentes*, no. 36: *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, 58 (1966), p. 983.

5 Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium*, no. 11: *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, 57 (1965), p. 15.

6 *Ibid.*

7 *Ibid.*; cf. also Decree on the Missionary Activity of the Church, *Ad Gentes*, no. 11: *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, 58 (1966), pp. 959-960.

8 Cf. Second Vatican Council, Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests, *Presbyterorum Ordinis*, no. 5: *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, 58 (1966), p. 997.

9 Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 997-998.

From ancient times the conferring of the gift of the Holy Spirit has been carried out in the Church through various rites. These rites have undergone many changes in the East and the West, but the signification of the conferral of the Holy Spirit has been kept.

In many Eastern rites it seems that from early times a rite of chrismation, not yet clearly distinguished from Baptism,¹⁰ prevailed for the conferring of the Holy Spirit. That rite continues in use today in the greater part of the Churches of the East.

In the West there are very ancient witnesses concerning the part of Christian Initiation that was later distinctly recognized to be the Sacrament of Confirmation. There are directives for the performance of many rites after the baptismal washing and before the Eucharistic meal—for example, anointing, the laying on of the hand, consignation¹¹ — contained both in liturgical documents¹² and in many testimonies of the Fathers. Consequently, in the course of the centuries, questions and doubts arose as to what belonged with certainty to the essence of the Rite of Confirmation. Worth mentioning, however, are at least some of the elements that, from the thirteenth century onward, in the Ecumenical Councils and in documents of the Supreme Pontiffs, cast considerable light on the importance of anointing with Chrism but at the same time did not allow the laying on of hands to be forgotten.

Our Predecessor Innocent III wrote: ‘The anointing of the forehead with Chrism signifies the laying on of the hand, the other name for which is Confirmation, since through it the Holy Spirit is given for growth and strength.’¹³ Another of Our Predecessors Innocent IV calls to mind that the Apostles conferred the Holy Spirit ‘through the laying on of the hand, which Confirmation or the anointing of the forehead with Chrism represents.’¹⁴ In the profession of faith of Emperor Michael Palaeologus read at the Second Council of Lyons, mention is made of the Sacrament of Confirmation, which ‘Bishops confer by the laying on of hands, anointing with Chrism those who have been baptized.’¹⁵ The Decree for the Armenians, issued by the Council of Florence, declares that the ‘matter’ of the Sacrament of Confirmation is ‘Chrism made of olive oil... and

10 Cf. Origen, *De Principiis*, I, 3, 2: GCS, 22, pp. 49 ff.; *Comm. in Ep. ad Rom.* V, 8; PG, 14, 1038; Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catech.* XVI, 26; XXI, 1-7: PG, 33, pp. 956, 1088-1093.

11 Cf. Tertullian, *De Baptismo*, VII-VIII: *Corpus Christianorum Series latina*, 1, pp. 282 ff.; ed. B. Botte, *La tradition apostolique de Saint Hippolyte: Liturgiewissenschaftliche Quellen und Forschungen*, 39, Münster in W., 1963, pp. 52-54; Ambrose, *De Sacramentis*, II, 24; III, 2, 8; VI, 2, 9: CSEL., 73, pp. 36, 42, 74-75; *De Mysteriis*, VII, 42: *ibid.* p. 106.

12 *Liber Sacramentorum Romanæ Ecclesiæ Ordinis Anni circuli*, ed. L.C. Mohlberg (*Rerum Ecclesiasticarum Documenta, Fontes*, IV), Rome, 1960, p. 75; *Das Sacramentarium Gregorianum nach dem Aachener Urexemplar*, ed. H. Lietzmann (*Liturgiegeschichtliche Quellen*, 3), Münster in W., 1921, pp. 53 ff.; *Liber Ordinum*, ed. M. Férotin (*Monumenta Ecclesiæ Liturgica*, V), Paris, 1904, pp. 33 ff.; *Missale Gallicanum Vetus*, ed. L.C. Mohlberg (*Rerum Ecclesiasticarum Documenta, Fontes*, III), Rome, 1958, p. 42; *Missale Gothicum*, ed. L.C. Mohlberg (*Rerum Ecclesiasticarum Documenta*, V), Rome, 1961, p. 67; C. Vogel-R. Elze, *Le Pontifical Romano-Germanique du dixième siècle, Le Texte*, II (*Studi et Testi*, 227), Vatican City, 1963, p. 109; M. Andrieu, *Le Pontifical Romain au Moyen-Age*, t. 1, *Le Pontifical Romain du XIIe siècle (Studi e Testi*, 86), Vatican City, 1938, pp. 247 ff. and 289; t. 2, *Le Pontifical de la Curie Romaine au XIIIe siècle (Studi e Testi*, 87), Vatican City, 1940, pp. 452 ff.

13 Innocent III, *Ep. “Cum venisset”*: PL 215, 285. The profession of faith that the same Pope imposed on the Waldenses has these words: “We regard confirmation by the Bishop, that is, the laying on of hands, to be holy and to be received with reverence”: PL 215, 1511.

14 Innocent IV, *Ep. “Sub Catholica professione”*: Mansi, *Conc. Coll.*, t. 23, 579.

15 Mansi, *Conc. Coll.*, t. 24, 71.

balsam¹⁶ and, quoting the words of the Acts of the Apostles concerning Peter and John, who gave the Holy Spirit through the laying on of hands (cf. Acts 8:17), it adds: ‘in the Church in place of that laying on of the hand, Confirmation is given.’¹⁷ The Council of Trent, though it had no intention of defining the essential Rite of Confirmation, designated it simply by the term ‘the sacred Chrism of Confirmation.’¹⁸ Benedict XIV made this declaration: ‘Therefore let this be said, which is beyond dispute: in the Latin Church the Sacrament of Confirmation is conferred by using sacred Chrism or olive oil mixed with balsam and blessed by the Bishop, and by the minister of the Sacrament tracing the Sign of the Cross on the forehead of the recipient, while the same minister pronounces the words of the form.’¹⁹

Taking account of these declarations and traditions, many doctors of sacred theology maintained that for valid administration of Confirmation only the anointing with Chrism, done by placing the hand on the forehead, was required. Nevertheless, in the rites of the Latin Church a laying of hands on those to be confirmed prior to anointing them with Chrism was always prescribed.

Moreover, with regard to the words of the rite by which the Holy Spirit is imparted, it should be noted that, already in the nascent Church, Peter and John, in order to complete the initiation of those baptized in Samaria, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Spirit, and then laid hands on them (cf. Acts 8:15-17). In the East the first traces of the expression ‘seal of the gift of the Holy Spirit’ appeared in the fourth and fifth centuries.²⁰ The expression was quickly accepted by the Church of Constantinople and still is used in Byzantine Rite Churches.

In the West, however, the words of the rite that completes Baptism were less settled until the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. But in the twelfth-century Roman Pontifical the formula that later became common first occurs: ‘I sign you with the Sign of the Cross and confirm you with the Chrism of salvation. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.’²¹

From what We have recalled, it is clear that in the administration of Confirmation in the East and the West, though in different ways, the most important place was occupied by the anointing with Chrism, which in a certain way represents the apostolic laying on of hands. Since this anointing with Chrism aptly signifies the spiritual anointing of the Holy Spirit, who is given to the faithful, We wish to confirm its existence and importance.

As regards the words pronounced in anointing with Chrism, We have examined with the consideration it deserves the dignity of the venerable formula used in the Latin Church, but We judge preferable the very ancient formula belonging to the Byzantine Rite, by which the Gift of the Holy Spirit himself is expressed and the outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost (cf. Acts 2:1-4, 38) is called to mind. We therefore adopt this formula, rendering it almost word for word.

16 *Epistolæ Pontificiæ ad Concilium Florentinum spectantes*, ed. G. Hofmann: *Concilium Florentinum*, vol. I, ser. A., part II, Rome, 1944, p. 128.

17 *Ibid.*, p. 129.

18 *Concilii Tridentini Actorum pars altera*, ed. S. Eheses: *Concilium Tridentinum*, V, Act. II, Fribourg Br., 1911, p. 996.

19 *Ep. “Ex quo primum tempore,”* 52: *Benedicti XIV. ... Bullarium*, t. III, Prato, 1847, p. 320.

20 Cf. Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catech.* XVIII, 33: PG 33: 1056. Asterius, Bishop of Amasea, *In parabolam de filio prodigo*, in the “Library of Photius,” Cod. 271: PG 104, 213. Cf. also *Epistola cuiusdam Patriarchæ Constantinopolitani ad Martyrium, Episcopum Antiochenum*: PG, 119, 900.

21 M. Andrieu, *Le Pontifical Romain au Moyen-Age*, t. 1, *Le Pontifical Romain du XIIe siècle (Studi e Testi, 86)*, Vatican City, 1938, p. 247.

Therefore, in order that the revision of the Rite of Confirmation may, as is fitting, include even the essence of the sacramental rite, by Our Supreme Apostolic Authority We decree and lay down that in the Latin Church the following are to be observed for the future:

THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION IS CONFERRED THROUGH THE ANOINTING WITH CHRISM ON THE FOREHEAD, WHICH IS DONE BY THE LAYING ON OF THE HAND, AND THROUGH THE WORDS: *ACCIPE SIGNACULUM DONI SPIRITUS SANCTI*.

But the laying of hands over the elect, carried out with the prescribed prayer before the anointing with Chrism, even if it is not of the essence of the sacramental rite, is still to be regarded as very important, inasmuch as it contributes to the complete perfection of the rite and to a more thorough understanding of the Sacrament. It is evident that this prior laying on of hands differs from the later laying on of the hand in the anointing with Chrism on the forehead.

Having established and declared all these elements concerning the essential rite of the Sacrament of Confirmation, We also approve by Our Apostolic Authority the *Ordo* for the same Sacrament, revised by the Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship, after consultation with the Sacred Congregations for the Doctrine of the Faith, for the Discipline of the Sacraments, and for the Evangelization of Peoples on the matters that are within their competence. The Latin edition of the *Ordo* containing the new sacramental form will come into force, as soon as it is published; the editions in the vernacular languages, prepared by the Conferences of Bishops and confirmed by the Apostolic See, will come into force on the date to be decreed by each Conference. The old *Ordo* may be used until the end of the year 1972. From 1 January 1973, however, only the new *Ordo* is to be used by those concerned.

We intend that everything that We have laid down and prescribed should be firm and effective in the Latin Church, notwithstanding, where relevant, the Apostolic Constitutions and Ordinances issued by Our Predecessors, and other prescriptions, even those worthy of special mention.

Given at Rome, at Saint Peter's, on the fifteenth day of the month of August, the day of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, in the year 1971, the ninth of Our Pontificate.

PAUL VI, POPE

THE ORDER OF CONFIRMATION

INTRODUCTION

I. The Dignity of Confirmation

1. Those who have been baptized continue on the path of Christian Initiation through the Sacrament of Confirmation, by which they receive the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, whom the Lord sent upon the Apostles at Pentecost.
2. By this gift of the Holy Spirit the faithful are more fully conformed to Christ and are strengthened with the power to bear witness to Christ for the building up of his Body in faith and charity. They are marked with the character or seal of the Lord in such a way that the Sacrament of Confirmation cannot be repeated.

II. Duties and Ministries in the Celebration of Confirmation

3. One of the highest responsibilities of the People of God is to prepare the baptized to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. Pastors have the special responsibility to see that all the baptized reach the completion of Christian Initiation and therefore that they are prepared with the utmost care for Confirmation.

Adult catechumens who are to receive Confirmation immediately after Baptism profit from the help of the Christian community and, in particular, the instruction given them during the period of the catechumenate, to which catechists, sponsors and members of the local Church contribute by means of catechesis and communal celebrations of the rites. It will be appropriate to adapt the plan for the catechumenate for those who were baptized in infancy and only in adulthood approach Confirmation.

To a large extent it is the responsibility of Christian parents to show concern for the initiation of their children to the sacramental life both by forming and gradually increasing a spirit of faith in the children and, sometimes with the help of their instructors who are responsible for catechetical formation, by preparing them for the fruitful reception of the Sacraments of Confirmation and the Eucharist. The duty of the parents is also expressed by their active participation in the celebration of the Sacraments.

4. Attention should be paid to giving the liturgical action the festive and solemn character that its significance for the local Church requires. This will be achieved especially if all the candidates are gathered together for a common celebration. The whole People of God, represented by the families and friends of the candidates for Confirmation and by members of the local community, will be invited to take part in such a celebration and will endeavour to express their faith by means of the fruits the Holy Spirit has produced in them.
5. As a rule, each of those to be confirmed should be assisted by a sponsor, who will bring them to receive the Sacrament, will present them to the minister of Confirmation for the sacred anointing, and afterwards will help them to fulfill their baptismal promises faithfully in accordance with the Holy Spirit whom they have received.

With due regard for contemporary pastoral circumstances, it is desirable that the godparent at Baptism, if available, also be the sponsor at Confirmation. In this way the link between

Baptism and Confirmation is more clearly expressed and the role and responsibility of the sponsor are exercised more effectively.

Nonetheless, the option of choosing a special sponsor for Confirmation is in no way excluded. It is for the local Ordinary to determine diocesan practice with due regard for local conditions and circumstances.

6. Pastors of souls will see that the sponsor, chosen by the one to be confirmed or by his or her family, is spiritually fit to take on this responsibility and is endowed with these qualities:
 - a. he or she should be of sufficient maturity to fulfill this function;
 - b. he or she should be a member of the Catholic Church and should have received initiation in the three Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist;
 - c. he or she should not be impeded by law from fulfilling the responsibility of a sponsor.
7. The ordinary minister of Confirmation is the Bishop. Normally a Bishop administers the Sacrament so that there will be a clearer reference to the first outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. For after the Apostles were filled with the Holy Spirit, they themselves transmitted the Spirit to the faithful through the laying on of hands. Thus the reception of the Holy Spirit through the ministry of the Bishop shows the close bond that joins the confirmed to the Church and the mandate received from Christ to bear witness to him before all.

Besides the Bishop, the following possess the faculty to confirm by the law itself:

- a. territorial prelate and territorial abbot, vicar and prefect apostolic, apostolic administrator and diocesan administrator, within the limits of their territory and while they hold office;
 - b. in consideration of the person to be confirmed, a Priest who, in virtue of his office or the mandate of the Diocesan Bishop, baptizes a person who is no longer an infant or admits one already baptized into the full communion of the Catholic Church;
 - c. as regards those who are in danger of death, the pastor or indeed any Priest.
8. The Diocesan Bishop is to administer Confirmation personally or is to take care that another Bishop administers it; if necessity requires, he can grant the faculty to one or more specific Priests, who are to administer this Sacrament.

For a grave cause, as sometimes is present because of the large number of those to be confirmed, the Bishop and even the Priest endowed with the faculty of confirming in virtue of the law or the special grant of the competent authority can in single cases also associate Priests to themselves to administer the Sacrament.

It is preferable, moreover, that the Priests who are so invited:

- a. either exercise a particular role or office in the diocese, being, namely, either vicars general, episcopal vicars, or vicars forane;
- b. or are the pastors of the places where Confirmation is conferred, or pastors of the places where the candidates belong, or Priests who have had a special part in the catechetical preparation of those to be confirmed.

III. The Celebration of the Sacrament

9. The Sacrament of Confirmation is conferred through the anointing with Chrism on the forehead, which is done by the laying on of the hand, and through the words: *ACCIPE SIGNACULUM DONI SPIRITUS SANCTI* (BE SEALED WITH THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT).

The laying of hands on those to be confirmed, which is accompanied by the prayer Almighty God, although it does not pertain to the validity of the Sacrament, should still be considered to be of great importance with regard to the integrity of the rite and a fuller understanding of the Sacrament.

The Priests who are at times associated with the principal minister in conferring the Sacrament join him in the laying of hands on all the candidates, but say nothing.

The whole rite presents a twofold symbolism. Through the laying of hands on the candidates by the Bishop and the concelebrating Priests, the biblical gesture, by which the gift of the Holy Spirit is invoked, is expressed in a manner well suited to the understanding of the Christian people. In the anointing with Chrism and the accompanying words, the effect of the giving of the Holy Spirit is clearly signified. Signed with the perfumed oil by the hand of the Bishop, the baptized receive the indelible character, the seal of the Lord, together with the gift of the Spirit that conforms them more fully to Christ and gives them the grace of spreading among men and women 'the pleasing fragrance of Christ.'

10. The sacred Chrism is consecrated by the Bishop in the Mass that is celebrated by custom on Thursday of Holy Week for this purpose.
11. Adult catechumens and children who are baptized at an age when they are old enough for catechesis should ordinarily be admitted to Confirmation and the Eucharist at the same time as they receive Baptism. If this is impossible, they should receive Confirmation at another common celebration (cf. no. 4). Similarly, adults who were baptized in infancy should, after suitable preparation, receive Confirmation and the Eucharist at a common celebration.

With regard to children, in the Latin Church the administration of Confirmation is generally delayed until about the seventh year. For pastoral reasons, however, especially to implant more deeply in the lives of the faithful complete obedience to Christ the Lord and a firm witnessing to him, the Conferences of Bishops may set an age that seems more suitable, so that this Sacrament is conferred at a more mature age, after appropriate formation.

In this case every necessary precaution is to be taken to ensure that, in the event of danger of death or serious problems of another kind, children receive Confirmation in good time, even before the use of reason, so that they are not left without the benefit of this Sacrament.

12. Those who are to receive Confirmation must have already been baptized. Moreover, those faithful possessing the use of reason must be in the state of grace, be properly instructed, and be capable of renewing the baptismal promises.

It is for the Conferences of Bishops to determine more precisely the catechetical resources, so that the candidates, especially children, are suitably prepared for Confirmation.

In the case of adults, those principles that are in force in the individual dioceses for admitting catechumens to Baptism and the Eucharist should be followed, with appropriate adaptation. Measures should especially be taken so that suitable catechesis precedes Confirmation and that the association of the candidates with the Christian community

and with individual members of the faithful be effective and sufficient in offering them practical help towards achieving formation for bearing witness to the Christian life and for carrying on the apostolate and towards instilling in them a genuine desire to participate in the Eucharist (cf. Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, Introduction, no. 19).

The preparation of a baptized adult for Confirmation sometimes coincides with his or her preparation for Marriage. In such cases, whenever it is foreseen that the conditions for a fruitful reception of Confirmation cannot be satisfied, the local Ordinary will judge whether it is more appropriate to defer Confirmation until after the celebration of Marriage.

In addition, if Confirmation is conferred on a member of the faithful who has the use of reason and is in danger of death, a spiritual preparation, suited, as far as possible, to the individual situation, should be given beforehand.

13. As a rule, Confirmation takes place within Mass so that the fundamental connection of this Sacrament with all of Christian Initiation, which reaches its culmination in the Communion of the Body and Blood of Christ, may stand out in a clearer light. The newly confirmed therefore participate in the Eucharist, which completes their Christian Initiation.

If, however, the candidates for Confirmation are children who have not received the Most Holy Eucharist and are not being admitted to First Communion at this liturgical celebration or if other special circumstances so suggest, Confirmation should be conferred outside Mass. Whenever Confirmation is conferred without Mass, a celebration of the word of God should precede it.

When Confirmation is conferred within Mass, it is fitting that the minister of Confirmation celebrate the Mass or, better, concelebrate it, especially with those Priests who happen to be joined with him in administering the Sacrament.

If the Mass is celebrated by someone else, it is fitting that the Bishop preside over the Liturgy of the Word, doing all that the celebrant normally does, and that he give the blessing at the end of Mass.

Great emphasis should be placed on the celebration of the word of God that introduces the Rite of Confirmation. For it is from the hearing of the word of God that the many-sided work of the Holy Spirit flows out upon the Church and upon each one of the baptized or confirmed and that the Lord's will is made known in the life of Christians.

Great importance is likewise to be attached to the saying of the Lord's Prayer, which those to be confirmed recite together with the congregation—either during Mass before Communion or outside Mass before the blessing—because it is the Spirit who prays in us and in the Spirit the Christian says: 'Abba, Father.'

14. The names of those confirmed, with mention made of the minister, the parents, and sponsors, and the place and date of the conferral of Confirmation are to be recorded in the Confirmation register of the diocesan curia, or, where the Conference of Bishops or the Diocesan Bishop has prescribed it, in a register to be kept in the parish archives. The pastor must inform the pastor of the place of Baptism about the conferral of Confirmation, so that a notation is made in the baptismal register, according to the norm of the law.
15. If the pastor of the place was not present, the minister either personally or through another is to inform him, as soon as possible, about the conferral of Confirmation.

IV. Adaptations that may be carried out in the Rite of Confirmation

16. It is for Conferences of Bishops, by virtue of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (art. 63 b), to prepare in particular ritual books the Rite of Confirmation, which corresponds to this Rite of Confirmation in the Roman Pontifical, adapted to the needs of the particular regions, for use in the regions under their care, after their decisions have been approved by the Apostolic See.
17. The Conference of Bishops will consider whether, with due consideration for local circumstances and the culture and traditions of peoples, it is opportune:
 - a. to make suitable adaptations of the formulas for the renewal of baptismal promises and professions of faith, either following the text in the Order of Baptism or accommodating these formulas so that they more suitably correspond to the state of those to be confirmed.
 - b. to introduce a different manner for the minister to give the sign of peace after the anointing, either to each individual or to all the newly confirmed together.
18. In individual cases and with due consideration for the capacity of those to be confirmed, the minister, moreover, may introduce some explanations into the rite and may also make appropriate accommodations in the existing texts, for example, by expressing these by way of a dialogue, especially with children.

When Confirmation is conferred by an extraordinary minister, whether by concession of the general law or by special indult of the Apostolic See, it is fitting for him to mention in the homily that the Bishop is the ordinary minister of the Sacrament and to explain the reason why even Priests receive the faculty to confirm from the law or by an indult of the Apostolic See.

V. Things to be prepared

19. The following should be prepared for the administration of Confirmation:
 - a. the sacred vestments prescribed for the celebration of Mass both for the Bishop and for any Priests assisting him, when Confirmation is conferred within a Mass at which they concelebrate. If the Mass is celebrated by someone else, it is appropriate that the minister of Confirmation and the Priests joining him in administering the Sacrament should take part in the Mass wearing the sacred vestments prescribed for the conferral of Confirmation, namely: the alb, the stole, and, for the minister of Confirmation, the cope; these vestments are also worn when Confirmation is conferred outside Mass;
 - b. chairs for the Bishop and the Priests assisting him;
 - c. vessel (or vessels) with sacred Chrism;
 - d. The Roman Pontifical or the Roman Ritual;
 - e. the requisites for the celebration of Mass and, if Holy Communion is distributed in this form, for Communion under both kinds, when Confirmation is conferred within Mass;
 - f. the requisites for the washing of hands after the anointing of those to be confirmed.

The discussion surrounding the sacrament of Confirmation is complicated. Should it be administered to infants (the Eastern Church) or to those having attained the age of reason (the later Western Church). Should it be administered by a bishop alone (Western Church) or by extension a priest (Eastern Church and modern Western Church). Is the matter anointing with chrism or simply laying on of hands. The Apostolic Constitution of Paul VI *Divinae consortium naturae* states that the matter of Confirmation is "the anointing with chrism on the forehead, which is done by the laying on of the hand." In other words, the anointing of the head is the same as the laying on of the hand on the head described in the New Testament. Comment | Share | Tweet | Buffer | print | email. These very incomplete collection of excerpts from several Early Church Fathers demonstrates the importance of what we now call the sacrament of confirmation (chrismation in the Eastern Christian Churches) and the conviction that this sacrament went back to apostolic times. Baptism in the early church was always followed immediately by the laying on of hands by the bishop and the anointing with the special perfumed oil called chrism which was used in the Old Testament for the consecration of priests, prophets, and kings. These excerpts also demonstrate the meaning of the sacrament of confirmati... Apostolic constitution. Quite the same Wikipedia. Just better. Apostolic constitution. From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia. For the 4th-century text, see Apostolic Constitutions. Part of a series on the. Canon law of the Catholic Church. *Ius vigens* (current law). Omnia in mentem. Valid but illicit. Sacraments. Holy Orders. Impediment (canon law). Confirmation is a sacrament that Jesus Christ instituted within His Catholic Church to further strengthen those who have reached adulthood. Acts 19:5-6 "the people of Ephesus were baptized in Christ, but Paul laid hands on them to seal them with the Holy Spirit." As the Father sets His seal on Jesus, so Jesus sets His seal on us on the sacrament of baptism, and later, in the sacrament of confirmation. Rev. Apostolic Constitutions, 7,2:22 (A.D. 400). "Why, therefore, is the Head itself, whence that ointment of unity descended, that is, the spiritual fragrance of brotherly love," why, I say, is the Head itself exposed to your resistance, while it testifies and declares that "repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem"?