

**GUIDELINES FOR
CELEBRATING THE RITE OF CONFIRMATION 2023**



DIOCESE OF KILDARE & LEIGHLIN

Confirmation marks a unique moment in a person's life when one is invited to grow in faith and, through the power of the Holy Spirit, embrace a new maturity where all that has gone before takes on richer and deeper meaning further forming one as a faithful disciple, grateful steward, and active evangelist of the Risen Christ.

(Rev. Ronald Rolheiser Secularity and the Gospel)

Theme for Confirmation 2023

'Making a choice to take my place in the tent'

'Enlarge the space of your tent, spread out your tent cloths unsparingly, lengthen your ropes and make firm your pegs' (Is 54:2).

'Listened to today, these words of Isaiah invite us to imagine the Church similarly as a tent, indeed as the tent of meeting, which accompanied the people on their journey through the desert: called to stretch out, therefore, but also to move. At its centre, stands the tabernacle, that is, the presence of the Lord. The tent's hold is ensured by the sturdiness of its pegs, that is, the fundamentals of faith that do not change but can be moved and planted in ever new ground, so that the tent can accompany the people as they walk through history. Finally, in order not to sag, the structure of the tent must keep in balance the different forces and tensions to which it is subjected: a metaphor that expresses the need for discernment. This is how many reports envision the Church: an expansive, but not homogeneous dwelling, capable of sheltering all, but open, letting in and out (cf. Jn. 10:9), and moving toward embracing the Father and all of humanity.'

Working Document for the Continental Stage 27

CELEBRATING CONFIRMATION IN 2023

These Guidelines are designed to help parishes, particularly those where Bishop Denis will preside, in their preparation and planning of the celebration of Confirmation. They will also help Bishop Denis in his preparation for the celebration in each parish.

It would be very helpful if parishes where Bishop Denis is not presiding at Confirmation this year would let Aisling know, by emailing aisling@kandle.ie, when their celebration is and how many candidates are being confirmed. It is hoped that these guidelines will also be of use in those parishes.

CELEBRATING THE RITE OF CONFIRMATION OUTSIDE OF MASS

COVID 19 continues to impact on the way we gather and it is important to acknowledge that Confirmation celebrations may take place outside of Mass as allowed by Canon 882. The experience of focusing on the Rite of Confirmation over the past three years was a very positive one for a significant number of people and it is hoped that parishes will choose to continue to celebrate Confirmation this way in the coming year.

There is a template for the celebration of the Rite of Confirmation on pages 7-11.

If you choose to celebrate Confirmation within the Eucharist, then further Guidelines are available from aisling@kandle.ie.

COVID 19 & CONFIRMATION 2023

COVID 19 and a number of other infectious viruses continues to pose challenges for all communities. There continue to be significant numbers of children and staff absent daily in our school communities. It would be helpful for parishes to offer guidance in advance to parents based on the most up to date HSE advice available at the time. It would also be helpful for parishes to have contingency plans in place in the event that one or more candidates cannot present for Confirmation on the day.

BEFORE THE CELEBRATION TAKES PLACE: Bishop Denis asks that the **Planning Form** be completed and returned to him **three weeks** before the date of Confirmation in your parish. *Schools, please note that this form is sent to the parish to complete and return.*

CONFIRMATION BOOKLETS: Parishes and schools are asked to consider carefully the environmental impact of printing booklets. If your parish is preparing a booklet for use on the day, please send a copy to Bishop Denis in advance.

The following notes are designed to help ensure the best possible experience of the celebration of Confirmation for all.

1: PARISH PREPARATION: Bishop Denis would like a brief description of the type of preparation undertaken by the candidates and their families in the parish. This can be as simple as naming the preparation programme such as ***You Shall Be My***

Witnesses, We Belong to Christ or providing an outline of any initiatives used by the parish team to engage the candidates and their families in a programme of preparation in the months prior to Confirmation. This will enable him to encourage and affirm the work of preparation in the parish during the ceremony.

2: LETTER TO THE BISHOP: Bishop Denis would like **all candidates** who will be confirmed by him to submit a letter prior to Confirmation. This letter is to be written **at home** by the candidates in consultation with their parents/guardians and then signed by the candidates and their parents/guardians. The letters should then be sent by the parish to the bishop together with the enclosed form **three weeks** before the celebration of Confirmation in your parish. **If your parish has multiple confirmations please ensure that the letters are bundled together and labelled with the names of schools and the corresponding Confirmation Ceremony.** The following information should be included in the letters:

BIOGRAPHY: The candidate should introduce themselves to Bishop Denis using some of the following information

- Their name and age
- The name of their school and the class that they are in
- The name of their parish
- Something about their family
- Their interests/hobbies/favourite things to do

DESCRIPTION OF PREPARATION AT HOME, IN THE PARISH AND IN SCHOOL: The candidate needs to say something to the bishop about how he or she has prepared to celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation.

PERSONAL MEANING: The candidate should reflect on what the celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation means to them.

CONFIRMATION NAME AND SPONSOR: The candidate should tell the bishop what name they are choosing and why. They might also say something about their sponsor and the reason for choosing this person.

FOR 2023: The candidate should say something to the bishop about each of the following:

- what would help them to be more involved in their parish community once they have been confirmed. This could be based on the discussion that they will have in class about their choice of word for the Poster that they will present to Bishop Denis on the day of Confirmation. This word will describe their hope for the church of the future. It might also be helpful for them to reference the following in their letters:
 - 1) Do I know of any opportunities for me to be involved in my local parish community after Confirmation?

- 2) What could my local parish do to help me be more involved?
- 3) What would you say to Bishop Denis about how the church in Kildare & Leighlin could help you and other young people stay involved?

3: SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION: The sacrament of reconciliation should be celebrated by all candidates prior to the celebration of Confirmation. A suggested outline for a Reconciliation Service and for a combined Reconciliation and Ceremony of Light Service is available for download on www.kandle.ie.

4: RETREAT: Many parishes provide candidates with the opportunity of a retreat before or after Confirmation.

5: SPONSOR: Each candidate has a sponsor for confirmation. *The sponsor for any candidate may be male or female, is to be at least 16 years of age, a fully initiated Catholic and living a life of faith which befits the role to be undertaken. A parent may not act as a sponsor for his or her child (Canon 874). A Baptismal sponsor is desired as the Confirmation sponsor, in order to emphasize the relationship between Baptism and Confirmation (Canon 893.2).*

6: PLEDGE: The Pledge Commitment is an important part of the candidate's preparation. All parishes are expected to include a Pledge Commitment Ceremony as part of the preparation or post celebration process. You can find a copy of a Confirmation Pledge Certificate <https://app.growinlove.ie/en/user/professional-development>. There are also useful resources for exploring the Pledge on https://www.irishbishopsdrugsinitiative.ie/what_we_do_category/confirmation-commitment/

7: PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEOGRAPHY: Under the Diocesan Safeguarding Guidelines best practice would suggest that no photography or videography should take place in the Church. Therefore, the taking of photographs and of videos is not permitted during the ceremony and this must be communicated to candidates, parents/guardians, sponsors and family members prior to the celebration of Confirmation. This can be done at the rehearsal and on the day itself in the time before the liturgy begins. The turning off of mobile phones should also be requested at this time.

Stewards can help to ensure that the taking of photographs or videos is discouraged.

Bishop Denis suggests that a group picture of him with the candidates be taken after the ceremony and that the organisation of this should be done at the rehearsal for Confirmation.

If a videographer is being used in an official capacity, he/she should be instructed not to distract from the solemn nature of the celebration and at no time should he/she enter the sanctuary area. **Parental consent for the taking of the video must also be obtained from all parents in advance of the ceremony.**

8: PRELUDE Five minutes before the Confirmation ceremony begins it is useful for the priest or other nominated person to begin preparing the congregation for the

celebration which is to follow. This is an opportunity to quieten the gathering, remind them of the need to switch off mobile phones, not to take pictures and to invite them to spend a moment in quiet prayer for the candidates who are to be confirmed. This may be accompanied by some quiet instrumental music that can continue until the liturgy is ready to begin.

TEMPLATE FOR THE CELEBRATION OF THE RITE OF CONFIRMATION 2023

CAN. 881 *It is desirable to celebrate the sacrament of confirmation in a church and during Mass; for a just and reasonable cause, however, it can be celebrated outside Mass and in any worthy place.*

Whenever Confirmation is conferred without Mass, a celebration of the word of God should precede it. [OC 13]

GATHERING SONG: *Suggestions for all music on pages 15*

WORDS OF WELCOME:

SIGN OF THE CROSS: As we begin our celebration let us mark ourselves with the sign of that faith as we did on the day of baptism:

You might consider inviting the parents to make the Sign of the Cross on their child's forehead as they did on the day of their baptism.....

In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

If there is a space dedicated to symbols of the candidate's work in preparation for Confirmation now would be an appropriate time to refer to it.

COLLECT:

Fulfill for us your gracious promise,
O Lord, we pray,
so that by his coming
the Holy Spirit may make us witnesses before the world
to the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.
Who lives and reigns with you
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. **Amen**

Or

Graciously pour out your Holy Spirit upon us, we pray, O Lord,
so that, walking in oneness of faith
and strengthened by the power of his love,
we may come to the measure of the full stature of Christ.

Who lives and reigns with you
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

Amen

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

Suggested Readings on page 12

SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION

PRESENTATION OF THE CANDIDATES

The names of the candidates are called, and they stand as they are presented to the Presider and the community alternatively see the suggestion for the Renewal of Baptismal Promises where the candidate's names might also be called.

Homily

RENEWAL OF BAPTISMAL PROMISES

If baptismal candles are to be lit the priest could introduce the Renewal of Baptismal Promises in these or similar words while standing near the Paschal Candle

Our Paschal Candle is a sign of hope for all who believe that Jesus is the light of the world, a light that can never be quenched, a light that will always brighten our way. On the day of your baptism your parents took light from the Paschal Candle to light your baptismal candle as a sign of the faith that they wanted to pass on to you. They were asked to keep the light burning brightly until you were ready to say yes to your faith for yourselves. They obviously have done a good job because you are here, ready to confirm what they did for you at baptism, ready to say yes to continuing to live as Jesus wants you to. Now as they light your baptismal candle again, we pray that you will continue to walk as a child of the light and keep this light of faith burning brightly for all to see.

Each candidate and their parent/s are called forward individually, they light their baptismal candle and then return to their seats and remain standing

CELEBRANT: Do you renounce Satan,
And all his works,
And all his empty show?

CANDIDATES: I do.

CELEBRANT: Do you believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth?

CANDIDATES: **I do.**

CELEBRANT: Do you believe in Jesus Christ,
his only Son, our Lord,
who was born of the Virgin Mary,
was crucified, died, and was buried,
rose from the dead,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father?

CANDIDATES: **I do.**

CELEBRANT: Do you believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord, the giver of life,
who came upon the apostles at Pentecost
and today is given to you sacramentally in Confirmation?

CANDIDATES: **I do.**

CELEBRANT: Do you believe in the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and life everlasting?

CANDIDATES: **I do.**

CELEBRANT: This is our faith.
This is the faith of the Church.
We are proud to profess it in Christ Jesus our Lord.

CANDIDATES: Amen.

LAYING ON OF HANDS

CELEBRANT: My dear friends,
in baptism God our Father
gave the new birth of eternal life
to his chosen sons and daughters.
Let us pray to our Father
that he will pour out the Holy Spirit
to strengthen his sons and daughters with his gifts

and anoint them to be more like Christ, the Son of God.

The celebrant(s) stretch out their hands over the candidates and pray:

All powerful God,
Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
by water and the Holy Spirit
you freed your sons and daughters from sin
and gave them new life.
Send your Holy Spirit upon them,
to be their helper and guide.
Give them the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of right judgement and courage,
the spirit of knowledge and reverence.
Fill them with the spirit of wonder,
and awe in your presence.
We ask this through Christ our Lord, **Amen.**

ANOINTING WITH CHRISM

CELEBRANT: (Name), be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit.

CANDIDATE: **Amen.**

CELEBRANT: Peace be with you.

CANDIDATE: And with your spirit.

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL *(see suggestions on pages 13 & 14)*

We pray to the Lord:

Lord hear our prayer

THE LORD'S PRAYER

ALL: Our Father.....

PRESENTATION OF POSTER TO BISHOP DENIS/CELEBRANT

The poster (no larger than an A2 size page) contains one word that, following discussion in their classroom, describes the church that the Confirmation candidates want to belong to, the church that they would like to help make a reality in the future. The poster can be decorated however the candidates decide.

CELEBRANT: Let us pray

Lord, help those you have anointed by your Spirit.
Support them through every trial
and by their works of love
build up the Church in holiness and joy
Grant this through Christ our Lord. **Amen**

CONCLUDING RITE

FINAL BLESSING & DISMISSAL

SUGGESTED READINGS FOR CONFIRMATION 2023

If you wish to change any of these readings, please let Bishop Denis know in advance.

ACTS 1:7-8

He replied, 'It is not for you to know times or dates that the Father has decided by his own authority, but you will receive the power of the Holy Spirit which will come on you, and then you will be my witnesses not only in Jerusalem but throughout Judaea and Samaria, and indeed to earth's remotest end.

ACTS 18: 1-4

After this Paul left Athens and went to Corinth, where he met a Jew called Aquila whose family came from Pontus. He and his wife Priscilla had recently left Italy because an edict of Claudius had expelled all the Jews from Rome. Paul went to visit them, and when he found they were tentmakers, of the same trade as himself, he lodged with them, and they worked together. Every Sabbath he used to hold debates in the synagogues, trying to convert Jews as well as Greeks

GOSPEL: MATTHEW 28:18-20

Jesus came up and spoke to them. He said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, make disciples of all nations; baptise them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to observe all the commands I gave you. And look, I am with you always; yes, to the end of time.

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

For the Church:

We all belong to the Church which is a family of families. Today we give thanks that as members of this family we can come together to celebrate the confirming of our faith and that of our Confirmation candidates. We pray that the Holy Spirit will continue to strengthen their faith and give them the courage to live as followers of Jesus Christ.

We pray to the Lord:

ALL: Lord hear our prayer

**For Bishop Denis,
our priests and people:**

that God's Holy Spirit will continue to strengthen, protect and inspire Bishop Denis, our priests and all those who have a leadership role in our parishes.

We pray to the Lord:

All: Lord hear our prayer

For the Candidates:

that they are open to the gifts that the Holy Spirit lavishes on them today and that they will use these gifts as they continue to seek and find God's dream for them to live as people of the light sharing God's message of love with all they meet.

We pray to the Lord:

ALL: Lord hear our prayer

**For all who have helped
the candidates prepare:**

We pray for all who helped to prepare the candidates for this day, especially in these challenging times, their teachers, priests, sacramental coordinators.

May they know that their work in leading them to know you is precious and appreciated.

We pray to the Lord:

ALL: Lord hear our prayer

For our parents, guardians and sponsors:

that they will be the best teachers in the ways of faith both now and in the future.

We pray to the Lord

ALL: Lord hear our prayer

For those who are sick:

We pray for all those we love who are sick and especially for those who cannot be with us today, may they know God's healing presence.

We pray to the Lord.

ALL: Lord hear our prayer

For those who have died:

Individual parishes/school communities have had very different experiences of illness and loss in the past 12 months. This would be an appropriate time to offer a prayer for your specific context.

Or

We pray for those who have died, especially those in our families and our community, may they dwell forever in God's loving embrace.

We pray to the Lord.

ALL: Lord hear our prayer

SUGGESTED MUSIC FOR CONFIRMATION CEREMONY

Where possible the link to the growinlove.ie is provided so that in the absence of a music ministry songs can be downloaded and played through the church sound system

GATHERING SONGS

- *This Is the Day;* (Mary Amond O'Brien; *Grow in Love 2nd Class*)
<https://app.growinlove.ie/en/user/lesson-resources/196>
- *Spirit Anthem;* (Frances O'Connell; *Grow in Love 5th Class*)
<https://app.growinlove.ie/en/user/lesson-resources/404>
- *The Summons;* (John L. Bell & Graham Maule; *Grow in Love 5th Class*)
<https://app.growinlove.ie/en/user/lesson-resources/392>

PSALMS

- Psalm 103 Send forth your Spirit O Lord
(Liam Lawton; *Grow in Love 6th Class*)
<https://app.growinlove.ie/en/user/lesson-resources/516>
- Psalm 103: The Lord is Kind and Merciful
(Jeanne Cotter www.giamusic.com)

ANOINTING WITH CHRISM

- Lay your hands (Carey Landry; *Grow in Love 5th Class*)
<https://app.growinlove.ie/en/user/lesson-resources/389>
- Song for a Young Prophet (Damian Lundy; *Grow in Love 5th Class*)
<https://app.growinlove.ie/en/user/lesson-resources/387>
- Tar anuas a Spioraid Naoimh (Ite O'Donovan; *Grow in Love 6th Class*)
- Veni Creator Spiritus (*Grow in Love 5th Class*)
<https://app.growinlove.ie/en/user/lesson-resources/406>
- Where your Treasure is (Marty Haugen; *Grow in Love, 6th Class*)
<https://app.growinlove.ie/en/user/lesson-resources/513>

CONCLUDING HYMNS

- Go Tell Everyone (*Grow in Love 5th & 6th Class*)
<https://app.growinlove.ie/en/user/lesson-resources/404>
- They'll know we are Christians (Peter Sholtes; *Grow in Love, 6th Class*)
<https://app.growinlove.ie/en/user/lesson-resources/519>
- Christ be our Light (Bernadette Farrell; *Grow in Love 4th & 6th Class*)
<https://app.growinlove.ie/en/user/lesson-resources/515>
- Spirit filled day (Mary Amond O'Brien; *Grow in Love 5th Class*)
<https://app.growinlove.ie/en/user/lesson-resources/407>