



DIOCESE OF GRAND RAPIDS
Office for Worship

Spring 2024 Confirmation Preparation Documents

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DIOCESE OF GRAND RAPIDS
Office for Worship

Preparing Candidates for the Conferral of Confirmation

Blessings on all who prepare “those who have been baptized (to) 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” (The Order of Confirmation, par. 1).

What follows for your reference are the **updated** procedures from the Office for Worship of the Diocese of Grand Rapids regarding preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation:

Choice of Sponsors

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” (*The Order of Confirmation*, par. 5).

If the godparent at Baptism is available, that person should also be the Confirmation sponsor to express more clearly the link between Baptism and Confirmation. However, a member of the Catholic Church who is of sufficient maturity, has received all three sacraments of initiation, and otherwise fulfills the requirements of [Can. 874 §1](#) may serve as Sponsor (*The Order of Confirmation*, par. 6).

Confirmation Timeline

Each parish will receive its assigned date for the celebration of Confirmation from the Office of the Bishop. Depending on the number of candidates, a single parish

may be assigned two dates. Once you receive your date, consult the Confirmation section of the [Worship webpage](#) for documents that will aid your preparation.

Liturgical Ministers

Each parish will be required to supply liturgical ministers from the parish community to serve the Confirmation liturgy at the Cathedral. These liturgical ministers will include Altar Servers, Readers, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, Greeter/Ushers and Gift Bearers. To ensure the necessary liturgical ministers are provided for each liturgy, a specific number of liturgical ministers will be assigned to each parish. This number will depend upon the number of candidates the parish will have attending and the number of parishes participating in each liturgy. Names of volunteer ministers must be entered on SignUpGenius two weeks prior to the liturgy. The parish Confirmation Coordinator is responsible for making sure all positions are filled.

It is extremely important that you follow up at least one week prior to the sign-up deadline for your Confirmation liturgy to verify that all liturgical ministers have been identified. If any openings remain, please remember that this is your parish's liturgy and fill the remaining positions to ensure a seamless and reverent celebration. Please do not wait until the last week to fill positions.

Parish Priest(s)

Liturgical planning begins from the presumption that all priests assigned to your parish (whether as pastor, administrator, or parochial vicar) will concelebrate the Mass. Please let us know *as soon as possible* if a priest of your parish is not able to attend. This will affect how many Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are assigned for each liturgy. It is expected that each pastor will present his parish's Confirmation candidates to the Bishop.

Visiting Clergy

If there will be a visiting priest or deacon with your group, please let him know he is welcome to concelebrate the Mass with the Bishop, provided he send a letter of good standing in advance. An extra concelebrant reduces the number of Extraordinary Ministers needed; to avoid confusion, please sign up the visiting clergy using SignUpGenius as one of the ministers of Holy Communion.

Baptismal certificates

Those responsible for the preparation of candidates for Confirmation should obtain baptismal certificates from each candidate at the beginning of the preparation process. These can then be used to notify each of the proper parishes of the fact of Confirmation for entry into those baptismal registers.

Recording and Notification of Confirmation by the Parish

Soon after the celebration of the sacrament, the pastor of the newly confirmed is to ensure that the appropriate entries are made in the Confirmation register of his parish. These entries note the names of each of those confirmed, their parents and sponsors, the place and date of the conferral, and the name of the minister.

A notation of the date and place of Confirmation must also be made in the baptismal register of each candidate. The pastor of the place where Confirmation was celebrated is to ensure that the pastor of the church of the baptism is informed so that the appropriate entry can be made in the baptismal register of each person confirmed (canon 895).

Please contact the Office for Worship at worship@grdiocese.org or 616-288-0908, with questions regarding sign-ups, SignUpGenius, or the Worship webpage.

Additionally, if the number of your candidates has changed from the time your Confirmation date was originally designated, please contact the Office for Worship prior to the Confirmation liturgy so that you will have the appropriate number of pews reserved.



DIOCESE OF GRAND RAPIDS
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Confirmation Liturgy Guidelines

“Dearly beloved, the gift of the Holy Spirit, which you are about to receive, will be a spiritual seal, by which you will be conformed to Christ and will be made more fully members of his Church.”

- The Order of Confirmation, par. 22

What follows for your reference is information from the Office for Worship of the Diocese of Grand Rapids regarding the liturgical celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation:

Dress Code for Candidates

Candidates for the Conferral of Confirmation Within Mass should dress modestly in at least business casual. In general, this means that men are attired in long dress pants and dress shirt and women in skirts or dresses of knee length or longer, or dress pants, with shoulders covered and no open backs. Low-heeled shoes are advised as the candidates will need to walk up a ramp and down steps in the Cathedral sanctuary. Please note that these guidelines apply to sponsors as well.

Name Tags for Candidates

The parish must provide name tags for the candidates. Only the Confirmation name should be printed on the name tag, in a font size of at least 24. The name tag should be placed on the **left shoulder or clavicle (no lower)** of the candidate upon arrival at the Cathedral. When the sponsor and candidate approach the Bishop to be anointed, the sponsor is to state the candidate’s Confirmation name to the Bishop.

Arrival Time Schedule

Greeters/Ushers from the individual parishes should arrive **60 minutes** prior to the beginning of the Confirmation liturgy and check in with the

Cathedral Greeter/Usher Coordinator at the back of the church. Refer to the instructions document for [Parish Ministers of Hospitality](#) for further information.

Readers from the individual parishes should arrive **60 minutes** prior to the ceremony and check in with the Coordinating Sacristan at the sign-in location at the back of the church. The readings will be placed on the ambo prior to your arrival. Please note that the readings will be posted on the [Worship website](#) for your review.

Altar Servers from the individual parishes should arrive **60 minutes** prior to the ceremony and check in with the Sacristan outside the vesting sacristy.

Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion from the individual parishes should arrive **60 minutes** prior to the ceremony and check in with the Cathedral EMHC Coordinator at the back of the church. Refer to the instructions document for [Parish Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion](#) for more information.

Please note: If concelebrating priests arrive that have not notified the diocesan Office for Worship that they would be present, some of the scheduled Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion will not serve since priests are Ordinary Ministers of Holy Communion and will take their positions.

Candidates for Confirmation and their sponsors should be at the Cathedral no less than **30 minutes** prior to the announced time of the liturgy.

Seating

Candidates and their sponsors will sit next to each other in reserved seating in the front of the church. Tags with the parishes' names on them will mark the assigned section in which only the candidates from each parish and their sponsors will sit. Candidates and their sponsors should fill in each pew completely.

Normally eight (8) people will fill a pew. Any pew that is not marked with a tag is open for general seating.

Please address any questions or concerns regarding special accommodations for those with physical handicaps that were noted on the Confirmation Planning Form to the Coordinating Sacristan of the Cathedral.

Only choir members and musicians are permitted to sit in the choir loft. Please remind family members and friends who will attend the Confirmation that seats may not be reserved for those who have not yet arrived.

Photographs

Bishop Walkowiak will be available for individual photos after Mass, either outside (weather permitting) or in the sanctuary area. He will not be available for group photos.

The sanctuary is set aside for liturgical action; please do not enter the sanctuary before or after Mass.

Generally, photos are discouraged during Confirmation Mass. However, any photos taken during Mass must be done discreetly (without flash) and not be a distraction or inhibit the liturgical action taking place.



DIOCESE OF GRAND RAPIDS
Office for Worship

Order for Conferral of Confirmation Within Mass

“Dearly beloved, the gift of the Holy Spirit, which you are about to receive, will be a spiritual seal, by which you will be conformed to Christ and will be made more fully members of his Church.”

- The Order of Confirmation, par. 22

What follows for your reference is information from the Office for Worship of the Diocese of Grand Rapids regarding the liturgical celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation:

PLEASE REVIEW THIS PROCEDURE WITH THE CANDIDATES PRIOR TO ARRIVAL AT THE CATHEDRAL FOR THE CONFIRMATION LITURGY

The procedure for Conferral of Confirmation Within Mass is as follows:

Presentation of the Candidates: After the Gospel and before the homily, the candidates are presented to the Bishop by the pastor or his delegate. The candidates are called by the pastor as a group and stand at their places for recognition by the Bishop and the congregation.

Homily: Given by the Bishop.

Renewal of Baptismal Promises: After the homily, the candidates are asked to stand to renew their baptismal promises per *The Order of Confirmation*.

The response from the candidates to each question asked by the Bishop is “I do.”

Please prepare the candidates to answer with a strong voice so that they may be heard.

Laying On of Hands: As the candidates continue to stand in their places, the Bishop lays hands over all those to be confirmed as he recites a prayer.

Anointing with Chrism: The Bishop then stands at the *cathedra* (chair). The ushers will invite the candidates and sponsors to come forward by way of the side aisles.

Each candidate and sponsor will be directed to approach the Bishop and stand before him. Blue tape on the floor will indicate where the candidate is to stand. The sponsor stands behind the candidate with his or her right hand on the right shoulder of the candidate and announces the candidate's Confirmation name to the Bishop, either by stating the name alone or by saying, "Bishop [Walkowiak], I present [Name]."

The Bishop will make the Sign of the Cross on the forehead of each candidate saying, "***[Name], be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit,***" to which the newly confirmed replies, "***Amen.***"

The Bishop will then say, "***Peace be with you,***" to which the newly confirmed replies, "***And with your spirit.***"

The newly confirmed and their sponsors return to their seats by way of the main aisle.

Mass then continues as usual with the Universal Prayer.

Please Note: *Candidates/sponsors are not to stop and take photos while in procession.* This disrupts the flow and prevents the other candidates from being visible when they are receiving the Sacrament. Please see the [Confirmation Liturgy Guidelines](#) (page 6) for more information on photos.



DIOCESE OF GRAND RAPIDS
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Confirmation FAQ's

1. Who can serve as liturgical ministers?

Anyone from your parish who is trained in that capacity (i.e. extraordinary minister, altar server, usher, reader, etc.).

2. What if a family member from a different parish would like to serve?

They may serve if you can verify they are trained and active in their home parish. Just be sure to list the *candidate's* parish on SignUpGenius, so we know which group they are with.

3. Can a sponsor serve as a liturgical minister?

It is preferred that sponsors not serve as liturgical ministers during the Confirmation Mass, allowing them to give greater attention and support to their candidates. Parents and other family members, on the other hand, are encouraged to serve.

4. Can't I just sign up my liturgical ministers under my account, and put their names in the comment box?

- a. You can, but you will receive their reminder emails and will need to forward them on.
- b. If you do choose to sign someone up under your account, include his or her name in the comment box.
- c. If a minister does not have email, sign them up under your account and communicate their responsibilities to them by another means.

5. I can't get family members to commit to serving. They prefer to remain in the assembly.

- a. The Church invites family of the candidates to "express their faith by means of the fruits the Holy Spirit has produced in them" (*Order of*

Confirmation 4). Propose to family members that serving as a liturgical minister will be an excellent way to share the fruits of their own Confirmation with those who are now receiving the sacrament.

- b. If they still prefer not to serve, remember that Confirmation is significant to the whole local church. Emphasize to other parish ministers that this Mass is not just for candidates and family but is a celebration of the whole parish community that they have been called to serve.
- c. If ministers remain reluctant, ask them to consider how often they will have the opportunity to serve at Mass with their bishop.
- d. Start recruiting as soon as you receive your ministry assignments.

6. I can't figure out how to use SignUpGenius!

Take a look at the step-by-step instructions at the end of this document. If that doesn't help, call the assistant in the Office for Worship at 616-288-0908, or email worship@grdiocese.org and she'll be happy to walk you through it.

7. Where do I find guidelines for candidates' dress? Where do I find the readings for our lectors?

All guidelines can be found on [page 6](#) of this document. Readings can be found on the [website](#). (Note: If you are participating in a bilingual liturgy, your SignUpGenius will specify which reading is in Spanish, and which is in English.)

8. One of my candidates won't be able to attend Confirmation on the date we were assigned; can he/she join another parish's date?

Because such changes affect many people and details, arrangements for one of your candidates to join another parish's scheduled date must be coordinated by the diocese. Please contact Gail Welsh in the Bishop's office at 616-514-6050 or gwelsh@grdiocese.org



DIocese OF GRAND RAPIDS *Office for Worship*

SignUpGenius Instructions

NOTE: You will need to enter your liturgical ministers one at a time.

1. Go to the Worship page of the Diocese website.
 - a. Path: [Diocesan website](#) → Ministries → Worship
2. Click on the sign-up deadline date for your parish's Confirmation liturgy. This will take you to SignUpGenius.
3. Do not log in. If you are logged in under your own account, LOG OUT and proceed as a guest.
4. You will see sign-up options for all the liturgical minister positions:

| Available Slot | |
|---|-------------------------|
| Altar Server - Regular Please arrive at 2:00pm and check in with the Cathedral Coordinator at the back of the church. 5 slots available | Sign Up |
| Chrism Bearer *This role should be filled by a Candidate. Please arrive at 2:00pm and check in with the Cathedral Coordinator at the back of the church. 1 slot available | Sign Up |
| Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion Please arrive at 2:00pm and check in with the Cathedral Coordinator at the back of the church. 10 slots available | Sign Up |
| Gift Bearers Please arrive at 2:00pm and check in with the Cathedral Coordinator at the back of the church. 2 slots available | Sign Up |

5. Check the “Sign Up” box for the liturgical minister position you are selecting for your first volunteer. Click “Save and Continue” at the bottom of the page.

Lector (2nd Reading - English) ✓ Selected

Please arrive at 2:00pm and check in with the Cathedral Coordinator at the back of the church.

1 slot available

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Save & Continue

6. Enter the name and email address of the liturgical minister you are signing up for this position.
7. Fill out the phone number and parish information. If the minister belongs to a different parish, list the parish celebrating Confirmation, not the minister’s parish.

Display an alternate name on the sign up (like a child or spouse)


Name

Make this my default member name

Phone

Save my contact info for use on future sign ups

Which parish are you coming with?

8. Click: 

9. Click:  to add more liturgical ministers.

10. You're done!

Note:

You may encounter an issue with this process if your liturgical minister already has a SignUpGenius account. If that is the case, you can simply forward the link to them and ask them to sign themselves up. If you are unable to do that, please send the person's information to Jennifer Baxter in the Office for Worship.

It is important for the sign-ups to be linked to your ministers' email addresses, as they will receive a reminder email **two days** before your Confirmation Liturgy. Please email worship@grdiocese.org or call 616-288-0908 with any questions.