



Liturgy Resources For The Sacrament of Confirmation 2004

- Rituals
- Readings
- Music & Hymns

Rituals

The following are suggestions of how to highlight various rituals in the celebration of Confirmation. It is not intended that all of these suggestions be used in one liturgy. They are listed here merely as options, and will require adaptation and editing according to the readiness and needs of your children and community, as well as the actual structure of your worship space.

Artwork by Dorothy Woodward rsj

Entrance Procession

Option 1: Highlighting the Symbols Of Confirmation

Order of the Procession:

- Processional Cross
- The Paschal Candle
- The Confirmation Candidates
- 3 Incense Bearers, holding bowls of burning incense that have fire coloured ribbon flowing from them (see below for details)
- Flaming Brazier (see below for details)
- Chrism in a glass container with fire coloured ribbon flowing from the bearer's hands as she/he holds the glass container (see below).
- Servers & Ministers
- Lectionary – draped with fire coloured fabric (the lectionary bearer drapes the fabric across her/his arms as she/he holds the lectionary high)
- Presider

The Procession proceeds to the sanctuary as an appropriate Entrance Hymn is sung (see music section below). When the procession arrives at the sanctuary, the cross and paschal candle bearers stand together to one side of the sanctuary. The Candidates come in pairs to the foot of the sanctuary, bow to the altar and stand in diagonal rows (half facing the sanctuary and half facing the community), on either side of the centre aisle.

When they are in place, the incense bearers come forward and stand across the steps of the sanctuary awaiting the brazier, oil and lectionary bearers, (leaving enough room for the servers and ministers to pass through them). The brazier, oil and lectionary bearers proceed to the centre of the sanctuary. When they are each in place, the incense bearers stand on a lower sanctuary step before each of them.

The Presider approaches the sanctuary and goes to his place. When the Entrance hymn has ended, the cross and paschal candle are placed in their allocated positions.

Enthroning the Symbols:

The Presider welcomes the community and introduces the liturgy with a statement such as the following.

Today we gather to celebrate the Spirit of Jesus within each of us, and to confirm our Candidates (gestures to them) in the gifts of the Spirit, drawing them into deeper participation in our community. We begin our celebration by honouring the symbols which speak to us of the Spirit's transforming grace and love.

In silence, the flaming brazier is brought forward and held high before the community. It is incensed by one of the incense bearers and then enthroned in the sacred space with the incense placed near to it.

When this is completed, the Chrism is displayed to the community and is then incensed and enthroned in the sacred space with the incense placed beside it.

When this is completed, the Lectionary is displayed to the community. It is incensed and enthroned in the sacred space. The incense bearer then hands the incense to the Presider, who says:

We acknowledge now the sacredness of God's Spirit here amongst us, especially in our candidates.

The Presider then incenses the Candidates. He then hands the incense to an appointed minister, who then incenses the altar, the Presider and the other ministers and servers. He then hands the incense back to the Presider, who in turn incenses him and the whole community. The incense is then placed in the sacred space next to the Lectionary. The Candidates go to their places and the liturgy continues in the usual manner.

Specific Notes:

- **Incense bowls:**

Use the thurible and two round open pottery bowls. Fill the bowls with tin foil and sand to keep them cool while the charcoal is burning. Ensure that the charcoal is *well lit* about 5 minutes before you are ready to place the incense on it. Be generous with the charcoal and the amount of incense used, so that the incense is visible and will last for the duration of the entrance procession and ritual. *(Be aware of those who suffer from allergies or asthma – open a window to release the build up of incense – have them lie near the ventilation of the window or the door).*

- **Fire coloured Ribbon:**

Use lengths of various shades of orange and red of ribbon, about 2-3 inches wide and about 1 meter long. Attach them with clear tape or glue to the bottom of each incense bowl and to the glass container for the chrism.

- **Flaming Brazier:**

The flame will need to burn for about 6 – 10 minutes, therefore do not light it until it is time to move off with it in procession. If you do not have a brazier, use a terracotta pot or copper bowl that is light to carry and at least 30cm wide in diameter.

Fill it half way to the top with tin foil and cover the foil with sand. This prevents the brazier from over heating in the person's hands as well as from being too heavy to carry. Use smokeless fluid for the flame, such as lighter fuel or methylated spirits (rubbing alcohol), or lemon essence. Pour fluid over the sand just seconds before it is required. Do not pour it sooner because the fluid evaporates and therefore will not light.

Alternatively, fill the pot/bowl with foil but leaving the centre clear. Sink into the centre of the pot/bowl a smaller tin of sand (ensuring it cannot be seen as the pot/bowl is displayed). Pour fluid into the tin and light just prior to the procession, as indicated above.

Test this before the liturgy to ensure that the fluid works, that the amount used burns long enough, and above all, that the size of the flame at its peak is manageable and safe for the person who is to carry it. *(Ensure that it is an adult member of the community and not a child who carries this brazier).*

Option 2: Highlighting the Gifts of the Spirit

Order of the Procession:

- Processional Cross
- Paschal Candle
- 7 Banner /flags - each one bearing images of one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit (see below)
- The Confirmation Candidates
- Servers and ministers
- Lectionary
- Presider

The procession is accompanied by an appropriate Entrance hymn (see the music section below).

As it approaches the sanctuary, the cross and paschal candle bearers go up onto the sanctuary and stand together to one side of it.

When the banner bearers approach the foot of the sanctuary, they stand side by side on either side of the centre aisle, turning in towards the aisle.

The Confirmation Candidates process in pairs, through the banners, bow to the altar and go to their places.

The servers and ministers go to their allocated places.

The lectionary is brought to the centre of the sanctuary. When the Presider takes up his place on the sanctuary, the banner bearers stand across the lower step of the sanctuary facing the community.

When the hymn ends, the cross and paschal candle are placed in their respective positions.

The Word is displayed to the community and enthroned in its allocated position.

The banners are then installed in their appointed place within the sacred space. The liturgy continues on with the Welcome and Introductory Rite. These banner/flags can be used again during the actual Rite of Confirmation. Have them form a wide, all embracing semi-circle around the sanctuary area while the Candidates are actually being confirmed. They can also be used in the Recessional Procession, by way of leading the Candidates out of the church at the conclusion of the liturgy.

Specific Notes:

- **Banner/flags**

These should be colourful and bright. Use a light flag type fabric and fabric paint. When they have been decorated, attach them like a flag to very thin long doweling sticks or old fishing rods (with all the bits & pieces removed from them). The rods or sticks need to be high enough to extend well above the heads of the adult community so that the flags are free to flow high in the procession without hitting anyone's head. Have the children holding them swing them like flags as they process with them.

The Rite of Confirmation

The Rite is self-directive and rich in symbolism. The important thing however, is to ensure that all of the elements of the Rite are honoured.

The Renewal of Baptismal Promises can be highlighted by bringing the Paschal candle into the centre of the sanctuary and holding it high as the Candidates renew their baptismal promises and profess their faith.

If the Baptismal font is visibly accessible, this can be even more significantly highlighted by placing the Paschal Candle in the Baptismal waters.

When the renewal of the Baptismal promises has ended, the Candidates and the whole community can be blessed with the Baptismal Waters.

For the actual anointing, try to position this in such a way that the community can see the action of anointing and not just the back of the candidate.

This can be achieved by positioning the Presider, the Candidate and Sponsor/God Parent, in a diagonal position on one side of the sanctuary, rather than in the centre.

Avoid having big queues of Candidates and Sponsors/ Godparents blocking the community's view of the anointing. This can be achieved by having the awaiting Candidates, Sponsors/Godparents stand down the side aisles and having only the next immediate candidate standing at the foot of the sanctuary.

The logistics of this need to be well thought out in terms of the actual structure of your worship space so that the whole community is able to see clearly this powerful sacramental action, and in so doing, be fully engaged in it. This will avoid restlessness, chatter and disorder.

Using appropriate hymns and music throughout this ritual will also help to maintain a prayerful and sacred atmosphere. (See the list below).

Prayers of The Faithful

These can be based around the Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit.

As each prayer is prayed, a lit candle is placed before each respective banner (see above - Entrance Procession Option 2). To avoid this being too long, when including additional prayers for the church, community and world, allocate two gifts per prayer and one prayer focused on three gifts.

Post-Communion Reflection

Option 1: Reflective Mantra:

After Communion, settle the whole community, inviting them all, especially the Candidates, to be still and simply listen to the mantra ***Holy Sacred Spirit*** (Holy Ground – see below), allowing it to lead them into silent reflection and prayer. (If the liturgy has already been long, shorten the mantra simply by fading it down gradually.)

Option 2: Fire & Candle Procession- Presentation of Certificates:

When all are settled, dim the lights in the Church. As the mantra, ***Come Sacred Spirit*** (Praise & Blessings- see below), is played, a large flaming brazier is carried down the centre aisle of the church, up to the centre of the sanctuary and is placed in an appropriate stand.

Two ministers go to either side of the brazier and each lights a candle from it. The Candidates then come forward with unlit candles in procession from their seats, via the side aisles, and light their candles from the minister's candles, one at a time, on either side of the brazier.

When they have lit their candles, they then assemble at the foot of the sanctuary.

When the mantra has ended and all have assembled with their lit candles, the Presider presents them with their Confirmation certificates.

Following the blessing and dismissal, the Candidates, lead by the Processional Cross, process out of the Church, holding their candles high.

Recessional Procession

Option 1: Banner Procession

If banners have been used (see above – Entrance Procession Option 2), have them move out, at the beginning of the Recessional hymn, to line the centre aisle.

When they have taken up their positions, the Candidates, lead by the Cross, process out of the Church, through the banners.

When all the Candidates have passed through the banners, the banner bearers then process out behind the last of the Candidates. They are followed by the servers, ministers and Presider.

Option 2: Candle Procession

If candles have been used (see above- Post Communion Reflection – Option 2), then have the Candidates process out of the Church holding their candles high during the singing of the Recessional Hymn.

Option 3: Fire Fabric Dance

Choose an appropriate Recessional Hymn with the theme of the Spirit (see music list below), and have dancers, with fire coloured fabric (*chiffon or a similar free flowing fabric*) dance the first part of the hymn before the community, and then lead the Candidates out in procession during the second half of the hymn.

Readings

Proclaiming the Word of God is not the same as reading a book in a classroom or in a presentation.

It is important that the children who are reading the scriptures are comfortable, confident and familiar with the text they are reading.

It is not just a matter of being good readers- it is their presence, their ability to articulate and produce their voices and generally be comfortable in what they are doing.

This is best achieved when they actually understand and have a feel for the meaning of what they are reading. This will require some one-on-one work with the readers, as well as some technical work in using microphones etc. The pace at which they read is very important, and it may be that the text needs to be typed for them with pauses allocated in it and important words emphasised, keeping in mind that when children are nervous, they tend to race through their readings and forget their instructions.

Suggestions for the First Reading:

Isaiah 42: 1 - 3

Here is my servant... whom I have endowed with my spirit...

Wisdom 8: 21; 9: 9-11

With you is Wisdom...send her forth'

Ecclesiastes 17: 1 – 7

God made them in God's own image...and put God's light in their hearts...

(Be aware of the need for inclusive language in this text)

Sung Responsorial Psalms:

(See below in the music section)

Suggestions for the Second Reading:

Acts 2; 1- 4

They were all filled with the Holy Spirit... they spoke in different tongues...

Romans 8: 1-9

The Spirit of God has made His home in you...

Romans 8: 14 - 17

Everyone moved by the Spirit is a son of God...

Romans 8: 22- 24; 26 – 27

The Spirit too comes to help us...the Spirit expresses our plea in a way that could never be put into words...

1 Corinthians 2: 10 –16

The Spirit reaches the depths of everything...we have received the Spirit that comes from God...

1Corinthians 12: 4 –11

There is a variety of gifts but always the same Spirit...

2 Cor 3: 18

Where the Spirit of the lord is, there is freedom..

Ephesians 1: 13 – 14

You too have been stamped with the seal of the Holy Spirit...

Ephesians 3: 16 – 21

Out of His infinite glory, through the power of His Spirit... you are filled with the utter fullness of God...

Colossians 3: 12 –17

You are God's chosen race, God's saints... let the message of Christ find a home in you

Gospel Acclamations & Processions:

Choose an appropriate Gospel Acclamation from the list below, and let it accompany one of the following Gospel Processions:

Option 1: Procession with Paschal Candle

Have two Candidates come forward to assist with this procession.

- The first candidate takes up the Paschal candle (or, if this is too heavy, lights another processional candle from it). She/he then goes to the place where the Lectionary is enthroned.
- The second candidate takes up the Lectionary and displays it to the community.
- The candle bearer leads the Lectionary bearer in procession to the place where the Gospel will be proclaimed.
- The Lectionary bearer hands the Lectionary to the Presider who in turn, holds it high until the acclamation has ended.
- The Candle bearer stands beside the Presider as he proclaims the Gospel. When the Gospel has ended, the candle bearer returns the candle to its place and goes back to her/his seat. (This will need to be timed to the sung acclamation).

Option 2: Procession of the Word Through The Candidates

If the number of Candidates is small, have them line both sides of the centre aisle of the church, standing beside each other (about a meter apart) and diagonally opposite each other. If the group is large, select representatives do this.

- As the Gospel acclamation is sung, beginning from the back, have them pass a lit candle, followed by the Lectionary, to one another, in a criss - cross manner down the aisle, with the last two people carrying the candle and the
- Lectionary up the sanctuary steps to the Presider.
- The Lectionary bearer holds the Lectionary as the Word is proclaimed and the Candle bearer stands beside the Presider with the lit candle.

(This will need to be timed to the sung acclamation and well rehearsed so that it flows reverently).

Option 3: Procession with Dancers

Have some children usher the Word of God to the Presider, in a dance like movement, using fire coloured fabric (*chiffon or a similar free flowing fabric*).

(This will need to be well rehearsed with the specific acclamation that is chosen. The place where the procession begins may be determined by the length of the acclamation - that is, whether it begins from the very back, or centre back of the church, or across the front of the sanctuary).

Suggestions for the Gospel:

John 20: 19 – 22b

He breathed on them and said, 'Receive the Holy Spirit...

John 14: 16 –18

He will give the Advocate... the Spirit of truth.. He is with you, He is in you...

John 14: 25 – 27a

The Holy Spirit will teach you everything...

Luke 4: 16 – 21

The Spirit of the Lord has been given to me...

Hymns and Music:

A Song Of Praise (Monica Brown – Praise & Blessings)

Celebrate (Monica Brown – Praise & Blessings)

Celebrating the Spirit (John Burland – Celebrating The Sacraments)

Children Of Our Time (Ray Paxton – As One Voice For Kids)

Come Holy Spirit (Michael Mangan – Sing Jubilee)

Come Holy Spirit (Monica Brown – Special Collection Revised Edition)

Come Holy Spirit (Hilary Raimondo – As One voice For Kids)

Come Sacred Spirit (Monica Brown – Praise & Blessings)

Come Spirit Come (Tim Bolton & Min Flipo – As One Voice For Kids)

Cosmic Hymn of Praise (Michael Mangan – Setting Hearts On Fire)

God Has Chosen Me (Bernadette Farrell – As One Voice/Vol & Gather Australia)

Go Now In Peace (Monica Brown – Praise & Blessings)

I'll Sing Your Song (Erica Marshall- As One Voice/Vol 1)

In Your Spirit (Monica Brown – Quiet My Soul)

Holy Is The Spirit Of The Lord (Carey Landry – A Wonderful Song Of Joy)

Holy Sacred Spirit (Monica Brown – Holy Ground)

Holy Spirit Of Fire (Michael Mangan – Setting Hearts On Fire)

Holy Spirit Live In Us (John Burland – Celebrating The Sacraments)

One For Others (Trish Watts & Monica O'Brien – As One Voice For Kids)

Send Forth Your Spirit O Lord (C. Walker – As One Voice/Vol 1 & Gather Australia)

Spirit Come Transform (G. Norbett- As One Voice/Vol 1 & Gather Australia)

The Song Of Creation (Monica Brown – Praise & Blessings)

The Gifts Of The Spirit (John Burland – Sacred Moments)

Warm Our Hearts (Erica Marshall – As One Voice/Vol 1)

Weave One Heart (Marty Haugen – As One Voice For Kids)

You Are Mine (David Haas – As One Voice/Vol 2 & Gather Australia)

© Emmaus Productions