



ARCHDIOCESE of OMAHA

## GUIDELINES FOR THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION IN THE ARCHDIOCESE OF OMAHA.

The following guidelines pertain to those non-adult persons already baptized and in full communion with the Roman Catholic Church. If you are seeking the guidelines for adult Catholics who, for whatever reason, were never confirmed or for those seeking the sacrament of Confirmation who are not baptized or who were baptized in another Christian tradition, please see Appendix A for help.

Those who seek to receive the sacrament of Confirmation from the Church are referred to in the following as “candidate for confirmation,” or simply “candidate,” or by the more traditional plural term *confirmandi*. The solemn Mass at which the sacrament of Confirmation is conferred is referred to below as the “celebration of the sacrament.”

The following guidelines are divided into three sections: the basic requirements for preparation, the guidelines for formation, and elements of the liturgical celebration of the sacrament on the day of Confirmation. Appendix B provides suggested hymns and the *Planning Form for Eucharistic Liturgies with the Archbishop of Omaha*, which is to be filled out and returned to the Archbishop’s office at least one (1) month before the celebration of the sacrament.

These guidelines are not exhaustive of the policies of the Archdiocese of Omaha, but are meant to provide pastors, Directors of Religious Education, catechists, parents, sponsors and candidates for Confirmation with necessary information. For a list of the policies, please refer to the most current edition of the Archdiocese of Omaha’s Pastoral Policies Handbook, available at the Archdiocesan website [www.archomaha.org/pastoral/pastoralpolicies/index.html](http://www.archomaha.org/pastoral/pastoralpolicies/index.html).

Questions regarding the following can be made to the Coordinator of Catechist Certification in the Office of Evangelization & Catechesis: 402.557.5610

### **PREPARATION FOR CONFIRMATION – BASIC REQUIREMENTS:**

1. The preferred time for Confirmation in the Archdiocese of Omaha is between the ages of thirteen (13), eighth grade, and eighteen (18), before the senior year of high school.
2. The candidate for Confirmation must be a baptized Catholic. If they are not, see Appendix A.
3. A sponsor must be chosen.
4. The sponsor may not be the candidate’s parent.
5. The sponsor may be of either gender.
6. The sponsor must be at least sixteen (16) years of age. However, as it is crucial that a sponsor be sufficiently mature for this role, it is recommended that parents and the candidate collaborate on choosing an adult sponsor with whom the candidate can speak about his/her faith.

7. The sponsor of a candidate for Confirmation must be a Catholic in good standing with the Catholic Church who has already received the sacraments of initiation: Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist.
8. Being “in good standing” refers to those who regularly practice their faith and believe what the Church believes, having accepted the responsibilities of their baptismal promises. If the proposed sponsor is married, he/she must be in a valid marriage according to the norms of the Catholic Church. Whether the sponsor is married or not, he/she must be living a lifestyle consonant with the moral teachings of the Church. All sponsors must be free from the burden of canonical penalties.
9. Non-Catholics may not be sponsors.
10. When appropriate, the godparent from baptism may be the sponsor for Confirmation. In such cases, the above norms should be followed.

#### **FORMATION FOR THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION:**

1. The goal of formation for the sacrament of Confirmation is to instill greater appreciation of the sacramental life and to foster perfection of charity through an increased desire for a life in relationship with Jesus Christ and His Church.
2. It is primarily the responsibility of the parents to present their children for the sacrament of Confirmation having prepared them, with the help of catechetical institutions.
3. It is the special responsibility of pastors to see that all those who are baptized come to the fullness of Christian initiation and are carefully prepared for Confirmation.
4. It is the pastor’s, catechists’ and parents’ responsibility to ensure and affirm that a candidate for Confirmation is suitably instructed and properly disposed for the renewal of the candidate’s baptismal promises and reception of Confirmation.
5. Catechetical programs offered through the parishes exist to help the people of God form their children for the fullness of life with Christ in the Church. They provide unique opportunities of formation within the local Church, with a candidate’s peers and with catechists who can model this life.
6. Pastors and/or their appointee(s) are encouraged to meet with the parents of the candidates seeking the sacrament of Confirmation, so that parents might learn the nature of the sacrament and their special responsibility in the preparation of their children and the conferral of the sacrament.
7. The Rite of Confirmation should be an integral part of the cognitive formation of the candidate for Confirmation, who should be familiar with the gestures, responses, and prayers of the Rite.
8. Since the sacrament of Confirmation is a sacrament of the living, it is essential that an opportunity to receive the sacrament of Reconciliation be provided to the candidate within a short period of time prior to reception of the sacrament of Confirmation.
9. Although choosing a saint name is a custom highly encouraged, it is not a canonical requirement for the sacrament of Confirmation. In the Archdiocese of Omaha, a candidate can be confirmed under his/her baptismal name or a virtue or mystery of the faith (see CCC #2156). Care should be taken that the candidate chooses a name that it is not foreign to Christian sentiment.
10. If parents choose to homeschool their child in preparation for the sacrament of Confirmation, they ought to produce for the pastor or his appointee(s) the curriculum which they intend to use.

Parents of this candidate for Confirmation ought to attend all meetings required for parents. See Appendix D for more information.

11. Even though no one is to require more of the candidate than that which is required by the Church for the reception of this sacrament, ensuring proper preparation is the special responsibility of the pastor (C.890). The sacrament of Confirmation is not to be used as a means to secure and maintain an individual's attendance in religious education programs.
12. To aid pastors, catechists and parents in assessing the candidate's knowledge and disposition for the sacrament, the Office of Evangelization & Catechesis provides an instrument for assessment attached here in Appendix C.

#### **THE CONFIRMATION CEREMONY:**

1. The sacrament of Confirmation should be conferred within the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass with the participation of the parish community as much as is possible.
2. Scheduling for the celebration of the sacrament will be done by the Archbishop's Office in collaboration with the pastor or his appointee. Scheduling for a fall Confirmation ceremony takes place in the preceding winter. Scheduling for a spring Confirmation ceremony takes place in the preceding late-summer.
3. In order to maintain a reasonable schedule for the Archbishop, a minimum number of twenty (20) candidates is required for each separate ceremony.
4. If a parish has less than twenty (20) to be confirmed, consideration should be given to combining with a neighboring parish. In some cases celebration of the sacrament will need to be scheduled once every two or three years.
5. If a parish has more than one hundred (100) persons to be confirmed – excepting the Cathedral or other large churches – consideration should be given to having more than one celebration of the sacrament.
6. It is fitting that priests of the deanery are invited and encouraged to be present for this important celebration.
7. One (1) month before the celebration of the sacrament, the *Planning Form for Eucharistic Liturgies with the Archbishop of Omaha* must be completed and returned to the Archbishop's Office. The form is available below in Appendix B, and from the Archdiocesan website or directly from the Archbishop's Office. The printed program listing the *confirmandi* must be sent to the Archbishop's Office at least one (1) week before the ceremony.
8. The readings for the celebration of the sacrament must be from the Lectionary (Vol. IV, pg. 302-330) if the celebration occurs on a weekday, and must be read by a mandated lector.
9. On Sundays of Ordinary Time the readings can be from the proper Mass for the Rite of Confirmation or from the proper for the day. On weekdays and Sundays in Ordinary Time, the orations from the Rite of Confirmation are used and red vestments are worn.
10. On Sundays during Advent, Christmastide, Lent and Eastertide as well as on any Solemnities, the readings and prayers for the celebration of the sacrament must be from the proper for the day.
11. Music for the celebration of the sacrament should reflect the solemnity of the occasion. Suggestions can be found in Appendix B. Ordinarily, the responsorial psalm ought to be sung.
12. The ordinary minister of the sacrament of Confirmation is the Archbishop or his delegate.

13. The Rite of Confirmation is to be followed as it appears in the ritual book.
14. The Archbishop or his delegate will bring the Chrism to the ceremony.
15. The Archbishop asks that any formal group pictures with him take place approximately 20 minutes before the ceremony begins.
16. *Confirmandi* must be dressed appropriately and modestly in recognition of the solemnity of the occasion. It is permissible for an alb or similar garment to be put on over the appropriate and modest clothing of the *confirmandi*.
17. A stole is not permissible for *confirmandi* as it is a sign of ordained ministry.
18. The *confirmandi* with or without their sponsors form part of the entrance procession, following the crucifix.
19. *Confirmandi* may not serve as ministers (server, lector, general intercessions, EMHC, or choir member) during the celebration of the sacrament. They may participate as gift bearers.
20. After the Gospel but before the homily, the *confirmandi* are presented to the Archbishop or his delegate. The pastor (or another priest, deacon, or catechist) presents the *confirmandi*. Each candidate is called by name. The candidates should stand as they are called and remain standing until the Archbishop asks them to be seated.
21. For the anointing, *confirmandi* and their sponsors will stand before the Archbishop or his delegate two-by-two (2 lines) and stand close to him.
22. Following the anointing, please have warm water, soap or lemon, rinse water and towel available.
23. Priests and deacons present shall serve as Ministers of Holy Communion – Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion (EMHCs) are to be used only if necessary.
24. The newly confirmed form part of the procession from the church at the conclusion of the ceremony, following the crucifix. They should proceed directly to the reception, or other place of assembly where the Archbishop will be available for informal individual photos.
25. The giving of certificates should take place outside of the ceremony for the sacrament.
26. Following the celebration of the sacrament, the pastor will see that the 1) name of the minister, 2) those confirmed, 3) parents, 4) sponsor and 5) the date and place of Confirmation are recorded in the Confirmation registry book.
27. The pastor must ensure that the notation of Confirmation is made in the Baptismal register if the confirmed was also baptized in the same church. Otherwise, the pastor must inform the current pastor of the place of baptism about the conferral of Confirmation so that a notation is made in the baptismal register.
28. The parish sacramental registry books are to be available for review by the Archbishop when he comes for the celebration of the sacrament of Confirmation.

## **GUIDELINES FOR CONFIRMATION: APPENDIX A**

### **CONFIRMATION FOR ADULT, BAPTIZED CATHOLICS NEVER CONFIRMED OR FOR CONVERTS**

The following are guidelines summarizing the Archdiocesan Pastoral Policies for those who seek the sacrament of Confirmation but who are:

- Baptized, Catholic adults (18 years or older) who, for whatever reason, were never Confirmed, or
- Baptized, Catholic children (age 7 or higher) who never received Reconciliation, Eucharist or Confirmation, or
- Baptized Christian, non-Catholics (adult or child age 7 or higher) coming into full communion, or
- Unbaptized adults or children age 7 or higher.

The appropriate section in the Pastoral Policies is section 3.2.2. Norms for the Rite of Baptism and Confirmation on the Easter Vigil Mass are not included in this Appendix. Questions about the following ought to be directed to the Chancellor's Office.

1. Adult Catholics who never formally left the Catholic Church but who were never confirmed as young people should be confirmed by the Archbishop or his delegate in the parish celebration of Confirmation.
2. It is recommended that the adults not be made to go through the formation process for children preparing for Confirmation. Rather, the pastor or his appointee should offer catechesis with this adult separately according to the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults.
3. Within marriage preparation, it is highly recommended that the future spouses will have received the sacrament of Confirmation before marriage unless grave inconvenience precludes it (canon 1065 §1).
4. Pastors and associate pastors have the faculty to confirm in the following circumstances:
  - i. When one baptizes a person who is no longer an infant (age 7 or higher);
  - ii. When one receives a person, who is no longer an infant (age 7 or higher), and is already validly baptized in another Christian denomination into full communion with the Catholic Church;
  - iii. When receiving the profession of faith of one who is no longer an infant (age 7 or higher) and who was baptized a Catholic but never catechized (*i.e.*, never received the sacraments of Reconciliation or Eucharist);
  - iv. In the case of readmission to communion of a baptized Catholic who left the faith through public, total repudiation. However, prior to receiving Confirmation, the person must also be reconciled to the Church through the Sacrament of Penance and have the penalty of excommunication lifted;
  - v. In the case of a baptized Catholic who, without fault, has been instructed in a non-Catholic religion or adhered to a non-Catholic religion.

## **GUIDELINES FOR CONFIRMATION: APPENDIX A**

5. Priests who baptize those who are no longer infants (age 7 or higher) or who receive non-Catholic Christians who are no longer infants (age 7 or higher) into the full communion of the Church are to confirm them immediately following baptism or at the reception of a baptized adult Christian into full communion with the Church.
6. For validity, Confirmation must be conferred in the same ceremony by the same priest who is the minister of baptism or reception or readmission into the Church.
7. A priest may also seek special delegation from the Archbishop to celebrate confirmation (canon 884 §1). Delegation must be sought, for example, to confirm an adult Catholic who never left the Church but for whatever reason was not confirmed at the normal age for confirmation. This delegation is required for validity.
8. Any priest may confirm baptized Catholics of any age if there is a danger of death (canon 883 3°).

## GUIDELINES FOR CONFIRMATION: APPENDIX B

### *Suggested Liturgical Hymns for Confirmation Ceremony*

**Entrance** – Come, Holy Ghost (Tune: Lambilotte); Sing with all the Saints in Glory (Tune: Hymn to Joy); Lift High the Cross – longer, and uses a refrain (Tune: Crucifer); Holy God, We Praise Thy Name (Tune: Grosser Gott); Holy, Holy, Holy (Tune: Nicaea)

*In Advent:* Come, O Long-expected Jesus (Tune: Stuttgart); *In Advent:* O Come, O Come Emmanuel – longer, and uses a refrain (Tune: Veni Emmanuel)

*In Lent:* Lord, Who Throughout these Forty Days (Tune: St. Flavian); *In Lent:* I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say (Tune: Kingsfold)

*In Easter:* The Strife is O'er (Tune: Victory); *In Easter:* O Sons and Daughters (Tune: O filii et filie)

**Psalm** – Lord, send out your Spirit (use verses from Pentecost or Pentecost vigil)

**Rite of Confirmation** – Veni Creator Spiritus (chant); any version of the Sequence from Pentecost Sunday; Send us your Spirit (Haas); The Spirit of God (Lucien Deiss); Veni Creator Spiritus – Taize; Psalm Refrain/Verses from Pentecost Sunday or Vigil Responsorial Psalm.

**Offertory** – Any of the above – or The King of Love (Tune: St. Columba); A setting of Psalm 23; Lord of All Hopefulness (Tune: St. Columba); A Choral or Instrumental piece with the character of the above selections or Holy Spirit theme.

**Mass Settings** – Mass in Honor of Saint Cecilia; Chant Mass from the Roman Missal.

**Communion** – An appropriate Eucharistic Hymn; Settings of Psalm 34 or Psalm 42

**Hymn of Thanksgiving** – Now Thank We All Our God (Tune: Nun dankett alle Gott); O God, Our Help in Ages Past (Tune: St. Anne)

**After Dismissal** – With the Archbishop and ministers and sometimes *confirmandi* processing out, it is nice to have festive music to accompany that, as people like to watch, depending upon context. If there is not the possibility of Instrumental Music after dismissal, it may be preferable to sing a hymn to accompany the ministers' process out. Both suggested hymns of Thanksgiving would work for this, or Lift High the Cross would be suitable as well.

### *Planning for the Celebration of the sacrament of Confirmation*

In the following pages you will find the "Planning Form for Eucharist Liturgies with the Archbishop of Omaha." Please use this form in the planning of the ceremony for the sacrament of Confirmation. This form must be turned into the Archbishop's Office no later than one (1) month before the celebration of Confirmation. A digital version of this form is available from the Archbishop's Office.

A printed program listing the names of the *confirmandi* must be turned in to the Archbishop's Office at least one (1) week before the ceremony.

Archbishop Lucas requests that formal group pictures with him be taken approximately twenty (20) minutes before the ceremony so that the dismissal at the end of Mass is indeed a dismissal. Informal pictures with the Archbishop are welcome at the reception.

## **GUIDELINES FOR CONFIRMATION: APPENDIX B**



ARCHDIOCESE of OMAHA

# PLANNING FORM for EUCCHARISTIC LITURGIES with the ARCHBISHOP OF OMAHA

OFFICE USE ONLY	
Date Received:	_____
Date Approved:	_____
Signature:	_____

Please return to the Archbishop's Office by e-mail, fax, or regular mail no later than one (1) month prior to liturgy.

**Mail:** 100 N 62<sup>nd</sup> Street, Omaha, NE 68132

**Fax:** 402.551.4212

**E-mail:** archbishop@archomaha.org

<b>Date &amp; Time of Liturgy:</b> _____	<b>Place:</b> _____
<b>Occasion:</b> _____	<b>Address:</b> _____
<b>Contact Person:</b> _____	<b>Address:</b> _____
<b>E-mail :</b> _____	<b>Phone:</b> _____
<b>Mobile:</b> _____	<b>Fax:</b> _____

*This liturgy provides a wonderful opportunity for your parish or religious community to celebrate the Eucharist with the Archbishop. We ask your cooperation in planning for this important event by following these guidelines:*

1. The liturgy will be celebrated according to the appropriate norms and liturgical directives. If you have questions about these norms, please contact the Archbishop's Office. You may find it helpful to refer to the General Instruction of the Roman Missal and *Sing to the Lord: Music in Divine Worship*.
2. Parishes are to provide a full complement of ministers, including a deacon, if possible.
3. Music is an integral part of any liturgical celebration. The Eucharistic acclamations (Holy, Holy; Memorial Acclamation; Great Amen), the Lamb of God, the Alleluia (or Gospel Acclamation during Lent) and the Psalm are always to be sung with the assembly taking its proper role.
4. Concerning Confirmation, on Sundays of Ordinary Time the readings can be from the proper Mass for the Rite of Confirmation or from the proper for the day. On weekdays and Sundays in Ordinary Time, the orations from the Rite of Confirmation are used and red vestments are worn. On Sundays during Lent, Eastertide, Advent and Christmastide, as well as on any Solemnities, the readings and prayers for the celebration of the Mass must be from the proper for the day.
5. The Presentation of the Gifts includes the bread, wine, and any monetary offerings. No other items such as banners, parish symbols, awards, etc. are to be carried in the offertory procession.
6. The sign of Communion is more complete when given under both kinds, since the sign of the Eucharistic banquet appears more clearly. Therefore, offering Holy Communion under both kinds is strongly encouraged, especially for the celebration of Confirmation.
7. Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion should not approach the altar until the celebrant has received Communion.
8. Announcements during the liturgy are to be made following the Prayer after Communion and before the Final Blessing.

Please wait to print the liturgy program booklet/worship aid until approval has been given by the Archbishop's Office.

PLANNING FORM FOR EUCHARISTIC LITURGIES WITH  
THE ARCHBISHOP OF OMAHA

**GENERAL INFORMATION:**

1. Vestment Color: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Is the Archbishop to (please check only one):  
 preach a homily?  offer a welcome at the beginning?  
 offer some remarks after the Prayer after Communion?
3. Will there be any concelebrants?  Yes  No If so, approximately how many? \_\_\_\_\_
4. It is expected that a Deacon will assist. Please give Deacon's name(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
*(if a parish does not have a deacon available for this Mass, one may be invited from another parish)*
5. It is expected that servers will assist. How many will be assigned? \_\_\_\_\_  
*(5 are normally needed, including 2 to hold the miter and crozier.)*
6. Will incense be used?  Yes  No  
*(When used, incense is normally used at the entrance procession, the gospel procession and the preparation of gifts.)*
7. Will a language other than English (i.e. Spanish, etc.) be used for any of the prayers or Scripture readings? \_\_\_\_\_  
If "Yes," please indicate in the different sections of this form the other language(s) that will be used.

**INTRODUCTORY RITES:**

8. After the Sign of the Cross, will a welcome be offered?  Yes  No If so, by whom? \_\_\_\_\_
9. What form of the Penitential Act will be used? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Or will the Blessing and Sprinkling of Holy Water replace the Penitential Act?  
Will the Kyrie be  sung or  spoken?
10. Will the Glory to God be sung?  Yes  No  
Is the Archbishop to intone it?  Yes  No
11. What set of prayers from the Roman Missal will be used? \_\_\_\_\_ Page # \_\_\_\_\_

**LITURGY OF THE WORD:**

- |   | Scripture Citation | Number in Lectionary |
|---|--------------------|----------------------|
| OT  | _____              | _____                |
| Psalm   | _____              | _____                |
| <i>Please note: The psalm may be taken from the Lectionary texts for the day or the occasion or from the common texts for sung responsorial psalms found at #175 in the Lectionary. Hymns may not be substituted for the psalm.</i> |                    |                      |
| NT  | _____              | _____                |
| Gospel  | _____              | _____                |

PLANNING FORM FOR EUCHARISTIC LITURGIES WITH  
THE ARCHBISHOP OF OMAHA

13. Is there a Creed?  Yes  No      Is there a renewal of baptismal promises?  Yes  No  
*(The renewal of baptismal promises replaces the Creed at the celebration of Confirmation.)*

14. Will the Prayers of the Faithful be  sung or  spoken?      By whom? \_\_\_\_\_

Please provide below the texts that will be spoken by the Archbishop to introduce and conclude the Prayers of the Faithful. Note that the Introduction is an invitation to prayer that is addressed to the assembly and should not be a prayer in itself.

Introduction:

Conclusion:

*On the day of the Mass, please have these texts available on a separate sheet for the Archbishop's use.*

**LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST:**

15. Will a parish collection be taken up at his liturgy?  Yes  No

16. If yes, will the offertory gifts be brought forward  during the collection?  at the end?

17. Will there be a second collection?  Yes  No      If yes, when? \_\_\_\_\_

18. Which Preface? \_\_\_\_\_      Which Eucharistic Prayer? \_\_\_\_\_

19. Will the Lord's Prayer be  sung or  spoken ?

**CONCLUDING RITES:**

20. Will there be any special announcements following the Prayer after Communion?  Yes  No

21. What form of the Final Blessing? \_\_\_\_\_      Missal page # \_\_\_\_\_

22. Will a reception of any kind follow the Eucharist?  Yes  No

23. Is there any information about this liturgy that it would be helpful for the Archbishop to know in advance?

*Note: Parish background/history/homily suggestions are welcome here or on a separate sheet of paper to be returned to the Archbishop's Office.*



## **GUIDELINES FOR CONFIRMATION: APPENDIX C**

### **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FORMATION**

Preparation for the sacrament of Confirmation starts at Baptism, through which we enter into the body of Christ. This initiation continues through the Eucharist and is completed in the sacrament of Confirmation but is not the end of formation in the Christian life of virtue.

The goal of the immediate formation for the sacrament of Confirmation is discipleship in Jesus Christ, participation in the life and mission of the Catholic Church as well as the personal, spiritual growth of each young person. This formation is the result of collaboration between parents and pastors. It is ultimately the responsibility of pastors to be sure that the candidate for Confirmation is properly prepared. Formation can begin within two years prior to the actual Confirmation day.

The following are recommendations for formation.

#### ***Catechesis:***

The curriculum for catechesis during formation for the sacrament of Confirmation should come from the list of approved texts from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. Catechesis for the sacrament should:

- teach that Confirmation increases and deepens the grace of Baptism, imprinting an indelible character on the soul.
- teach that Confirmation strengthens the baptismal conferral of the Holy Spirit on those confirmed in order to incorporate them more firmly in Christ, strengthen their bond with the Church, associate them more closely with the Church's mission, increase in them the gifts of the Holy Spirit and help them bear witness to the Christian faith in words and deeds.
- teach about the role of the Holy Spirit, his gifts, and his fruits.
- be developmentally appropriate and include retreat experiences.
- include instruction on the Rite of Confirmation and its basic symbols: the imposition of hands, the anointing with Sacred Chrism and the words of the sacramental formula.
- ensure that parents and sponsors are involved in the catechetical preparation of the children for Confirmation.
- teach that the bishop is the ordinary minister of the sacrament of Confirmation

#### ***Retreat:***

Retreats are an opportunity to encounter Jesus in a personal way. Along with instruction on our Catholic faith, a retreat hopes to make possible a connection between “the what” of our faith and “the One” with whom we are being called into relationship, Jesus Christ. By the strength of this relationship with Christ, the hope is that the candidate will grow in the sacramental life of the fully Christian person, i.e. to “live lives worthy of the gospel.” (Phil 1:27) Indeed, the Church recognizes that Confirmation formation ought to be preparation for the Christian commitments of adult life (see *Catechesi Tradendae* no. 39).

## GUIDELINES FOR CONFIRMATION: APPENDIX C

Therefore, retreats for Confirmation are ideal times to form the participants in prayer, both private and communal. Forms of prayer can be taught including traditional prayers and devotions like Eucharistic Adoration, the Rosary, the Chaplet of Divine Mercy, the Angelus, etc. An excellent starting point for retreat is prayer using the Sacred Scriptures (*lectio divina*). This form of prayer can be both communal and personal. Pope Benedict XVI wrote that teaching the Word helps “to stress anew something we risk taking for granted in everyday life: *the fact that God speaks and responds to our questions.*” (*Verbum Domini* no. 4)

The retreat can also offer experiences of the gifts of the Holy Spirit, i.e. how these gifts affect real people in the real world. For this reason, taking time during a retreat to speak about the Saints is a good practice. Their lives of heroism are living examples of the gifts of the Holy Spirit and so can inspire the candidate as well as teach them how the Catholic life is lived concretely.

### ***Service:***

In a special way, the sacrament of Confirmation is to graciously fill Christians with the desire to serve the Church and the world. God’s many gifts to us have been given so that we might share them with our families and with our Church. The testimony of the early Church bears witness to the fact that service in stewardship for the community was a hallmark of authentic Christian life. Therefore, service by candidates for Confirmation is an important aspect of preparation and an opportunity for formation.

The Social Teaching of the Catholic Church is an outgrowth of the encounter with Jesus Christ who loved the poor so dearly: the poor in health, the poor in spirit, the socially poor, and the materially poor. The “preferential option for the poor” is a helpful guide for discernment in service. The long tradition of the Corporal Works of Mercy is another guide for directing service projects.

The formation around service in stewardship for the Church should include the teaching that anything done in love can be a moment of service for God, and thus the Church and the world. This was the great insight of St. Thérèse of Lisieux whose “little way” showed us that “Without love, deeds, even the most brilliant, count as nothing,” and that “Our Lord does not look so much at the greatness of our actions, nor even at their difficulty, but at the love with which we do them.” As we read in the letter of St. James, “faith without works is dead” (2:20), and works must be done in love.

The candidate who performed the task should be encouraged to reflect on the service either orally or in writing. In such reflections the candidates would be encouraged to make the connection between their service and their own personal relationship with Christ and with the mission of the Church.

### ***Mass Attendance:***

The proper disposition and preparation for the sacrament of Confirmation presumes regular participation at Sunday Mass. Mass attendance for the candidate for Confirmation can be a complicated issue, because the parents may not go to Mass themselves. For those candidates who do not attend Mass regularly, but have expressed a desire to do so, it is recommended that the pastor contact the parents directly in order to follow up about this issue.



## CONFIRMATION INTERVIEWER'S FORM

This form is meant to be an aide to a pastor and/or his delegate(s) for fulfilling his obligation and right to assess the preparedness of a candidate for the sacrament of Confirmation. The majority of the questions are meant to cover the basic cognitive or intellectual content of the Catholic faith. However, there are also questions which hope to elicit from the candidate a response of personal experience with the faith, or the affective content of the faith. The hope is that formation for the candidate will instill a greater appreciation of the sacramental life and foster a desire for life in relationship with Jesus Christ and His Church. Assessing a candidate, therefore, should take into consideration the cognitive and the affective content of the faith.

Each question is followed by a grid of possible answers. The best answer is considered to be worth 4 points. This form provides suggested criteria for assessing the candidate's answers. Once a score is determined for each question, the interviewer is invited to add them together into an aggregate score. A scale for grading has been provided at the end of this form. For more questions about this aide, contact the Office of Evangelization & Catechesis 402.557.5610.

Candidate: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of interview: \_\_\_\_\_

Candidate's Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

### BEGIN WITH PRAYER

*Come Holy Spirit fill the hearts of your faithful and enkindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit that they shall be created. And you shall renew the face of the earth. Let us pray. O God who instructed the hearts of the faithful by the light of the Holy Spirit, grant us in the same Spirit to be truly wise and ever to rejoice in His consolation. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

#### 1. What have you learned about the Holy Spirit and how the Holy Spirit works in our lives?

- The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Blessed Trinity.
- The Holy Spirit is God.
- Having received the gifts of the Holy Spirit in Baptism, they are strengthened in Confirmation.
- The Holy Spirit is the source of all holiness and prayer.

#	Assessment Criteria	4	3	2	1	Score
1	<b>Knowledge of the Holy Spirit</b>	Has an excellent understanding of the workings of the Holy Spirit.	Has good understanding of the workings of the Holy Spirit	Has some understanding of the workings of the Holy Spirit.	Has little or no understanding of this topic.	_____

## CONFIRMATION INTERVIEWER'S FORM

### 2. Tell me something about the gifts of the Holy Spirit and how these gifts work in your life.

The gifts of the Holy Spirit are:

- Wisdom: Knowing the right choices to make to live a holy life.
- Understanding: The ability to grasp the meaning of the teachings of the Catholic Church.
- Counsel: The ability to receive and give good advice.
- Fortitude: Helps you stand up for your faith in Christ.
- Knowledge: Helps you to know what God asks of you and how you should respond.
- Piety: Helps you love and worship God and helps you be respectful to others.
- Fear of the Lord: Helps you recognize the greatness of God and your dependence on him.

#	Assessment Criteria	4	3	2	1	Score
2	<b>Gifts of the Holy Spirit</b>	Has an excellent understanding of this topic and is able to articulate the gifts of the Holy Spirit and how these gifts work in our lives.	Has a good understanding of this topic and is able to articulate most of the gifts of the Holy Spirit and how they work in our lives.	Has a fair understanding of this topic and can name only a few gifts of the Holy Spirit	Has little understanding and is unable to name the gifts of the Holy Spirit.	_____

### 3. Service Work/Personal Gifts: How were you of service to your faith community or to the community at large? Tell me about that service experience. What did you gain from these experiences? What personal gifts do you have to use for others? What is stewardship and what is its relationship to your personal gifts?

- God gave us all personal gifts to serve Him, His church, and His people. Some gifts could be gifts of teaching, healing, prayer, caring, etc.
- Stewardship is the way we use the personal gifts that God has given us through our time, talents, and treasures.

#	Assessment Criteria	4	3	2	1	Score
3	<b>Service to Others/ Personal Gifts</b>	States importance of service as living faith; Already doing service or has plans to continue it using personal gifts; Can define stewardship; Practicing stewardship	Relates what was learned from service. Expresses a desire to continue service using his/her personal gifts	Names services performed and why liked; Names personal gifts; Sees little relationship between personal gifts and service to others	Sees no reason to continue service; Doesn't know personal gifts	_____

### 4. Recite the Apostles' Creed.

The Apostles' Creed is a statement of Christian faith (CCC #194)

- I believe in God, the Father, Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified, died and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen!

## CONFIRMATION INTERVIEWER'S FORM

### 4. continued... Tell me about the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

The mystery of one God in three persons is the Blessed Trinity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

- The Father is the first person of the Blessed Trinity.
- The Son is the second person of the Blessed Trinity.
- The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Blessed Trinity.
- There are three persons and only one God.
- The Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit are all God.

#	Assessment Criteria	4	3	2	1	Score
4	<b>Basics of Religion-Creed</b>	Knows that the Creed is a summary of what Catholics believe; Can name the persons of the Trinity and something about each of them.	Knows that the Creed is a summary of what Catholics believe; Can name the members of the Trinity and something about 2 of them.	Can tell who the members of the Trinity are and something about only one of them.	Has a very poor understanding about the persons of the Trinity	_____

### 5. What is prayer? When do you pray? Tell me about the different types of prayer and which is your favorite. Why do Catholics invoke Mary and the saints in prayer?

- Prayer is conversation with God, talking and listening to Him.
- We can pray using our traditional prayers (Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory Be, etc.) and private prayers (using our own words).
- There are five types of prayer: blessing, petition, intercession, thanksgiving, and praise. (CCC 2644)
- When invoking the Saints and Mary we are asking for their help in approaching God. This is intercessory prayer. An example is the Rosary.
- The four sets of mysteries of the Rosary are Joyful, Luminous, Sorrowful, and Glorious.

#	Assessment Criteria	4	3	2	1	Score
5	<b>Basics of Religion-Prayer</b>	Has an excellent understanding of the definition of prayer. Can state the 5 types of prayer; Knows that Catholics invoke the Saints and Mary as intercessory prayer; Can name the mysteries of the rosary.	Has a good understanding of the definition of prayer. States 3-4 <u>types</u> of prayer; Knows that Catholics invoke the Saints and Mary as intercessory prayer; Can name the mysteries of the rosary.	Has a fair understanding of the definition of prayer. Names several traditional prayers. Understands why Catholics invoke Mary and the Saints. Can name some of the mysteries of the rosary.	Has a poor understanding of the definition of prayer, but can name several traditional prayers.	_____

## CONFIRMATION INTERVIEWER'S FORM

**6. What can you tell me about the Mass? How is Mass part of your prayer life? Do you actively participate weekly and on Holy Days? Why or why not?**

- Mass was established by Jesus at the Last Supper so that by participating in his death and resurrection we can renew and make real our salvation. The Mass renews the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross as the sacrifice offered by the Church. Catholics fulfill the obligation of the 3<sup>rd</sup> commandment by attending Mass on Sundays and designated Holy Days . The most important part of Mass is receiving the Holy Eucharist, the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. By attending Mass on a weekly basis, we grow in our faith and in holiness as a person.

#	Assessment Criteria	4	3	2	1	Score
6	<b>Prayer Life/Mass</b>	Has an excellent under-standing of the Mass as our greatest prayer. Never intentionally misses Mass without serious reason; Knows we fulfill the obligation of the 3 <sup>rd</sup> Commandment by attending.	Has a good understanding of the Mass as our greatest prayer. Attends Mass 3 or 4 times monthly; Does not mention how we fulfill 3 <sup>rd</sup> Commandment.	Has a fair understanding of the Mass as our greatest prayer. Attends Mass 1 or 2 times a month.	Has a poor understanding of the Mass and our obligation to attend.* Rarely attends Mass except Christmas & Easter.	_____

\*Mass attendance for the candidate for Confirmation may be a complicated issue because the parents may not attend themselves. For those candidates who do not attend Mass regularly, but have expressed a desire to do so, it is recommended that the pastor contact the parents directly in order to see about this issue.

**7. How are the Ten Commandments part of our lives as Catholics? Can you name the first five commandments and tell how they guide our lives?**

1. the Lord, am your God. You shall not have other gods before me.

- Commands: faith, hope, love, and worship of God alone; reverence for holy things; nourish and protect your faith
- Forbids: desecration of the Holy Eucharist, idolatry, superstition, astrology, fortune telling, believing in good luck charms, indifference with your faith, ingratitude, hatred of God; putting other things before God (hobbies, TV or work), committing a mortal sin with the idea that you can “just go to confession,” sacrilege, tempting God, choosing the "in" crowd over God.

2. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.

- Commands: reverence in speaking about God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, Blessed Virgin Mary, Saints, the Pope, priests or other consecrated persons and holy things; keeping oaths and vows
- Forbids: not confessing mortal sins, swearing, blasphemy, false oaths and the breaking of vows, perjury

3. Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day.

- Commands: going to Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation; rest of mind and body; performing works of mercy
- Forbids: missing Mass on Sunday through your own fault; doing unnecessary work; leaving Mass before it is over; intentionally not fasting or abstaining on the appointed days

4. Honor your father and your mother.

- Commands: love, respect, and obedience to one's parents; looking after one's parents in their old age; honor and respect those in authority over us; fulfilling duties as a citizen
- Forbids: disrespect, disobedience, or hatred of parents and those in authority over us; making fun of people; rejecting your Catholic upbringing; fighting with siblings

5. You shall not kill.

- Commands: respect for life, health, and dignity of one's own life and that of others; controlling one's anger, avoiding war
- Forbids: willfully leading another into serious sin, suicide, deliberate abortion, murder, unjust fighting, excessive tattoos or body piercing, listening to immoral or disrespectful music; excessive use of TV, computer games or the Internet, euthanasia, endangering one's life or that of others, excesses such as food or alcohol consumption, hatred for people of other races and cultures, unjust killing, artificial contraception.

## CONFIRMATION INTERVIEWER'S FORM

#	Assessment Criteria	4	3	2	1	Score
7	<b>Basics of Religion-- Commandments</b>	Has an excellent understanding of the first 5 commandments. States that we live out our faith by following them. Recites Commandments 1-5, and tell how each guides our lives.	Has a good understanding of the 5 commandments. States that we live out our faith by following them. Is able to recite 4 of them, and tell how each guides our lives	Has a fair understanding of the 5 commandments. States that we live out our faith by following them; Is able to recite 3 of them and tell how each guides our lives.	Has a poor understanding of the first 5 commandments, Can recite some of them but cannot relate to how they guide our lives.	_____

\_\_\_\_\_ **8. Can you name the last five commandments and tell how they guide our lives?**

6. You shall not commit adultery.

- Commands: chastity in thought, word, and action; respecting one's own body and that of others
- Forbids: obscene speech, being unfaithful to one's spouse, sex outside of marriage, pornography, impure actions alone or with others, living together before marriage, lust, rape, homosexual practice, polygamy.

7. You shall not steal.

- Commands: respect for the property and rights of others; restitution for damaging others' property
- Forbids: stealing or keeping the goods of others, damaging someone's property, cheating, and plagiarism

8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

- Commands: truthfulness, respect for another's good name, keeping secrets when required
- Forbids: ruining another's reputation, bragging, boasting, complaining, listening to immoral or disrespectful jokes, not keeping secrets when required, gossiping, flattery

9. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.

- Commands: purity in thought and heart; modesty in dress and action
- Forbids: willful impure thoughts and desires, immodest dress and action, not avoiding the near occasion of sin, lust

10. You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.

- Commands: respect for the rights of others and their property
- Forbids: the desire to take, keep, or damage the property of others; cruelty to animals, jealousy, greed, gambling, envy, plagiarism, pirating computer software, materialism

#	Assessment Criteria	4	3	2	1	Score
8	<b>Basics of Religion-- Commandments</b>	Has an excellent understanding of the first 5 commandments. States that we live out our faith by following them. Recites Commandments 1-5, and tell how each guides our lives.	Has a good understanding of the 5 commandments. States that we live out our faith by following them. Is able to recite 4 of them, and tell how each guides our lives	Has a fair understanding of the 5 commandments. States that we live out our faith by following them; Is able to recite 3 of them and tell how each guides our lives.	Has a poor understanding of the last 5 commandments, Can recite some of them but cannot relate to how they guide our lives.	_____

## CONFIRMATION INTERVIEWER'S FORM

### 9. How do you give witness that you are Catholic?

There are many ways a person lives out his/her Catholic Faith. Examples include

1. Attends Mass each week
2. Makes the sign of the cross in public
3. Uses sacramentals such as holy water, the rosary, holy cards, statues, crucifixes, etc.
4. Fasts, abstains and gives alms during Lent and does acts of penance on Fridays during the year
5. Receives Reconciliation at least once a year
6. Practices stewardship (giving of your time, talents, and treasures to the church)
7. Attends or participates in some type of continued learning about the faith
8. Asks others to attend Mass or other Catholic activities
9. Is conscious of his/her thoughts, words, and actions regarding what is right and wrong.
10. Behaves consistently with love for neighbor in all things
11. Makes decisions based on the teachings of Christ and His Church.
12. Others \_\_\_\_\_

#	Assessment Criteria	4	3	2	1	Score
9	<b>I am a Catholic</b>	Has an excellent understanding of what it means to be Catholic. Is able to name most of the above signs.	Has a good understanding of what it means to be Catholic.	Has a fair understanding of what it means to be Catholic.	Has a poor understanding of what it means to be Catholic.	_____

### 10. Tell me about the Sacraments and how each gives grace.

The seven sacraments are:

1. Baptism—makes us members of the Church; washing away of original sin
2. Eucharist--spiritual food which nourishes our faith life and strengthens us in our daily life and decisions
3. Confirmation—completes the grace of Baptism by a special outpouring of the gifts of the Holy Spirit
4. Penance or Reconciliation--confessing our sins to a priest to receive forgiveness from God and be reconciled with the Church
5. Anointing of the Sick—anointing by the priest of someone who is ill or of advanced age
6. Holy Orders-- men ordained by the bishop to serve the people of God, as a priest, deacon, or bishop
7. Matrimony-- covenant or partnership of life between a baptized man and woman, for their well-being and for the procreation and upbringing of children.

#	Assessment Criteria	4	3	2	1	Score
10	<b>Basics of Religion-- Sacraments</b>	Defines Sacrament; Names and explains all seven Sacraments	Defines Sacrament; Names seven Sacraments, & explains 5 or 6 Sacraments	Defines Sacrament and names the seven Sacraments; Explains 3 or 4 Sacraments	States that the sacraments are the way we celebrate our faith; States that there are seven sacraments; Explains 1 or 2 sacraments	_____

## CONFIRMATION INTERVIEWER'S FORM

**11. Who have you chosen for a sponsor and why? What qualities of faith do you find most impressive about this person?**

**11. continued... What can you tell me about the name you have chosen for Confirmation?**

#	Assessment Criteria	4	3	2	1	Score
11	<b>Sponsor</b>	Relates how sponsor can be role model in life & how Confirmandi can continue relationship with sponsor. Has an excellent understanding of why the name was chosen. Is able to speak about the saint, Christian mystery or virtue.	Names sponsor, why chosen, and names qualities of sponsor to imitate. Has a good understanding of why the name was chosen. Will share a few things about the decision	Names sponsor; Tells why sponsor was chosen. Has a fair understanding of why the name was chosen.	Names sponsor & relation-ship to student. Has a poor understanding of why the name was chosen. Is unable to equate the decision with faith.	_____

**12. Do you want to be confirmed? How will Confirmation help you on your faith journey? What will you do to continue growing in faith?**

#	Assessment Criteria	4	3	2	1	Score
12	<b>Concern about being Confirmed</b>	"Owns" the decision to be confirmed. Has an excellent understanding that Confirmation strengthens us toward a more intimate union with Christ. States plans to continue the journey	Has a desire to receive the sacrament and has a good understanding that Confirmation is not the end of the journey.	Indicates that parents are making them be confirmed and will continue faith formation only if parents require it.	Presents a "doesn't matter to me" attitude. Has no plans to continue with faith formation	_____

**13. Be ready to discuss, "What attracts you about Jesus?"**

#	Assessment Criteria	4	3	2	1	Score
13	<b>Knowledge of Jesus Christ</b>	Connects the love of Jesus to a personal encounter with Him.	Connects words and deeds with the example of love.	Gives specific actions and words of Jesus.	Offers generic attributes about Jesus.	_____

**14. Be ready to discuss, "What does it mean to be a disciple of Jesus in the world today?"**

#	Assessment Criteria	4	3	2	1	Score
14	<b>Understanding of Discipleship</b>	Has an excellent understanding of discipleship to Jesus	Has a good understanding of discipleship	Has a fair understanding of discipleship	Has a poor understanding of discipleship	_____

**TOTAL POINTS**



## **GUIDELINES FOR CONFIRMATION: APPENDIX D**

### **HOMESCHOOLING PARENTS**

In Baptism parents and the people of God take on the responsibility to prepare the child for the fullness of initiation into life in Christ.

This initiation is the responsibility of the family and the Church. As the Rite of Confirmation states, “The initiation of children into the sacramental life is for the most part the responsibility and concern of Christian parents.” However, this responsibility of parents is met through “the help of catechetical institutions.” Thus, it is “the responsibility of the pastors to see that all the baptized come to the fullness of Christian initiation and are carefully prepared for confirmation.” These two components of parental and pastoral responsibility ought to be reflected in the formation process.

Parents who, for the sake of fulfilling their responsibility, seek to homeschool their child in preparation for the sacrament of Confirmation should be reminded that this is a solemn responsibility. Therefore, homeschooling parents are obliged first to inform their pastor or his appointee that they intend to homeschool the candidate in preparation for the sacrament of Confirmation.

The pastor or his appointee is encouraged to meet with the parents and remind them that the catechetical tools of the parish are at their disposal to help them fulfill their responsibility. Also, because the pastor still retains the responsibility to determine that the candidate has been properly formed, parents should provide to the pastor or his appointee the information about the curriculum they intend to use in the formation of their child.

In the interest of standardizing formation requirements for the Archdiocese of Omaha, an assessment tool from the Office of Evangelization & Catechesis has been provided to pastors to assist in determining preparation. This tool may also be used in the assessment of candidates in school or parish religious education programs as well. It can be found in Appendix C.