

#### IV. The Sacrament of Confirmation

32. **Requirements for the Reception of Confirmation:** General Criteria: Baptism and the State of Grace. One must be validly baptized to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. ([canon, no. 889](#), §1) A certificate of Catholic Baptism must be on file with the parish.
33. In addition, if baptized persons have the use of reason, it is required that they are in the state of grace, properly instructed and able to renew their baptismal promises. (Rite of Confirmation, no. 12)
34. **National Guideline Regarding Age:** The Bishops of the United States have agreed that the conferral of Confirmation will occur between the age of discretion and about sixteen years of age.
35. Cautionary notes regarding age and proper determination of process:
- In the case of unbaptized children of catechetical age (catechumens), they are to receive Confirmation at the time of their Baptism after the proper catechesis;
  - In the case of other baptized Christian (not Catholic) children of catechetical age (candidates), they are to receive Confirmation at the time they are received into full communion with the Church.
  - In the case of baptized youth who are older than the normal age at which the sacrament is usually celebrated, a special catechetical approach for preparing them may need to be provided that incorporates the goals and duration (two years) of the normal age process.
  - In the case of a practicing Catholic adult who has not yet been confirmed, she/he ought to be suitably prepared as needed – in a process determined by the pastor as to length and content before celebrating the sacrament:
    - A celebration of Confirmation with the Bishop may be offered each year on each island on an as-needed basis strictly for adult candidates, coordinated through the Office of Worship.
    - The adult may join the parish Youth Confirmation celebration; or
    - A special celebration of Confirmation may be observed. The Eastertide is recommended as the proper time for celebrating all sacraments of initiation with Confirmation. In this case, in order to complete their initiation with Confirmation, the pastor may formally request delegation from the Bishop, and is given the particular faculty to confirm in the Bishop's absence. ([canon, no. 884](#))
36. **Preparing Youth for the Sacrament of Confirmation:** Preparation for reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation should be seen as a component of the on-going catechesis and faith development of the candidates. It should be situated within a solid parish-based ministry to young people of which Confirmation is only one part. It should not be an isolated program that has no contact with the larger parish community. Catechesis, including sacramental preparation, is just one component of a solid ministry to young people – the Confirmation process should include all components of youth ministry.

37. Parents in a home school context are required to use the same or equivalent materials used in the parish catechetical process and both parent and candidate must participate in various elements of the parish process.
38. In the Diocese of Honolulu, the guidelines for the reception of the Sacrament of Confirmation for youth are as follows:
39. The candidate for Confirmation ought to:
  - Be at least in the ninth or tenth grade
  - Have participated in a two-year parish Confirmation preparation process. Generally, those who do not participate in the parish program should not be confirmed since suitable catechesis is important for all who wish to celebrate the sacrament. ([canon, no. 843](#))
  - Express a stated personal desire to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation.
  - Demonstrate a willingness to witness more fully to Christ by word and action.

To help foster this Christian imperative of life, each candidate is to participate in the on-going service ministry of the parish.

- These should not be viewed as “service projects”. This service in ministry should not be reduced to a ‘task’ to be completed but rather meant to be understood as an initiation into (apprenticeship in) and participation in the local community’s on-going/conscious identity to ministry (to the poor, shut-ins, persons with disabilities, homeless, and other essential parish ministries) which fosters the well-being of the parish community and larger local community.
  - Each is required to participate in at least 25 – 30 hours of service ministry over the two-year process. Hopefully, this involvement gives rise to a personal mission-consciousness, becoming a daily way of life, as a result of being initiated into “full, conscious, active participation” in the mission of Christ in the community of the Church, his Body.
40. **Content for Catechesis:** Preparation for the reception of Confirmation should aim at leading the Christian toward a more intimate union with Christ and a more lively familiarity with the Holy Spirit in order to be more capable of assuming the responsibilities of Christian life. To this end, catechesis for Confirmation should strive to awaken a sense of belonging to the Church of Jesus Christ, the universal Church as well as the parish community as a participating and empowered member of the Body of Christ. ([CCC, no. 1309](#)) . The pastor, catechetical leader, together in collaboration with catechists, should determine what resources should be used by referencing the [Catechism Conformity Listing of Catechetical Texts and Series](#) published by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Subcommittee on the Catechism.
  41. The following are themes to be used with youth ([CCC, no. 683-747](#); [no. 1285-1321](#))
    - God's Gift
      - Baptism begins membership

- Call to be responsible workers in God's reign
    - Call to discipleship – work for justice and peace
  - Role of the Spirit
    - Interrelationship of Trinity – create, redeem and sanctify
    - Empowered by gifts of the Spirit (wisdom and understanding, right judgment and courage, knowledge and reverence, wonder and awe – (RCIA, no. 234 and Rite of Confirmation(RC), no. 42)
  - Ritual
    - Scriptural roots (RC, no. 61, 62 for references from the Old and the New Testaments)
    - Signs and symbols (oil, anointing with Chrism, baptismal vows, laying on of hands, sign of peace, welcoming the newly confirmed into the family – the Body of Christ)
42. Confirmation catechesis for youth should provide opportunities for prayerful reflection (retreat), appropriate understanding of doctrine, and opportunities for involvement in the mission of the Church (service) by respecting the following principles:
43. Confirmation is a sacrament of Initiation – calling for a remembering and renewal of Baptism.
- Confirmation is rooted in the Trinity – remembering God's love, following the person of Jesus, and living justly in the activity of the Spirit.
  - Confirmation is about discipleship and mission – drawing persons into the life, work and mission of the Church.
44. Confirmation is a celebration of the faith community – the responsibility of all the faithful to accept and use the diverse gifts for the kingdom of God.
45. *Readiness for Confirmation*: God's initiative comes first – the candidate's response to his initiative, prompted by the grace of the Holy Spirit, is central in discerning readiness.
46. The pastor is responsible for providing sacramental preparation of all eligible youth and parents. The design and operation of the parish process are usually delegated to the director or coordinator of religious education so that, given the candidate requirements, [readiness](#) to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation may be discerned. The catechist is responsible for the catechetical session; the parents and/or guardians are responsible for participating as required and supporting the efforts of the catechetical staff.
47. The pastor, parents (or guardians), sponsors, coordinators of both the Confirmation process and of youth ministry and others involved in ministry with youth should take part in this process.
48. Interviews:

- Candidates for Confirmation are to be [interviewed](#) by the pastor or his designee at the outset of Year One in the preparation process to assess readiness, appropriate attitudes and adequate understanding of the process.
    - At the beginning of Year Two to ascertain where the candidate is in the journey through the process;
    - With the pastor or his designee to determine readiness for the sacrament. In advance of this interview, all those who are directly involved with the candidates (catechists, parents or guardians, sponsors, youth ministers) would have had an opportunity to participate in some way.
49. Ultimately, the burden of responsibility for meeting the requirements for the reception of Confirmation belongs to the candidate. The Sacrament of Confirmation should not be seen as a reward or something one can or must earn.
50. If a candidate decides to delay Confirmation, or if the pastor (upon the recommendation of the catechetical team) discerns that one is not ready, the sacrament may be delayed (not denied) until some future date. Such a personal (or communal decision) ought not to be interpreted as a rejection of faith. Alternate catechetical programs are to be in place to meet their needs for continued faith formation and discernment.
51. If a candidate misses the parish celebration due to sickness or some other Legitimate reason, it is possible that Confirmation may occur in a neighboring parish. The pastor or catechetical director should contact the pastor of the neighboring parish for permission and make whatever arrangements are deemed necessary.
52. *Immediate Preparation for Confirmation:* After determination of readiness, candidates are expected to participate in immediate preparation for the reception of Confirmation which includes the following:
- Catechesis on the Holy Spirit ([CCC, no. 683-747](#))
  - The Sacraments of Initiation ([CCC, Baptism no. 1213-1284](#); [Confirmation no. 1285-1321](#); [Eucharist no. 1322-1419](#))
  - A weekend retreat; at least a day or evening of prayer
  - Celebration of the Sacrament of Penance
  - Review the Rite of Confirmation
  - Rehearsal for the celebration of Confirmation
53. Immediate preparation should be adapted to the needs of persons with developmental disabilities. (Guidelines for the Sacraments with Persons with Disabilities, General Principles, no. 3)(GPD)
54. *Role of the Parents:* A special program (to which Sponsors may be invited to participate) ought to be designed for parents in order to remind them both of their role and ways of fulfilling that role as faith formators/examples; to have them understand the process and its parts to enhance their full participation; and to serve as an occasion to have them grow in their understanding of the sacrament(s) and in their own commitment to the faith. ([canon, no. 890](#))

55. Parents express a desire for their teenagers to celebrate Confirmation by enrolling them in the parish process. While they are enablers to the process, the ultimate decision rests with the candidate.
56. While parental participation is expected, its lack should not prevent the Confirmation of one who desires it.
57. In some cases, one might be prepared in a home program. However, since the community-building aspect of catechesis is so important, participation in essential aspects of the parish process is encouraged, especially the retreat, participation in parish ministry experiences (service), parent meetings, the discernment process and other liturgical celebrations.
58. If the youth's parents are not practicing Catholics, but desire that their son or daughter celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation, and the youth in question has been practicing the faith, has been properly catechized and seeks to receive the sacrament, then the sacrament cannot be denied. Pastoral sensitivity should be shown to the family's circumstances and sincere efforts made to strengthen the relationship of the family to the parish community. Particular care is to be taken in the choice of sponsor to provide the youth support in ongoing faith formation.
59. In the case of a youth – younger than 18 and living with someone other than the parent(s) or guardian – written permission of the parent or legal guardian is necessary prior to the start of the process. If permission is not forthcoming, preparation for the sacrament ought to be postponed (not denied) until such consent is received or until the youth attains the age of 18.
60. In cases of joint custody, written permission of both parents must be secured prior to the start of the process.
61. *Sponsors for Confirmation:* A sponsor functions as a public representative of the community and as a role model and ongoing support to the candidate. The sponsor assists the parents in the ongoing faith formation of the candidate, especially should the parent(s) be unable to do so. There should be one sponsor for each of those confirmed. (RC, no. 5)
62. A sponsor:
  - Should be at least 16 years of age and sufficiently mature for this responsibility
  - Is to be a Catholic, fully initiated (who has been baptized, confirmed, and has already received First Communion) and is leading a life in harmony with the faith and the role to be undertaken
  - Is not the parent of the candidate
  - May be either male or female
  - May be one's Baptismal sponsor
63. Special catechetical sessions ought to be provided for sponsors to enable them to understand the importance of:
  - Sharing their faith understanding with their candidate
  - Being a good role model in the living of their faith

- Being available to accompany and participate with their candidate in mission/service activities
  - Being able to answer questions and concerns the candidate may have
  - Continuing in their own faith formation through parish adult formation programs
64. A proxy may be chosen if the sponsor cannot be present for the actual Confirmation celebration. A proxy must be designated in writing and meet the same qualifications as a sponsor. However, the name of the sponsor, not that of the proxy, is recorded in the parish register.
65. *Scheduling for the Sacrament of Confirmation:* A date for Confirmation is secured by contacting the Office of the Bishop. The parish consults with the Office of Worship, which establishes the liturgical guidelines for the celebration of the sacrament and approves the final parish-prepared, ritual Order of Worship for the parish celebration.
66. *Confirmation Name:* The rite says nothing about taking a new name at Confirmation. Therefore, candidates may retain their baptismal name rather than take a new one. This is desirable because it manifests an understanding that Confirmation completes the grace of Baptism.
67. This name can be worn on a badge pinned to the shoulder or printed on a card to be handed to the priest or deacon assisting the Bishop. This practice is preferred over the sponsor or confirmandi announcing their name directly to the Bishop.
68. *Attire for Sacrament of Confirmation:* The dress encouraged for the candidates should not give the impression of a graduation. Regular (Sunday best) dress attire is satisfactory. However, to emphasize the relationship between Confirmation and Baptism, dressing in a white tone (or white garment or robe) may be used at Confirmation, just as a white robe is used to clothe the newly baptized.
69. The practice in some places of using stoles at Confirmation seems to have risen out of a desire to provide a symbol of Confirmation. However, the distinction between the universal priesthood of all the baptized and the ministerial priesthood of the ordained is blurred when the distinctive garb of the ordained ministers is used in this manner. Therefore, stoles are not to be used by the newly confirmed.
70. **Preparing Adults for Confirmation:** Catechesis directed towards parents, sponsors and adults wishing to celebrate the sacrament themselves, should reflect the following themes ([CCC, no. 683-747](#), [no. 1285-1321](#))
- Fulfillment of Initiation
    - Baptism begins the process.
    - Confirmation renews baptismal promises and gifts of the Spirit.
    - Eucharist nourishes the daily faith.
  - Role of the Spirit
    - Work of the Trinity

- Gifts of the Spirit – (wisdom and understanding, right judgment and courage, knowledge and reverence, wonder and awe – (RCIA , no. 234 and RC, no. 42)
  - Ritual of Confirmation
    - History
    - Scriptural roots
    - Signs and symbols (oil, anointing with Chrism, baptismal promises, laying on of hands, sign of peace, welcoming the newly confirmed into the family – the Body of Christ)
  - Roles and responsibilities
    - Witness to the world
    - Personal development
71. Adults who have been baptized and who have celebrated First Communion are to receive catechesis which is age appropriate but distinct from children's catechesis.
72. **Reception of Confirmation for Persons with Developmental Disabilities:** Appropriate adaptations in candidate requirements should be made for persons with developmental disabilities who have the use of reason. Judgment of readiness for them should be based on whether they demonstrate acceptance of the faith and a desire for greater participation in the life and mission of the Church.
73. Persons who may never attain the use of reason are to be encouraged, through their parents or guardians, to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation at the appropriate time. (Guidelines for the Sacraments with Persons with Disabilities, General Principles, no. 3)
74. **Record of Conferral of Confirmation:** The full name of the confirmed with mention of the minister; parents – including mother's maiden name; sponsor; place and the date of the conferral of Confirmation are to be noted in the Confirmation Register of the parish. At the pastor's discretion, this responsibility may be done by the parish secretary, who should be provided the necessary information in a timely manner.
75. Notation of the conferral of Confirmation is also to be made in the Baptismal Register (when the confirmed was baptized in the parish where Confirmation occurred) or, if not, sent to the Church of Baptism, with complete information described above.
76. A certificate of reception of Confirmation may be prepared for distribution at a later date. If certificates are distributed at the end of the celebration, care must be taken to avoid a perception of a "graduation ceremony".
77. The date of Confirmation should be entered on the family records in parish and Catholic school programs.
78. **Photography:** Families need to be informed of the parish's policy for the taking of photographs or videotaping during the Confirmation. Confirmation team members need to monitor and implement this strictly.