

SANITARY PROTOCOL TO CELEBRATE CONFIRMATION (PROPOSAL)

In addition to following the general public-health guidelines and your local church's deconfinement plan (reference document applicable to all rites), you are asked to comply with the following points, especially concerning the celebration of Confirmation.

PRELIMINARY STEPS AND PREPARATION OF THE PREMISES (CHURCH AND SACRISTY)

- Disinfection of the church before the ceremony, especially the surfaces with which those frequenting the church are most likely to come into direct contact;
- Disinfection and thorough cleaning of the materials that will be used during the ceremony: Holy Chrism. A container needs to be within arm's reach of the place where the minister will be standing for the anointment ritual. A few lemon slices will also be needed for this; If the minister uses cotton balls or cotton swabs, a container should be provided to dispose of the cotton balls or cotton swabs after use;
- Keeping 2 metres' distance from others at all times, including when entering, when leaving and while occupants are moving about within the church; a distance of 2 metres is to be kept while participants are seated, as well; this does not apply to members of the same family;
- Wearing of procedure masks is mandatory at all times in the church, including as church occupants arrive, as they leave and as they move about inside the church – including when they are seated;
- Hand sanitizing using a disinfectant is mandatory, especially at the church entrance and if possible before Communion (with a hydroalcoholic solution containing at least 60% alcohol);
- Planning the logistics of the Confirmation service as well as adequately briefing the confirmands and their sponsors. It is recommended that the roll call be rehearsed with the candidates and their sponsors.

THE ENTRANCE PROCESSION

- It is recommended that the entrance procession be limited to a minimum number of people in order to maintain the 2 metres' distance separating parishioners.



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- Candidates could already be seated with their respective families before the ceremony begins (respecting the bubble concept) OR they can be seated with their sponsors (respecting social distancing), while candidates' immediate family members are seated in a separate pew in accordance with the church's planned layout during the pandemic.

CONFIRMATION LITURGY

THE ROLL CALL

- It is suggested that only one person should hold the microphone and call out the name of each candidate.
- When his/her name is called out, the candidate stands – along with his/her sponsor - without leaving their places.
- The sponsor is not to place a hand on the candidate's shoulder, but communicate his/her support simply by standing.
- The candidate then responds by saying: "Here I am."

THE PROFESSION OF FAITH and THE LAYING ON OF HANDS

- Everyone is to remain in his/her place without moving during this part of the liturgy of the sacrament.

ANOINTMENT with the HOLY CHRISM

- During the anointment with the Holy Chrism, everyone (minister, candidates, sponsors) must wear their masks, especially because it will be impossible, even if briefly, to maintain a distance of 2 metres between each other or between the minister and the candidate. The minister of the confirmation will disinfect his hands.
- For the actual confirmation ritual by anointment, two options are suggested:
 - The minister will himself approach each candidate, who will remain at his/her pew and receive the anointment there;
 - One candidate at a time will approach the minister, accompanied by his/her sponsor, in order to receive the anointment. They then return to their bench following a path previously



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indicated by the catechists at the ceremony rehearsal. Once the candidate is seated again, the next candidate can then approach the minister, and so on.

- The minister takes the infused oilⁱ with his thumb, a cotton ball or cotton swab, lays his hand on the candidate's head and traces the sign of the cross on his/her forehead, saying:

N....,

Be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit,

The Gift of God.

The candidate responds: **Amen**

- Following each anointment, having used his thumb, the minister rubs his hands with the lemon slice and disinfects his hands.

OR

Having used a cotton ball or a cotton swab, afterwards disposes of it in the container provided for this purpose and takes a new one.

- Once the individual anointment rituals are all completed, communicate a general message to everyone instead of proposing the sign of peace.

THE EXIT PROCESSION AND AFTER MASS

- Indicate clearly to the participants the path they are to take to exit;
- Remind everyone that socialization remains a high-risk activity for transmission of the virus and that it is preferable to limit it to the minimum;
- Remind everyone of the importance of respecting all the sanitation rules regarding gatherings in private homes: that is, they are either totally banned or extremely limited, depending on the alert level in place.

ⁱ The Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, in response to the request for clarification regarding certain issues raised regarding the administration of the Sacrament of Confirmation in the context of the current pandemic, clarified that the minister's possible use of materials (e.g., cotton balls, cotton swabs) does not affect the validity of the Sacrament.