

Confirmation

This service is used by various sections of the Liberal Catholic and Independent Catholic churches.

Instructions (rubrics) are shown in this font.

Words that are spoken (or titles) are shown in this font.

✝ This cross means the people make the sign of the cross upon themselves.

✝ This cross means the priest makes the sign of the cross upon himself or others, or upon objects as a sign of power.

Confirmation is, literally, the making of the person firm or strong in the life in Christ begun at baptism. It has the two-fold effect of strengthening the soul and giving it greater power to express itself through the body.

The candidate pledges to endeavour to set aside the smaller life of personal interests and to work for the common good. Having offered him or herself as a knight in Christ's service, the sacramental act of Confirmation follows and the person is sealed once again with the sign of the holy cross, the emblem of the life of sacrifice and service.

The candidates for Confirmation (called neophytes) are seated in due order before the Bishop outside the chancel - their sponsors also, if still alive and able to attend, being near at hand.

The Invocation

Bishop: In the name of the Father ✝ and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.

All: R/. Amen.

The Bishop is seated before the altar. If desired, an address may here be delivered to the candidates, explaining to them the nature of the Sacrament of Confirmation and of the responsibilities they take upon themselves.

The Charge

WHEN ONLY CHILDREN ARE CONFIRMED

Bishop: [My beloved children:] On your entry into this mortal life you were brought into the house of God, and our holy Mother the Church met you with such help as then you could receive. Now that you can think and speak for yourselves, she offers you a further help — the gift of God's most holy Spirit. This world in which we live is God's world, and it is growing better and better day by day and year by year; but it is still far from perfect. There is still much of sin and selfishness; there are still many who do not know God, nor understand His laws. So there is a

constant struggle between good and evil, and, since you are members of Christ's Church, you will be eager to take your stand upon God's side and fight under the banner of the Lord.

WHEN ONLY ADULTS ARE CONFIRMED

Bishop: Since you are members of Christ's Church, you will be eager to take your stand upon God's side and fight under the banner of our Lord in the constant struggle between good and evil.

THE CHARGE CONTINUES (BOTH CHILDREN AND ADULTS)

Bishop: In this Sacrament of Confirmation the Church gives you both the opportunity to enrol yourselves in Christ's army and the strength to quit yourselves like men.

But if you enter His most holy service take heed that you are such soldiers as He would have you be. Strong must you be, yet gentle, ready ever to protect the weak, watchful ever to help where help is needed, to give reverence to those to whom it is due, and to show knightly courtesy to all. Never forgetting that God is Love, make it your constant care to shed love around you wherever you may go; so will you fan into living flame the smouldering fires of love in the hearts of those in whom as yet the spark burns low. Remember that the Soldier of the Cross must utterly uproot from his heart the giant weed of selfishness, and must live not for himself but for the service of the world; for this commandment have we from Him, that he who loves God loves his brother also. Remember that the power of God, which you are now about to receive from my hand, will ever work within you for righteousness, inclining you unto a noble and upright life. Strive therefore earnestly that your thoughts, your words and your works shall be such as befit a child of Christ and a knight dedicated to His service. All this shall you zealously try to do for Christ's sweet sake and in His most holy Name.

The Interrogations

All rise and the Bishop addresses the candidates.

Bishop: Will you then strive to live in the spirit of love with all mankind and earnestly to fight against sin and selfishness?

Candidate(s): I will.

Bishop: Will you strive to show forth in your thoughts, your words and

your works, the power of God which shall be given to you?

Candidate(s): I will.

The candidates kneel, and the Bishop blesses them.

Bishop: May the ✠ blessing of the Holy Ghost come down upon you, and may the power of the Most High preserve you in all your ways.

All: R/. Amen.

The following hymn is sung, all kneeling.

Veni Creator

All Come, Thou Creator Spirit blest:
And in our should take up Thy rest;
Come with Thy grace and heavenly aid:
To fill the hearts which Thou hast made.
Great Paraclete, to Thee we cry:
O Highest gift of God most high;
O living Fount, O Fire, O Love:
And sweet anointing from above.

Thou in Thy sevenfold gift art known:
Thee, Finger of God's Hand, we own,
The promise of the Father, Thou:
Who dost the tongue with power endow.

Kindle our senses from above:
And make our hearts o'erflow with love;
With patience firm and virtue high:
The weakness of our flesh supply.

Far let us drive our tempting foe:
And Thine abiding peace bestow;
So shall we not, with Thee for guide:
Turn from the path of life aside.

O may Thy grace on us bestow:
The Father and the Son to know,
And Thee, through endless times confessed:
Of both eternal Spirit blest.

All glory while the ages run:
Be to the Father and the Son,
Who gave us life; the same to Thee:
O Holy Ghost, eternally.

Amen.

The people are seated.

The Confirmation

Each candidate is severally led up to the Bishop and instructed to kneel upon the cushion and to place his/her hands together, palm to palm, resting them upon the gremial which covers the Bishop's knees.

Candidate(s): Right Reverend Father, I offer myself to be a knight in Christ's service.

The Bishop, taking the candidate's hands between his own and pressing them lightly.

Bishop: In Christ's most holy Name do I accept you.

The Bishop takes some chrism upon his right thumb and places his right hand upon the head of the candidate.

Bishop: Receive the Holy Ghost for the sweet savour of a godly life; whereunto I do ✠ sign you with the sign of the cross, and I confirm you with the chrism of salvation. In the Name of the ✠ Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy ✠ Ghost.

All: R/. Amen.

At the words, 'I do sign you,' the Bishop makes the sign of the cross with the chrism upon the forehead of the neophyte. He makes the sign of the cross three times over the head of the neophyte as he recites the Names of the Holy Trinity. After a momentary pause, the Bishop again lays his hands upon the head of the neophyte.

Bishop: Therefore go forth, my brother (sister), in the Name of the Lord, for in His strength you can do all things.

The bishop touches the neophyte lightly on the left cheek.

Bishop: Peace be with you.

The neophyte rises, bows reverently to the Bishop and is led back to his seat.

When all have been confirmed, a hymn may be sung here. The people are then seated. Then the Bishop, seating himself, addresses the newly-confirmed.

Bishop: My brothers (and sisters), now have you received the gift of the Holy Ghost; see to it that your bodies are ever pure and clean, as befits the temple of the most high God and the channel of so great a power; and understand that as you keep that channel open by a useful life spent in the service of others, so will His life that is within you shine forth with ever greater and greater glory.

The bishop rises and faces towards the altar. The newly-confirmed kneel.

Bishop: † Our help is in the Name of the Lord.

All: Who has made heaven and earth.

Bishop: Blessed are the pure in heart.

All: For they shall see God.

Bishop: Trust in the Lord for ever.

All: For He is our Rock of Ages.

Bishop: The Lord be with you.

All: And with thy spirit.

Bishop: Let us pray.

The Bishop extends his hands towards the newly-confirmed.

Bishop: O Lord Christ, who gave the Holy Spirit to you Apostles, and ordained that by them and their successors He should be given to the rest of the faithful, we render to you hearty thanks for this inestimable benefit now bestowed upon us.

We offer unto You the lives which You today have blessed, that they, whom You have accepted as soldiers in Your Church militant here on earth, may so bear themselves as true and faithful knights in Your service that they may be found worthy hereafter to stand before You in the ranks of the Church triumphant, O great King of Glory, to whom be praise and adoration from men and from the Angel Host.

All: Amen.

The Benediction

The Bishop blesses the persons confirmed.

Bishop: *God the ✠ Father, God the ✠ Son, God the Holy ✠ Ghost,*
bless preserve and sanctify you; the Lord in His loving-kindness look down
upon you and be gracious unto you; the Lord lift up the light of His
Countenance upon you and giver you His peace, now and for evermore.

All: *R/. Amen.*