



The Episcopal Diocese Of Western New York

Regional Confirmation Customary

This Customary provides guidelines for regional confirmation services within the diocese. There may be special circumstances for your congregations, if so, please be in touch with the Bishop's Office (Shawn Slother) within one month of the service, so that we can discuss your particular needs.

In Advance of the Service

- 1) Please send to the host parish priest and Bishop's Office (Shawn Slother) a complete list of the names of your candidates one month in advance of the service. This list should match the name(s) to the appropriate certificate (Confirmation, Baptism, those being Received, and Reaffirmation). Certificates will be provided by the Bishop's Office and brought to the host parish the day of the service.
- 2) Please print and bring name tags for all the candidates.
- 3) Please let the host priest know who will be attending from your parish leadership (the parish priest and any who may be presenting the candidates).
- 4) Please encourage your congregation to attend the regional confirmation. This service is so much more meaningful if members of your congregation come and support your candidates.
- 5) Please complete your register and anything else that you need the Bishop to sign (such as gifts of BCPs), so that everything is ready for him to sign the day of the service.
- 6) Please ensure that the Bishop's Office (Cathy Dempsey-Sims) has a draft of the service one month in advance by the host priest.
- 7) The host congregation is encouraged to invite altar servers, readers, and choir members from other congregations in the region to participate in the service.
- 8) Please ensure that before the day itself there are people assigned to attend to all the usual liturgical tasks (serving, readings, prayers, the bringing up of the gifts at the Offertory, the administration of Holy Communion, etc). This includes clergy assignments for the distribution of Holy Communion. It is appropriate for members of congregations that are bringing candidates to be invited to participate in these ways. Given everything else that has to happen, it helps not to have to discuss all this right before the service.

On the Day of the Service

- 1) Please arrive with your candidates one hour before the service so that you can help them find their way around.
- 2) Priests presenting candidates, as well as other priests present, are welcome to vest and participate with the Bishop, if they wish. Or they are welcome to sit in the congregation with their candidates. Please let the host priest know what you would like to do. Each priest should have a role in the service.
- 3) At the end of the service, the Bishop likes to take photographs both with groups from each congregation, as well as with individual candidates. This can take some time and it is helpful if you can gather your candidates immediately after the service, so that the photos may be taken as expeditiously as possible.
- 4) Please encourage your folks to stay for the reception after the service.

- 5) The reception can be whatever is easy for the host parish, and different congregations have done different things. We have discovered that on the whole people do like to stay and socialize. However, it is important that the reception not be a burden to the host parish, and you must do what makes sense and is manageable. Other congregations who are attending the service may be able to help by bringing food. Please feel free to do as you think fit.

After the Service

- 1) Please return your confirmation record to the Bishop's Office (Shawn Slother) within 1 week of the service.
- 2) Please consider hosting a regional confirmation service at your parish, and contact the Bishop's Office (Shawn Slother) if this interests your congregation.

Notes on the Liturgy

- 1) The Propers are determined as follows:
 - a. If the service is on the Saturday morning or in the early afternoon, the Propers are for the day, and if there is a saint or feast we celebrate that. Usually there is only a first Reading, a psalm, and the Gospel reading. The color is white for baptisms and confirmations.
 - b. If there is no saint or feast that day, then the Collect is from the previous Sunday (usually, though there are exceptions) and the readings are from the daily Eucharistic lectionary for that day. In this case there is a first Reading, the psalm, and the Gospel. The color is white.
 - c. If the service is in the evening on a Saturday (5 pm or later), we keep it as the Vigil Mass of the following day, with the Propers for the Sunday. The color is white.
 - d. If you have a doubt as to what the Propers should be, please be in touch with the Bishop's Office (Cathy Dempsey-Sims).
- 2) If there is no deacon in the host congregation, it is good to have a deacon from the deanery to fulfill the deacon's duties.