

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC  
**ARCHDIOCESE OF ATLANTA**



**ADMINISTRATION OF THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION  
IN THE  
ARCHDIOCESE OF ATLANTA  
FOR BISHOP BERNARD E. SHLESINGER, III**

I. EXAMINATION OF CANDIDATES AND MEETING THE CLASS

Bishop Shlesinger will vest and spend up to thirty minutes with the candidates before the procession begins. If a group photo is desired, it might be taken before Bishop Shlesinger begins his dialogue with the teens. Please have only the class assembled in a classroom or parish center. The Bishop wants the Confirmandi to be at ease and relaxed. There may be some questioning of the candidates either during the homily or as they come up to be confirmed.

II. PREPARATIONS

Bishop Shlesinger hopes the celebration of Confirmation will be a parish community celebration. Accordingly, all parishioners should be invited, if room permits.

Thirty days prior to the date of Confirmation, please send the order of worship and ceremony to the attention of Yolanda Rivera by fax at (404) 920-7301 or through e-mail at [yrivera@archatl.com](mailto:yrivera@archatl.com).

*(Information desired includes the Scripture readings to be used, the parts of the Mass to be sung, and anything planned which will assist the Bishop in preparing for his visit to your parish.)*

Bishop Shlesinger will bring his own alb and vestments and will vest in the rectory or whatever place you have designated for him. The color of vestments is red or white, unless the rubrics of the day state otherwise. Please indicate the color you have chosen when you send in the order of worship.

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In church, please make the usual preparations for Mass. If there will be a large number of concelebrants, and/or Communion under both species, please have adequate chalices and extra hosts. If a significant number of priests and deacons are available, please assign them as Ministers of Holy Communion. If needed, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion are welcome to assist in the distribution of the Eucharist.

Please have a pitcher of warm water, large bowl, liquid soap and towel for the Bishop to wash his hands after the anointing. (The **Bishop does not use lemons and bread**).

Bishop Shlesinger will bring the oil of Chrism and Confirmation Ritual with him.

The Mass of Confirmation as found in the Roman Missal can be used on any day (even Sundays) except the Sundays of Advent, Lent and Easter Solemnities. On those days, the Mass will be that of the day. If it is a feast of one of the Apostles, Bishop Shlesinger prefers to offer the Mass of the Feast.

In selecting the Confirmation Readings these readings should be taken from the suggested texts given in the Lectionary for Confirmation. During the Easter Season (Easter Sunday to Pentecost) **all the Readings** should be selected from the New Testament.

**Please note:** If the Confirmation is to be held on the Vigil of Sunday (a Mass that begins after 4 PM) or on Sunday, **the readings are to be those of that particular Sunday.**

The commentator, lectors, and song leader should be well prepared and the Scriptures proclaimed so everyone can hear what is being read.

#### USE OF STOLES AT CONFIRMATION

Concerning the use of stoles at Confirmation, we bring to your attention a response to his question from the December 1984 issue of the Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy Newsletter:

Q. Is there any legislation regarding the use of stoles at the celebration of Confirmation?

A. The traditional vesture of the newly baptized is the white robe. There is no indication in liturgical tradition that the

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stole - which properly is the vesture of ordained ministers -  
was used for neophytes.

The current practice in some places of using stoles at Confirmation seems to have arisen out of the laudable desire to provide a symbol signifying the confirmands' participation in the life and ministry of the Church. 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 ordained ministers is used in this manner.

To emphasize the relationship between confirmation and baptism, a white garment might be used at confirmation - just as the baptismal robe was used to clothe the newly baptized. Use of stole, however, should be avoided for the reasons already indicated.

## NAME TAGS

The practice of the members of the class wearing name tags is retained. The name tags should be fastened high on the right shoulder of the Confirmandi. This will be the confirmation name, depending upon which name the Confirmandi chooses. Even though the candidate wears a name tag, the sponsor should introduce the candidate for Confirmation to the Bishop.

## III. SERVERS INSTRUCTIONS

Five servers will be needed: cross bearer, two acolytes, miter bearer and crosier bearer. If you are having incense, you may need another server.

## IV. ORDER OF PROCESSION

The servers and members of the class, including the adults if you wish, meet the Bishop and the clergy outside the rectory or wherever they are vesting.

### THE ORDER OF PROCESSION IS AS FOLLOWS:

1. Thurifer and Boat bearer (if you choose to have incense)

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2. Cross bearer and acolytes
3. Honor Guard (if you wish to have them)
4. Confirmation Class
5. Additional servers should you opt to have more than the three at the front
6. Visiting clergy and concelebrants
7. Pastor and Associate Pastors
8. Deacon carrying the Book of Gospels (if you have a deacon in your parish or have invited one to participate)
9. Bishop Shlesinger
10. Miter and Staff bearers

The procession moves directly into the Church and the members of the class go to their pews. You may choose either to have the class in the front pews on both sides of the main aisle and come forward to the Bishop at the time of Confirmation or have the class at the end of the pew and the Bishop comes to each pew. Please let us know which procedure you will be following.

## V. THE MASS AND CEREMONY

The pastor/associate(s) are seated near the Bishop's chair. If there is a deacon, he assists the Bishop at the chair. If there is room, the concelebrants and visiting clergy are seated in the sanctuary; otherwise in the pews. However, care should be taken that the clergy do not block the view of the class or the congregation.

The deacon (or pastor or associate, if no deacon is present) proclaims the Gospel. After the Gospel, the Pastor or a representative of the Parish Pastoral Council, or catechist presents the candidates to the Bishop. The following text or similar wording may be included:

“Bishop Shlesinger, the candidates of the parish community of \_\_\_\_\_ have been properly prepared to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. The pastor (and associate), parents and teachers, and the members of our parish community ask you, Bishop Shlesinger, to confer the gift of the Holy Spirit upon them. Bishop, it is my privilege to present these candidates to you at this time.”

*Individual names may be read if there are fewer than 30.*

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The candidates all rise (to the applause of the congregation) and then sit for the Bishop's homily.

After Bishop Shlesinger concludes the homily, he will lead the class in the renewal of Baptismal promises. The class answers "I do" five times (loud and clear) and the entire congregation responds with "Amen" at the conclusion. The assembly may sing a short song or acclamation of faith.

After the invitation to prayer, the Bishop, Pastor, Associate(s), the Concelebrants will join in imposing hands upon the candidates, (by extending their hands over them). Bishop Shlesinger says the prayer over the candidates.

Paragraph #26 of the Ritual for the celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation provides that the candidates can come to the minister of the sacrament or the minister of the sacrament can go to the individual candidates. Either option may be used.

If the candidates are to come to the minister, the following directives are to be observed.

The pastor goes with the Bishop to the edge of the sanctuary, or to the pews – if that option is selected.

As the confirmands come before the Bishop, the teens are to come up simultaneously, two at a time, and stand in front of the Bishop. If the class is very small, the candidates may come up single file.

The sponsor comes up with the candidate and places his/her right hand on the right shoulder of the Confirmandi. Please advise the sponsor in advance. If the pastor wishes, the parents, godparents and immediate family of the Confirmandi may also come up with the sponsor.

In order that everyone in the pews may witness the ceremony, the members of the class should remain seated in the pews until it is time to come up. Only a very few candidates should be in the aisle at one time so they will not block the view of the congregation. As soon as the newly confirmed and his/her sponsor return to the pew, they should be seated.

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If the second option is to be used, the Bishop goes to the candidates.

The candidates should be seated in such a way that the sponsor is seated next to them and the minister of the sacrament can easily approach each candidate. e.g. Each candidate sits at the end of the pew with her/his sponsor next to the candidate and Bishop Shlesinger proceeds down the aisle stopping at each candidate for anointing.

Only the candidate who is being anointed and the sponsor should be standing, all others should remain seated. The sponsor is to place his/her right hand on the right shoulder of the Confirmandi.

If there is an honor guard, they should be seated on the side aisles or in the back of the Church

The candidate and sponsor stand before the Bishop and the sponsor says:

“I am pleased to introduce \_\_\_\_\_ candidate’s confirmation name\_\_\_\_\_.”

The Bishop says:

“\_\_\_\_\_, BE SEALED WITH THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.”

The newly confirmed responds:

“Amen.”

The Bishop says:

“Peace be with you.”

The newly confirmed answers:

“And with your spirit.”

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N.B. Bishop Shlesinger will shake hands or offer the ritual embrace with each person confirmed at this time and possibly converse briefly with him/her. Please inform the members of the class. Immediately after this exchange, the newly confirmed and those with the Confirmandi return to their places and are seated.

The oil on the forehead of the Confirmandi is left on as a visible sign of the matter and form of the sacrament.

Bishop Shlesinger would prefer no singing or music played during the anointing so that everyone can hear what he is saying to those being confirmed.

## GENERAL INTERCESSIONS

The Creed is omitted whenever the Sacrament of Confirmation is administered because of the renewal of Baptismal promises, including weekend Masses.

The general intercessions follow. The Bishop will give an opening comment (Invitation to Pray) before the intentions are read and he will offer the concluding prayer. A maximum of six petitions would be appropriate.

## LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

The Liturgy of the Eucharist begins as members of the class bring up the gifts of bread and wine and any other symbolic gifts to the Bishop in front of the altar.

If four (4) or more chalices are to be used for distribution of the Precious Blood, they should be prepared before Mass and brought to the Altar from the credence table as the gifts are brought forward.

For the distribution of Holy Communion, the Bishop will distribute to the members of the class. He will go to the edge of the sanctuary in the center aisle and the Confirmandi are to come up two by two. If communion is distributed under both species, the Ministers of the Blood of Christ should be ready to go to their stations when the Bishop begins to distribute the Body of Christ.

While the Bishop is distributing to the members of the class, other priests or Eucharistic Ministers may begin to distribute on the side aisles or in other designated parts of the church.

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If Communion is distributed under both species, please make all necessary preparations in advance. Special ministers are used only if there are not enough priests and deacons present. Please inform Bishop Shlesinger of the details of distribution before Mass.

## RECESSIONAL

The cross bearer and acolytes, Honor Guard, if present, lead the clergy and Bishop Shlesinger out of the Church.

The members of the Confirmation class, including adults, follow the Bishop.

Please inform concelebrants and clergy before Mass, they are to follow the Honor Guard and/or cross bearer and acolytes and walk ahead of the class. Bishop Shlesinger will greet the class and the members of the congregation at the reception if one is scheduled.

## VI. PHOTOGRAPHS

Many pastors have found an advantage for the group picture to be taken before the Confirmation liturgy because it allows more time for the reception afterwards. If the parish has contracted with a professional photographer to take a group picture of the Confirmation Class the picture must be taken before the time that Bishop Shlesinger will meet with the Confirmandi, so as not to delay the reception and the Bishop's time with the newly confirmed and their families.

The Bishop would be happy to have individual pictures taken with the newly confirmed and their sponsors and families at the reception if there is one; if no reception, right after Mass in the sanctuary or wherever you have planned.

## VII. CLASSMATES WHO HAVE ALREADY BEEN CONFIRMED

Some parishes have young people who have already been confirmed when they were received into the church at the time of their baptism or prior to coming to the parish, but want to participate with their classmates at the time of their Confirmation. We suggest that something be written into the liturgy that acknowledges their presence. They should certainly renew their baptismal promises with the group at the liturgy. Perhaps they could



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come forward for a blessing after the group has been confirmed or rise as a group to be acknowledged. Exactly how they are recognized is a local parish decision. Simply inform Bishop Shlesinger at the time of the ceremony.