



DIOCESE OF MADISON
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RE: Guidelines and Suggestions for Confirmations with Bishop Morlino

Dear Pastor and Parish Representative:

A number of pastors have asked me some questions regarding practices surrounding Confirmation Masses with Bishop Morlino. Thus, each Confirmation season, we send out a letter explaining the guidelines for Confirmation Masses with Bishop Morlino. They are included below:

- 1) Vestments – Bishop Morlino uses a parish chasuble and stole based on the vestment color for the Mass. He brings his other vesture. A parish clip microphone is also needed by the Bishop for his mobile use.
- 2) Altar Cross – Bishop Morlino will be bringing an altar cross. If the parish doesn't have their own, this cross will be placed on the altar during the celebration of the Confirmation Mass.
- 3) Air Conditioning – If the forecasted temperature for the evening is 65 degrees or higher, please engage any air conditioning system prior to Mass. A full church quickly gets heated even in moderate temperatures.
- 4) Confirmation Garments and Dress – At several parishes, garments for confirmandi have been used. If a parish wishes to use “Confirmation” garments, red or white choir-style robes should be used for all confirmandi (i.e., male and female). Any “stole-like” garment should be avoided. Religious lapel pins or small medals worn by confirmandi for the occasion, etc... are acceptable. Dress for woman for Confirmation should avoid “prom-style” dresses that are “low-cut” and immodest and dresses should cover the shoulders, etc...
- 5) Readings Choice and Vestment Color Choice – These questions often arise from pastors, especially when a confirmation season spans several liturgical seasons. I think the easiest and correct answer is found in the *Ceremonial of Bishops*, and so I quote from it with some explanation in parentheses by me:

“On days when ritual Masses are permitted the ritual Mass for confirmation with its proper readings may be celebrated. The vestments for the [ritual] Mass are red or white or of some other festive color. If the ritual Mass is not celebrated [either not permitted for that day or if permitted, not chosen], [the readings of the day are used, but] one of the readings may be taken from those provided in the *Lectionary for Mass* for the ritual Mass for confirmation.

[The color of the vestment for a non-ritual Mass would be proper to the liturgical day.]” Section 459

Bishop Morlino has three specific requests. Firstly, he asks that on weekdays the customary format of a single reading and Gospel be chosen (i.e., no second reading), even for a Ritual Mass of Confirmation. This would not apply to Solemnities and Sunday/obligation Masses (i.e., Masses of Precept). Secondly, he asks that during the Lent and Easter seasons the Mass and readings of the Season, rather than a Ritual Mass and readings of Confirmation, always be chosen for Confirmation Masses. Thirdly, during Sundays and Solemnities in Ordinary Time, Bishop Morlino asks that the Mass and readings of the Sunday or Solemnity be chosen, although one non-Gospel reading may be taken from the Ritual Mass for Confirmation, if desired. Choices of readings and vestment color would be communicated to the Bishop’s Office through the submitted Liturgy Planner. One can check the Ordo or contact me if there are questions about making these choices.

- 6) Hymns – The number of verses of the entrance and offertory hymns should cover the length of the liturgical activity that it covers, including any incensations, and not continue beyond these activities. This guideline is not meant to encourage the use of incense. Also, there should not be any separate or added music performances or thematic musical pieces after Communion or at any time during the Confirmation Mass.
- 7) Procession/Recession – The confirmandi and sponsors should not process into or recess out of the Church due to the inordinate time involved with a Regional Confirmation Mass. In these cases, the confirmandi and sponsors would simply be seated in their pews prior to Mass and remain in their pews during the recessional.
- 8) Presentation of the Candidates – Each priest (i.e., multiple priests in the case of a regional Confirmation Mass), after the Gospel, should briefly go to the ambo and have their candidates stand, introduce them to the Bishop as a group worthy for confirmation, and ask them to remain standing. No individual names of confirmandi should be called at that time (due to undue length).
- 9) Rite of Confirmation - There should not be any music during the prayers of the bishop or priest, for example, during the laying on of hands during the Rite of Confirmation. However, there can be some background music or chanting during the chrismation with oil at the Rite of Confirmation.
- 10) Chrismation - **Bishop Morlino would like to sit to confer the chrism oil on the foreheads of the confirmandi.** He would like to sit in front of the altar in such a manner that the confirmandi can kneel before him on the sanctuary step to receive the chrismation (presumably with the sponsor standing behind the confirmand with the sponsor’s right hand on the confirmand’s right shoulder). The confirmands (with their sponsors) would come up two-by-two with the first kneeling and receiving chrismation while the other is getting into the kneeling position next to the first confirmand. This will allow for a steady flow of confirmandi in an expeditious manner. **No greeting or sign of peace to the confirmandi by the individual priests should take place after the Bishop’s chrismation of the individual confirmandi. The priests should simply remain seated at their seats in the sanctuary during the chrismation.**

- 11) Confirmation Sign of Peace – After the chrismation of each confirmand, the Bishop will say “peace be with you”. The confirmand should be instructed to simply say “and also with you.” The confirmand should be instructed not to try and shake hands with Bishop Morlino at that moment since the Bishop will be holding his crosier in his left hand and have the chrism oil on his right hand.
- 12) Number of Servers – I find that four servers are sufficient for a Confirmation Mass, but more may be used if space and circumstances permit.
- 13) Removal of Gum – As we know, our beloved teenage confirmandi sometimes may be chewing gum while waiting in line during the procession. It is asked that the DRE or other assistant ask the confirmandi to dispose of their gum. Experience has shown that the DRE or assistant can use an open coffee can lined with aluminum foil and simply walk down the procession line immediately prior to Mass and have confirmandi dispose of their gum.
- 14) Sprinkling Rite – Primarily during Easter and also at selected times of other liturgical seasons it is optional for a sprinkling rite to replace the penitential rite. Bishop Morlino prefers not to do the sprinkling rite at this time at Confirmation Masses due to shoulder complications. Therefore, the penitential rite should be chosen.
- 15) Lavabo Rite – The Bishop, after the anointing with chrism at the Rite of Confirmation, prefers to cleanse his hands by using lemon and water. Thus, two lemon halves can be placed in the lavabo bowl before Mass. Then, after the anointing, the Bishop inserts his oily fingers and thumbs into the lemon halves to cut the oil, and then servers pour the water over his hands.
- 16) Holy Communion – Distribution of Holy Communion for Confirmation Masses is only under the single species of bread. There is no distribution of the Precious Blood.
- 17) Announcements/Speeches/Presentations – Since the Bishop takes a brief period following the closing prayer of the Mass for vocations promotion, there should never be any further presentation scheduled for that time during Mass. The Bishop at the beginning of Mass, as best as he can, thanks all from the parish who have contributed in any way and thus there is no need for anyone to repeat the words of thanks that the Bishop has already sincerely offered. No further presentation or reflection would be in order after the closing prayer of the Mass. What is needed from the pastor or his delegate at this point in the Mass is simply an indication of where the reception will be, if there is a reception, and what arrangement is made for photographs with the newly-confirmed and the Bishop.
- 18) Recessional – At the recessional hymn, Bishop Morlino will recess out as is customary with servers, deacons, concelebrants, etc... If the number of confirmandi is less than one hundred (100), the confirmandi and sponsors seated with them will recess out from their pews as part of this procession without genuflecting or bowing. Prior to the Confirmation Mass, the Director of Religious Education or another appropriate staff member should inform the confirmandi, sponsors, and family to immediately come to the location of the photography after the Mass ends.
- 19) Photography – Due to the joy of the occasion, parents and family naturally desire to obtain photos of the confirmandi with Bishop Morlino, both as a group and individually. Bishop Morlino is happy to comply with this heartfelt desire. He asks that due to the solemnity properly accorded the Church proper, as rearticulated in the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, the photography session take place in

another location outside of the Church proper. He leaves the choice of this outside-the-Church venue to the pastor's judgment. For a group photo of the confirmandi class with Bishop Morlino, he asks that only one designated photographer take the photo on behalf of all families and friends, and that all people then share in this one photo. After the group photo, Bishop Morlino is happy to pose for the customary photos with individual confirmandi as taken by various family and friends. **Bishop Morlino asks that no professional photographer be used to take photos of individual confirmandi with the Bishop. A professional photographer may be used to take a group photo of all the confirmandi with Bishop Morlino. For Regional Confirmations of multiple parishes, be sure to arrange the confirmandi by group and make sure that the transition from one parish group photo to another is relatively quick and organized.**

- 20) Reception After Mass – If there is a reception after Mass at the parish, there is no need to wait for Bishop Morlino to give a meal blessing. Someone else should lead the meal prayer as Bishop Morlino finishes the picture session with confirmandi and parents and then removes his vestments. Also, there should be no “head table” at the reception, since the Bishop would simply sit and mingle with the faithful.
- 21) Dinner – The bishop requests that the start time for a post-confirmation Mass dinner be 1-3/4 to 2 hours maximum from the start time of the Confirmation Mass. If there is a prepared dinner in the rectory or at the parish (i.e., not a restaurant), a few menu tips are suggested. The Bishop would like a green salad, such as a spinach salad, along with an entrée of pork or salmon accompanied by a green side vegetable and red wine as a beverage. This dietary restriction applies only to the Bishop, and not to other dinner participants.

For a lunch, the bishop desires an entrée dinner-size salad with lettuce or spinach, a little tomato, no cucumbers, no croutons, no cheese, with a light dressing such as balsamic vinaigrette.

If you wish the Bishop to come or stay for a dinner before or after a Mass, you should clearly mark this on the liturgy planner. In addition, you should attach a cover letter to the planner clearly indicating in bold that you would like the Bishop to attend the dinner. Lastly, it is prudent to call the Bishop's Office and specifically invite the Bishop to the dinner that is adjacent to the event.

- 22) Dinner Guests – The pastor should feel free to invite any other priests or guests to the dinner. The Bishop welcomes their company.

I hope this helps your planning and answers many of your questions. If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me at 608-821-3011 or james.bartylla@straphael.org. Thanks so much.

Sincerely in Christ,



Rev. Msgr. James R. Bartylla
Master of Ceremonies
JRB/hs

cc: Most Rev. Robert C. Morlino, Bishop, Diocese of Madison
Dr. Patrick Gorman, Director of Office of Worship