



ARCHDIOCESE OF SAINT PAUL AND MINNEAPOLIS
CLERGY BULLETIN

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CONFIRMATION: PRIEST AS MINISTER

Reverend and dear Fathers,

In 1983, the revised *Code of Canon Law* modified the canonical legislation regulating all the sacraments and including several new norms and the occasions when priests can validly and lawfully administer the Sacrament of Confirmation. While custom and canon law establish that the ordinary minister of Confirmation is the Bishop (C. 882), a presbyter may confirm when he receives this faculty from the law itself or when the diocesan bishop grants him special faculties (C.882). It should be noted that a presbyter who has received delegation to confirm must use it for those persons in whose favor the faculty was granted (C.885.2).

Since 1983, pastoral experience has shown that there are several situations, in addition to those provided for in the universal law of the Church, when a presbyter may be called upon to administer the Sacrament of Confirmation. In order to eliminate confusion and provide for effective pastoral ministry, I hereby make the following provisions:

- I grant to presbyters with the faculties of the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis, and who have pastoral care of a group of the faithful by means of a parish assignment, the delegation to confirm Catholics aged eighteen or older who have been in the RCIA program at their parish. This faculty may be used only if the Catholic seeking Confirmation is properly disposed, not bound by any canonical impediments, has had an

extensive course of preparation through RCIA or another approved program. Such Catholics are encouraged to be confirmed at a ceremony distinct from the Easter Vigil.

- Since a Catholic preparing for marriage is urged to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation prior to the marriage, unless it creates serious inconvenience, I grant to presbyters with the faculties of the Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis, and who have pastoral care of a group of the faithful by means of a parish assignment, the delegation to confirm Catholics preparing for marriage, provided that the instruction is properly and fully completed and the sacrament of Confirmation is administered prior to the wedding taking place.

In addition, when confronted with a pastoral situation not allowed for in this policy, and in which a presbyter does not have the faculty to confirm by the law itself (i.e. when baptizing an adult, receiving an adult into full communion, or in situations when the recipient is in danger of death), a priest has the option of applying directly to the Archbishop for the delegated faculty to confirm in that particular instance.

Given at Saint Paul, Minnesota, this 10th day of April, in the year of Our Lord 2011. All things to the contrary notwithstanding.



The Most Reverend John C. Nienstedt
Archbishop of Saint Paul and Minneapolis



Jennifer Haselberger
Chancellor for Canonical Affairs