

**Confirmation Customary**  
**The Rt. Rev. Audrey C. Scanlan**  
**Fall 2016**

**Preparation of Candidates**

Candidates will be well prepared for their Confirmation/Reception/Reaffirmation with a working understanding of the sweep of the salvation story; an overview of the history, theology and ecclesiology of the Anglican tradition; and an appreciation of the resources for on-going spiritual formation as disciples of Jesus Christ and participants in God's Mission. For support in selecting a curriculum, contact the Very Rev. Robyn Szoke Coolidge, Dean of the Stevenson School for Ministry at [rszoke@diocesecpa.org](mailto:rszoke@diocesecpa.org)

Preparation for Confirmation/Reception/Reaffirmation is understood to be an active process that includes participation by the candidate, the parish Rector (or designated Catechist) and the family and/or support system of the candidate.

All forms of preparation will follow Safe Church procedures.

Candidates must be able to demonstrate a willingness to pursue discipleship in Jesus Christ and membership in God's Holy Church.

Candidates may be of any age, keeping in mind that Confirmation is the liturgical event by which one makes a "mature affirmation of faith."

**Administrative Procedure**

Four (4) weeks in advance, the Confirmation/Reception/Reaffirmation form will be completed listing the names, dates of baptism, etc. of the candidates and sent to Carolyn Patterson, Executive Assistant to the Bishop in order to return the appropriate number of certificates. A copy of the form is attached with this Customary and will be available on the diocesan website.

The Confirmations/Receptions/Reaffirmations will be duly recorded in the parish register of the church.

Confirmations/Receptions/Reaffirmations can take place (with appropriate advance notice) on the Bishop's Sunday visitation in the parish or at pre-scheduled, annual regional Confirmation services.

If a parish intends on bringing their candidates to another parish visitation or to another *regional service* for Confirmation/Reception/Reaffirmation, contact with Carolyn Patterson in the Bishop's office and a courtesy call to the hosting parish at least 4 weeks in advance is required. On the rare occasion, other confirmation services may be planned when a parish requires an additional service due to timing or volume of candidates. These occasions are subject to the Bishop's availability.

No other bishop other than the Bishop Diocesan may perform Confirmations/Receptions/Reaffirmations in the parishes of the Diocese of Central Pennsylvania without advance permission from the Bishop's office.

**Before the Service**

A meeting of the Candidates and the Bishop in advance of the service is requested in order to review the liturgy and make each other's acquaintance.

If there are gift books to be signed by the Bishop, they will be presented before the service or at the reception.

## **The Liturgy**

- The Bishop is the customary Officiant, Preacher and Celebrant at services of Confirmation/Reception/Reaffirmation unless decided otherwise in consultation with the Bishop.
- BCP pg. 322: "It is appropriate that the other priests present stand with the celebrant at the Altar, and join in the consecration of the gifts. . . ." Thus, priests should be vested and, at the Great Thanksgiving, join the bishop at the altar. At a Regional Confirmation the priests may sit in the chancel or in the pews with their congregations' candidates, as space allows.
- Propers for use can be "of the day" (if a Sunday), "for a Confirmation" (if at another time) or, "other" (if discussed in advance with the Bishop).
- The Paschal candle will be lighted and displayed in a prominent place.
- The Bishop's Chair- or another suitable chair- will be placed in front of the altar (or in the logical place for the Confirmation/Reception/Reaffirmation to take place) and will be removed after the Confirmation/Reception/Reaffirmation, just before the Offertory.
- The service will begin on page 413 of the BCP. (If this is the Bishop's first visit to the parish, the "door-knocking rite" will precede the opening of the Confirmation service.)
- Following the sermon, the candidates will be presented, examined and prayed for. Depending on the number of candidates, they may be asked to come forward for the Presentation and Examination or asked to stay in their pews. They should be rehearsed in their responses in the liturgy (BCP pg. 415)
- Prayers for the Candidate are found on BCP pg. 305-6. Please appoint an intercessor to do these.
- Candidates will come forward at the appropriate time and carry an index card with their name printed on it. They may also be invited to say their name out loud for the Bishop.
- The customary posture for Confirmation is kneeling and for Reception and Reaffirmation, standing. If candidates have difficulty kneeling, standing is an acceptable choice.
- Candidates may have family members/mentors assist in laying on of hands if that is the custom of the parish.
- It is the Bishop's preference that a generous amount of silence take place before praying each person's prayer of Confirmation/Reception/Reaffirmation.
- The Prayers of the People, Confession and Nicene Creed are omitted in this service.
- Those who are being Confirmed/Received/Reaffirmed may serve as lectors and/or oblation bearers at the discretion of the priest.
- The Proper Preface for Baptism is to be used Confirmations/Receptions/Reaffirmations.

**Photography**

- Photos taken during the liturgy must be without flash and unobtrusive.
- Photos (if desired) with Confirmands/those Received/Reaffirmed will take place directly after the service in the sanctuary.