



June 30, 2006

RE: Guidelines and Suggestions for Confirmations with Bishop Morlino

Dear Father:

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) Confirmation Garments – 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.
- 3) 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 two 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 of the Season, rather than a Ritual Mass of Confirmation, always be chosen for Confirmations.

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Diocese of Madison · 702 S. High Point Road · P.O. Box 44983 · Madison, WI 53744-4983

Phone: 608-821-3001 · Fax: 608-821-4552

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.

- 4) 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.
- 5) 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.
- 6) Number of Servers – I find that four servers are sufficient for a Confirmation Mass, but more may be used if space and circumstances permit.
- 7) 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.
- 8) 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.
- 9) 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.
- 10) Recessional – At the recessional hymn, Bishop Morlino will recess out as is customary with servers, deacons, concelebrants, etc... 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.

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- 11) 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 venue to the pastor’s good 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.
- 12) 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.
- 13) 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.
- 14) 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 608-821-3095 or jbartylla@straphael.org. Thanks so much.

Fraternally in Christ,

Reverend James R. Bartylla
Master of Ceremonies