



DIocese OF HARRISBURG

POLICY FOR THE PARTICIPATION OF CONFIRMED YOUTH IN THE CELEBRATION OF THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION

Great care and consideration is given to those young Catholics who have received the Sacrament of Confirmation at a time prior to Eighth Grade in accord with the *Code of Canon Law* and the policy of the Diocese of Harrisburg. At times, the Sacrament of Confirmation may have been conferred early because of the integral conferral of the Sacraments of Initiation after the age of reason (age 7), or because of emergency circumstances, or because a child has transferred from another Diocese which confirms at an earlier time, or because the child comes into the Latin Church from one of the Eastern Catholic or Orthodox Churches.

The Sacrament of Confirmation, once validly conferred, may never be repeated (*cf.* canon 889 §1). Therefore, those who have been previously confirmed must never be given the impression that the Sacrament will be repeated at the conclusion of a period of catechesis. It is laudable and fitting that the process of catechesis which leads up to the conclusion of the eighth grade includes those young people who have already been confirmed. However, it must be maintained clearly from the beginning of the period of catechesis that this child will not participate in the liturgical celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation in the same manner as his or her classmates. All care must be given to avoid any simulation of the Sacrament of Confirmation.

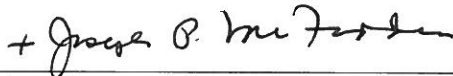
Therefore, the following policy is to be followed in all parishes and institutions of the Diocese of Harrisburg:

1. From the beginning of the catechetical period in seventh grade, it is the responsibility of the Coordinator/Director of Religious Education to ascertain the status of each candidate for confirmation based on the information gained from the young person's baptismal certificate. Should a child be known to have already received the Sacrament of Confirmation, he/she must be notified immediately that his/her participation in the liturgical celebration during the eighth grade will be distinct from the rest of the candidates presented.
2. In the liturgical celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation, in order to avoid any semblance of simulation or repetition of the sacrament, the young person who has already been confirmed is not to sit or vest in the same manner as the other candidates. The young person is not to stand with the candidates during the Renewal of Baptismal Promises or the Laying on of Hands. Nor should the young person present himself or herself for a blessing at the same time as the Anointing with Sacred Chrism.
3. It is highly recommended that the young person who has already been confirmed participate in a clear and active way in the liturgical celebration, such as serving at the altar or proclaiming one of the readings or presenting the gifts of bread and wine.

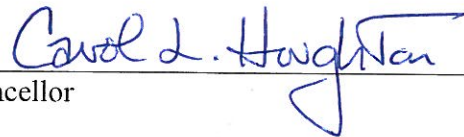
4. It is requested that each individual youth who will participate in the celebration in this manner be made known to the Bishop so that, in an appropriate way during the liturgical celebration, the Bishop may acknowledge the young person who has already been confirmed. All such notifications must be sent to the Office of the Bishop in writing at least two weeks prior to the date of Confirmation.

This policy, which is effective immediately, seeks to respect the Sacramental law and doctrine of the Church while at the same time being pastorally sensitive to the unique circumstances of our young people participating in the process of catechesis and formation in the Diocese of Harrisburg.

Given in Harrisburg,
April 28, 2011



Most Reverend Joseph P. McFadden
Bishop of Harrisburg



Chancellor