



## **REVISED POLICY ON THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION**

**TO: Parish Priests of the Archdiocese**

April 18, 2013

### **Re: Sacrament of Confirmation**

This revised policy is meant to clarify who can administer the Sacrament of Confirmation and in what circumstances.

According to canon 882, “the ordinary minister of confirmation is a bishop; a presbyter provided with this faculty in virtue of universal law or the special grant of the competent authority also confers this sacrament validly.”

### **PERMISSION IS REQUIRED IN THE FOLLOWING CASE:**

With regards to baptized Catholics who have not practiced the faith and baptized Catholics who have not completed their Christian initiation, the special grant of the diocesan bishop is required in each case for pastors, administrators or associate pastors (with the presumed permission of the pastor) to confirm (c. 884, §1), especially if the person is unable (due to a schedule conflict or other reasonable cause) to be confirmed by the Archbishop on Pentecost Sunday, as per the custom in the Archdiocese of Ottawa.

In the Archdiocese of Ottawa, the faculties granted to pastors, administrators and associate pastors may not be delegated to other priests.

A priest without a parish appointment needs to receive the express delegation of the diocesan bishop in order to confirm, and this special grant may not be sub-delegated.

**NO PERMISSION IS REQUIRED IN THE FOLLOWING CASES:**

By universal law, in danger of death any priest has the faculty to confirm a person who has not already been confirmed (canon 883, §3).

In the Archdiocese of Ottawa (and in virtue of universal law), the Vicar General, the Episcopal Vicars, all pastors, administrators and associate pastors (within their territory) have the faculty to:

- 1) confirm a person whom they baptize who is no longer an infant (7 years or older) with the use of reason (c. 883, §2).
  - It is highly recommended that a *catechumen* in the RCIA program receive the rites of initiation (baptism, confirmation and first communion) at the Easter Vigil. By exception, at the discretion of the pastor, any Sunday (outside of Lent) is appropriate for the reception of these rites.
- 2) confirm a person who has attained the use of reason but already has been validly baptized in another church or ecclesial community, when they are received into full communion with the Catholic Church (c. 883, §2).
  - A *candidate* may participate in the RCIA program or receive some other appropriate catechetical formation. The celebration of confirmation and first communion may take place at the Easter Vigil or on any Sunday (outside of Lent).

*(Please note that Eastern (Orthodox) Christians are only required to make a profession of faith and would then be ascribed to the equivalent Eastern Catholic Rite unless they also have recourse to the Holy See to transfer to the Latin Rite – please consult the Chancery).*

- 3) confirm the following on the occasion of a readmission to full communion with the Roman Catholic Church: the baptized Catholic who has left the Church; the baptized Catholic who through no fault of his or her own has been raised in a non-Catholic religion or joined a non-Catholic religion (c. 883, §2). For situations involving apostasy, heresy, or schism, please consult the Chancery.
  - These persons should receive appropriate catechetical formation and may be readmitted into full communion with the Catholic Church through the celebration of confirmation and first communion at the Easter Vigil or on any Sunday (outside of Lent).


This revised policy on the Sacrament of Confirmation amends the diocesan *pagella* for clerics. A revised *pagella* will be issued in the near future.

Please do not hesitate to contact the Chancery office if you require any further clarification.

This revised policy takes effect April 25, 2013.

  
+ Terrence Prendergast, S.J.  
Archbishop of Ottawa



  
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Chancellor