

Q & A: ADULT CONFIRMATION

February 5, 2012

1. WHO IS THIS CEREMONY FOR?

This ceremony is for baptized, already catechized Roman Catholic adults – 18 years old and older – who have not previously been confirmed.

2. WHAT DOES ONE MEAN BY THE TERM “CATECHIZED?”

A person who knows enough to practice faithfully and contribute to the mission of the Church is “catechized.” Practice of the faith and desire to be confirmed weigh more heavily than an ability to articulate the catechism, though one would expect to find the candidate open to ongoing conversion and education.

3. HOW DO I SEEK OUT CANDIDATES?

- Publish notices in the Sunday bulletins
- Search religious education permanent record files
- Discuss adult confirmation with parents seeking baptism and/or eucharist for their children

4. HOW DO I DETERMINE THE CANDIDATE’S READINESS?

In a personal interview, try to determine the following:

- Does the person want to be confirmed?
- Does the person have both the desire and ability to renew his/her baptismal promises?
- Does the person want to respond to the Spirit’s call to witness to the faith and build up the Body of Christ?
- Does the person have a sense of the Church and some experience of the local parish? Have you – has the community – known this person for some time?

5. WHY HAVE A SEPARATE ADULT CONFIRMATION CEREMONY?

The diversity of practice from diocese to diocese in our mobile society, the vagaries of youth, and the instability of family life are but a few of the factors that may have resulted in a baptized, catechized Catholic having “missed” confirmation.

For many years, catechized adults were confirmed at the same time as the youth of the parish or at the Easter Vigil with RCIA candidates.

Neither option seemed appropriate to many possible candidates. The style of parish confirmations is definitely youth oriented. Adults often feel out of place and conspicuous in a ceremony designed to meet the needs and concerns of youth. The RCIA process is designed for those who are coming to the faith for the first time (or those – “uncatechized” – Catholics who have not seen the inside of a church since their First Communion). A parish catechumenal process may be adversely affected if it includes a number of “catechized” confirmation candidates who do not need the depth or length of a full initiation journey. Pressure is often brought to short circuit the full initiation process. By the same token, many “catechized” adults do not persevere in a lengthy process that they rightly see as more than they need.

The adult confirmation ceremony option respects both the condition and spiritual maturity of the “catechized” adult candidate.

6. HOW DO I PREPARE ADULTS FOR CONFIRMATION?

A number of parishes in the diocese have developed separate, adult confirmation programs. Parishes are encouraged to meet this need at the local level. The diocesan Office of Religious Education is ready to assist parishes in developing their own programs. For information, please call (508) 929-4308.

7. WHO IS THE RETREAT FOR?

The Office of Religious Education is also offering a retreat for any adult candidates for confirmation **who have had significant participation in parish life over a number of years. For such candidates, the retreat may be sufficient preparation.** (See flyer)

8. HOW DO I SIGN UP CANDIDATES FOR THE FEBRUARY 5th CEREMONY?

Pastors should forward the following information to the Office of Religious Education, 49 Elm St., Worcester, 01609 **no later than January 17, 2012.**

- The full name, address and telephone number of the candidate
- A long form baptismal record if the candidate was baptized in the parish, or a record or photocopy of the baptismal record of a candidate who was baptized outside the parish
- The full name of the candidate's sponsor.
- The pastor's signed testimony that the named candidates are eligible for and prepared to celebrate the sacrament.

9. IS THERE A FEE/DONATION FOR THE FEBRUARY 5th CONFIRMATION CEREMONY?

There is no fee/donation for this ceremony.

10. WHERE WILL THE CONFIRMATION BE RECORDED?

The confirmation will be recorded at the Cathedral of St. Paul.

11. WHEN AND WHERE WILL THE ADULT CONFIRMATION CEREMONY TAKE PLACE?

The ceremony is scheduled for 3 p.m. on Sunday, February 5th at the Cathedral in Worcester.

12. DOES THE DIOCESE RECOMMEND ANY PUBLISHED PROGRAM FOR THE PREPARATION OF ADULT CANDIDATES FOR CONFIRMATION?

Yes. The Office of Religious Education recommends the revised edition of *Confirmation: Anointed and Sealed with the Spirit*, by Thomas Morris and Kathy Coffey, published by Living the Good News. The revised Leader's Guide is "now expanded for adult candidates." This program also includes a "Journal for Adults."

MORE QUESTIONS?

Please do not hesitate to call Barbara Ramian at (508) 929-4308 or Elizabeth Marcil at (508) 929-4306.