

**IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR THE REVISED GRADES
FOR THE CELEBRATION OF CONFIRMATION
ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA
January 18, 2018**

**Revised Grades for the Celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation
in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia**

The publication of the 2016 revised English translation of the *Order of Confirmation* once again introduced the topic of a revised standard grade for the celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. The Archbishop brought the proposal to the Council of Priests for discussion. On June 29, 2017, the Council of Priests voted almost unanimously for the new standard for the Sacrament of Confirmation to be seventh and/or eighth grade in the Archdiocese. On September 21, 2017, after consultation with the priests of the Archdiocese on the part of most deaneries, a presentation was made to the Council of Priests indicating overall support. At this same meeting, the Council of Priests again voted in favor of this change to the current Archdiocesan practice of Confirmation in grades four, five and six*. At the January 18, 2018, meeting of the Council of Priests, the Archbishop approved the implementation plan that follows for the revised grades of seventh and/or eighth for the celebration of the Sacrament of Confirmation in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. The revised standard is mandatory for all parishes within the Archdiocese and to all schools and religious education programs, including private Catholic schools and Independent Mission Schools.

*N.B.: In recent years, permission has been given to pastors who made a specific request to move the age of confirmation to seventh and/or eighth grade. These parishes will continue to schedule confirmation as usual and are not affected by the implementation plan.

Timeline for the Implementation of the Plan

The plan to convert the current practice to the revised standard grades will take place over a period of three years, beginning this Fall 2018. Those parishes that already celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation in the seventh and/or eighth grade will receive a notice to schedule and plan for the Sacrament for the Fall of 2018 or the Spring of 2019.

The chart below outlines when parishes, annually or biennially, celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation presently. The years in the *right* column indicate the next time the parish will celebrate the Sacrament with candidates in either seventh and/or eighth grade.

A. For Those Parishes Celebrating Confirmation Every Year

If presently in this grade:	Then transition to the new grade:
Grade 6	2019-2020
Grade 5	2020-2021
Grade 4	2021-2022

B. For Those Parishes Celebrating Confirmation Every Two Years

If presently in these grades:	Then transition to the new grades:
Grade 6 & 7	2019-2020
Grade 5 & 6	2020-2021
Grade 4 & 5	2021-2022

The Office for Catechetical Formation will maintain the record of the grades when parishes celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Choosing a New Grade for a Parish and Candidates

Pastors are encouraged to meet with the DRE, the school principal, and others who should be included, to discuss and determine the grade choice of seventh and/or eighth grade for candidates for the Sacrament of Confirmation.

Where several parishes are engaged in a regional school, then the meeting should take place with all pastors, DRE's and school leadership to discuss and determine the grade of choice of seventh or eighth grade for candidates for the Sacrament of Confirmation. In this circumstance, for the sake of the curriculum especially, all should agree on the same grade.

The new grade choice should be forwarded to the Office for Catechetical Formation by October 1, 2018.

Resources

The Office for Catechetical Formation (OCF) will provide, as in the past, suggestions for appropriate catechetical materials for the Sacrament of Confirmation for Catholic Schools and Religious Education Programs. The OCF will make available supplemental Confirmation materials as approved by the USCCB Secretariat for Evangelization and Catechesis Conformity List of Texts and Series (Sacramental Preparation Materials Section). The OCF, along with the Office for Divine Worship, will provide a revised series of questions and answers as summary of the essential information on the Sacrament of Confirmation.