

## **GUIDANCE FOR SERVICE OF PRAYER AND REFLECTION IN PREPARATION FOR THE CELEBRATION OF THE SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION**

- Ideally, this service should take place soon after the candidates have enrolled with their parishes for the sacrament of Confirmation.
- The ceremony is intended as a time of reflective preparation for parents, family members, sponsors and the candidates themselves. If the sponsor cannot attend, someone should be selected from the family to stand in for them at this ceremony.
- The ceremony should take place in the local parish church or some other suitable church.
- The ceremony is designed to be led by a priest or layperson.
- The reflection after the Gospel could be delivered by the priest, a teacher, parent, or guest who has experience and expertise in the area.
- The focus throughout should be on creating a space for personal reflection. It should not be rushed and silent periods should be observed as indicated.
- As many people as possible should be encouraged to take part in the symbolic actions and in the various parts marked 'leader'.
- Parents should be reminded to bring the candidate's baptismal candle to the service.
- The church could be decorated with candidates' religious artwork. A path or set of cut-out footprints could symbolise the journey of life. The names of the children and the names of their sponsors could be appropriately displayed (with due regard for GDPR and safeguarding principles). At the centre of the display should be:
  1. A bowl of water;
  2. The Paschal candle;
  3. Oil of chrism.
- Music is an important element – each situation will be different. The *Grow in Love* series provides a large selection of child-friendly hymns that may be incorporated as appropriate.
- A booklet based on the accompanying template should be provided for those present in order to enable their full participation.
- In a spirit of welcome, it is encouraged to provide those attending with a cup of tea/coffee etc. after the ceremony.