

June 10, 2020

Dear Monsignor or Father or Deacon:

The following is an update regarding how to licitly and validly administer the sacrament of Confirmation in light of COVID-19.

The Holy See's response to a USCCB request for clarification (i.e., a *dubium*): In a response to a *dubium* sent by the USCCB, the Holy See has responded that the use by the minister of an instrument (e.g., cotton ball or cotton swab) for the anointing does not affect the validity of the sacrament.

What does this mean practically? For this year only, as each candidate comes forward, the pastor can use a new cotton ball or swab dipped in chrism to anoint the candidate on the forehead and then place the cotton ball or swab aside for later disposal. A new cotton ball or swab should be used for each individual candidate. If the pastor chooses this method rather than using his thumb, then he would not need to sanitize his hands after each anointing.

Disposal of the cotton balls or swabs: Because they will contain the sacred chrism, the used cotton balls or swabs are to be burned afterward. They are not to be thrown in the trash.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask. Thanks for all of your hard work in these difficult times.

Sincerely,
Msgr. Edward M. Lohse
Vicar General