



CONGREGATIO DE CULTU DIVINO
ET DISCIPLINA SACRAMENTORUM

Prot. N. 437/20

Vatican City, 23 September 2020

Your Excellency,

The Congregation received your letter of 28 August in which you raise a question about the administration of the Sacrament of Confirmation. The substance of that query can be phrased as follows: Is the Sacrament of Confirmation validly and licitly administered if the minister makes use of an “instrument” to impose chrism on the foreheads of the *confirmandi* rather than doing so with his bare thumb? The Congregation had already received a similar query from another Episcopal Conference earlier this year. On that occasion the Congregation both cited an authoritative interpretation from the *Pontificia Commissio Decretis Concilii Vaticani II Interpretandis* on this matter as well as consulting with the Pontifical Council for Legislative Texts.

Our formal response to that query was: Affirmative.

For the validity of the Sacrament of Confirmation the law establishes that it is conferred by the ordinary minister, and by a priest with the faculty to do so, through the anointing with chrism on the forehead while the words prescribed in the liturgical books are pronounced (cf. cann. 880 § 1 and 882 of the Code of Canon Law).

The use by the minister of an instrument (gloves, cotton swab...), does not affect the valid or licit administration of the Sacrament.

With every good wish and kind regard, I am,

Sincerely yours in Christ,

✠ Arthur ROCHE
Archbishop Secretary

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