

Sponsor Information Sheet

According to the USCCB: Each candidate must choose a sponsor.

Sponsors must be able meet all of the following criteria:

- An adult (16 or older), ***who is not the parent*** or legal guardian of the candidate.
- The Sponsor must be a *practicing Catholic* who has already received the Sacraments of Eucharist, Reconciliation and Confirmation. (A godparent is an excellent choice, if they can meet the sponsor requirements, since Confirmation completes what is begun in Baptism).
- The Sponsor must be able to attend the Confirmation Mass with the Candidate.

Sponsor Responsibilities

The sponsor is recognized as a companion on the journey of faith, a mentor to the candidate, and also a co-learner with him or her as they grow together in faith.

The sponsor...

- Is a person of prayer and celebrates Mass and the sacraments regularly.
- Is someone whom you can trust and confide in, someone who is there when needed, or someone who has the potential to become this type of person for you.
- Is a good guide, a good listener who is ready to give advice when asked; one whose experience as a practicing Catholic and person of faith is an invaluable source for helping you to make decisions about your own life as a Catholic and continued growth in your relationship with Christ.
- Is able and willing to be involved in the preparation process for Confirmation which will be taking place over the next year and a half.
- Is able to meet with you 4 times individually and through these contacts affirm (at Confirmation) that you are someone who is choosing freely to celebrate Confirmation.

*“They were filled with the Holy Spirit
and they began to speak.” ~ Acts 2*

NOT TOO LONG AGO, THE SPONSOR FOR Confirmation was a friend or relative who showed up at the ceremony of Confirmation—and that was about it. Well, an ancient way of sponsoring has been rediscovered. In the early years of the Church, sponsors played a practical role in the initiation process. A person often wanted to join the Church because of a Christian’s personal example. Naturally, that Christian became the interested person’s sponsor.

The sponsor walked with the new member, helping him or her understand the way of Christ and the Church. The sponsor served as a model of what it meant to be a person committed to traveling on the way of Christ. That is where you come in. Today, the Church recognizes sponsors as people who are guides, models, friends, companions, and witnesses—responsible people the parish entrusts to accompany the candidates on their way to Confirmation.

A candidate for initiation from our parish has chosen *you* to be his or her sponsor as he or she approaches the initiation sacrament of Confirmation. Are you ready for it? You probably are, as the role you have been asked to play is not as overwhelming as it sounds. In fact, sponsoring a young person on the way to Confirmation can be an exciting and rewarding adventure for both of you.

Qualities of a Sponsor

As a Sponsor, you are not expected to be all knowing or all perfect. But here are a few qualities that your candidate can expect from you:

1. *Hospitality.* A sponsor must be a welcoming and inclusive person—a host. The sponsor needs to be open to accepting and discovering the person and the gifts—sometimes hidden—of his or her candidate. Your personal welcome helps the candidate discover both the comfort and the challenge offered by the community of faith. You can help establish a sense of belonging in your candidate.
2. *Prayerfulness.* By being a person of prayer—willing to pray and trying to pray—you will be a person responsive to the needs of your candidate and to the messages of the Holy Spirit.
3. *Respectfulness.* As a sponsor, you need to remain open and considerate. You need to value and esteem the opinions, ideas, gifts, talents, hopes, fears, and feelings of your candidate. You also need to show that respect by treating the sharing you and your candidate do with confidentiality.
4. *Generosity.* In the hustle and bustle of today, just to be a sponsor takes a certain generosity. You will be called upon to be generous with many precious commodities—time, talent, patience, prayer. Likewise, you cannot be penny-pinching with your feelings. Your candidate needs to see and experience what you feel strongly about.
5. *Faithfulness.* Faithfulness does not mean perfection. As a sponsor, your faith does not have to be perfect, solid, or totally secure. Rather, it must be steadfast, seeking, open, and growing. The community is made up of people on the way—people who have not yet arrived. It is alright to let your candidate see that your faith—like his or hers—is still seeking. That makes it abundantly clear that your faith is alive.

Sponsors are asked to help guide their Candidate in the following ways:

- Attend the **Candidate/Sponsor Session** (Spring of Year I).
- Attend the **Confirmation Retreat** (Fall of Year II).
- Meet individually with the Candidate at least 4 times before Confirmation.
- Monitor and help the Candidate keep their Confirmation Prep Commitments.
- Attend the **Confirmation Rehearsal** (Wednesday evening prior to Confirmation).
- Attend the **Confirmation Celebration** (usually February of Year II).