

Selecting a Sponsor

The Role of Confirmation Sponsor

According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church, the role of the Confirmation sponsor is to, “Continue to help the candidate along the road of Christian life, to safeguard and develop the grace given at Baptism and now sealed with the Holy Spirit.” (CCC. 1320)

The role of the Confirmation Sponsor involves much more than simply standing behind the Candidate as the bishop confirms. It is the beginning or the continuation of a lasting relationship of mentoring and guidance.

The prayers and support of the Sponsor are an important part of preparation for Confirmation, and helps the Confirmation Candidate live his or her baptismal promises both before and after Confirmation.

Qualifications

To serve as a Sponsor for Confirmation within the Catholic Church:

- The individual must be at least 16 years old.
- He or she must have received the sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation in the Catholic Church.
- If he or she is married, the marriage should have taken place in the Catholic Church.
- The person must have the intention, the ability, and adequate time to be a Sponsor.
- The Sponsor should live according to the Catholic Faith: attend Mass every weekend and receive the sacraments of the Church regularly, especially Reconciliation and the Eucharist. (A Catholic is required to receive Reconciliation and Eucharist once each year.)
- The Sponsor should practice the Faith within a Catholic parish community, and live a moral life.

Suggested Ways to Support a Candidate

- Help the Candidate become aware of his or her reasons for receiving the sacrament of Confirmation.
- Help the Candidate understand and appreciate the sacrament of Confirmation, and have the right intention for receiving it.
- Help the Candidate prepare for Confirmation by encouraging him or her to pray, to participate in the sacraments, especially the Eucharist and Reconciliation, and to become actively involved in the life of their parish.
- Support the Candidate and their family, and be a good example of Catholic Christian living.
- Meet with the Candidate on a regular basis for Mass, prayer, faith-sharing, reading Scripture, and discussions about the Christian life.

- Help the Candidate understand what it means to be a true disciple of Jesus Christ.
- Present the Candidate to the bishop for Confirmation.
- Ensure that the confirmed person behaves as a true witness of Christ and faithfully fulfills the obligations inherent in this sacrament.
- Continue to encourage the confirmed person to live a Catholic Christian life through:
 - prayer and the celebration of the sacraments
 - living the Gospel of Jesus Christ
 - turning to other Catholics for support and guidance
 - studying the Catholic Faith (*Confirmation is not the END of our faith formation and education; it is only the BEGINNING!*)

Additional Information about Sponsors

A parent may not serve as a Sponsor for their child. It is true that this arrangement was allowed at one time, but it is currently not allowed within the Catholic Church.

The gender of the person serving is not a deciding factor. The Sponsor may be a man or woman. A man may serve as a Sponsor for a girl, a woman may serve as a Sponsor for a boy, or the Candidate may choose a Sponsor of their own gender.

One of a Candidate's Godparents is an ideal choice. Choosing the same person as Sponsor for both Baptism and Confirmation helps emphasize the connection between the two sacraments.

Obtaining a Sponsor Letter of Eligibility

Sponsors must obtain a letter from their parish attesting that they meet the aforementioned requirements.

- If the Sponsor attends St. William of York, they should come to the Parish office or the RE office during normal office hours and obtain a letter.
- Those who attend other parishes must obtain a letter from their parish which must be sent to the family of the confirmand. **PLEASE DO NOT HAVE THE LETTERS SENT TO THE RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OFFICE DIRECTLY UNLESS THEY HAVE THE CONFIRMAND'S NAME ON THE LETTER.** Once you receive the letter from your sponsor, please bring it to the RE Office.
- If the sponsor is not able to attend the Confirmation Mass, a proxy can stand in for them. HOWEVER, the proxy must meet all the same requirements as the sponsor (see above list) including getting a letter. A parent *can* be a proxy!
- **The due date for selecting a sponsor is December 11, 2016.**
(please submit it on the attached form- Confirmation Saint Name & Sponsor)
- The due date for obtaining the letter of eligibility is **May 7, 2017.**