

CHOOSING A SPONSOR

WHAT IS A CONFIRMATION SPONSOR?

“Confirmation sponsors will help the Confirmandi to fulfill their baptismal promise, faithfully under the influence of the Holy Spirit whom they have received. It is recommended that the candidate’s baptism sponsor (godparent if still actively involved in the Confirmandi’s life) also be their Confirmation sponsor. This expresses the relationship between the two sacraments and also makes the function and responsibility of the sponsor more effective.”

WHO CAN BE A CONFIRMATION SPONSOR?

- Must have received all the Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, First Communion, Confirmation), and if married is married sacramentally in the Catholic Church.
- Must be a practicing Catholic (i.e. attends Mass weekly) and is living in a state of grace (i.e. able to receive the Eucharist).
- Must be a person who is an example and witness of the Catholic faith in word and action.
- Must be minimum age of 16 years old and mature enough to fulfill their function as a sponsor.
- Must be someone who will attend liturgical celebrations, special events, and the Confirmation Mass with the candidate (we highly recommend someone local).
- **A parent cannot be their son/daughter’s sponsor.** As parents already have a significant role in their son/daughter’s faith life, the Church envisions that a godparent will serve as an additional role model and advocate in helping a Candidate to be a faithful Catholic follower of Christ.

Your Confirmation sponsor must meet the above qualifications.

Please take some time to consider who will be your sponsor and **invest time getting to know them and praying with them.** Invite them to attend Mass with you and attend special events during the year - specifically Advent or Lent. A sponsor is promising to be a faith companion throughout your life, so **be open to sharing and reflecting openly and honestly** about what is going on in your life and faith journey and allow them to truly accompany you along the way.

THE ROLE OF A SPONSOR

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A SPONSOR?

Many people wonder what being a sponsor is all about? They are not sure they should become one. If that is you, it may help you to think of sponsoring a candidate in the simplest terms.

Being a “**sponsor**” means being a “**companion**”. Being a good sponsor means doing your best to live out your own faith well and listening to and sharing your life and faith with your candidate. They trust you. They have chosen you. Now it is your turn to choose to journey with them.

Being a sponsor doesn't mean having all the answers or being the perfect Catholic Christian. The sponsor/candidate relationship is not a teacher/student relationship. Rather, it is **two people discovering together the presence of God in the world, in the faith community and in each other**. To be the mature, Roman Catholic companion your candidate needs, it is important for you to **pray** - spend quiet time with God and consistently attend Mass and receive the Sacraments, **listen** - ask questions and receive their response with openness and curiosity, and **witness** - model your faith with your actions (in word & deed).

WHAT IS A SPONSOR SUPPOSED TO DO?

A SPONSOR PRAYS...

When we reflect on our lives in connecting with Jesus' life, death and resurrection, we pray. This kind of prayer allows the Holy Spirit to continue the conversion process begun in us at baptism. **Prayer makes us sensitive to the presence of God** in our ordinary day to day living. Each of us has our own way of praying - so don't worry about being perfect! The important thing is to **keep practicing and setting aside time to pray**. Failing to pray distances us from God and makes the possibility of living the fullness of the Christian way of life impossible.

Your candidate will be looking to you as they strive to discover their own path of continual conversion. **Sharing your prayer life will be an immense help**. Now may be the time for you to discover for yourself the form of prayer best suited to you and to build new habits of prayer. You may want to try praying with scripture or practicing “centering prayer” to discover the best way for you to come to know God.

THE ROLE OF A SPONSOR

A SPONSOR LISTENS...

One of the primary tasks of a sponsor is to **help the candidate uncover their own story**. That can only happen when we allow the candidate to speak and when we listen with **reverence** to what they have to say. They need to know we **value** them as a person and that we regard them as an **authentic voice of Christ** in our faith community. Good listening allows the kind of sharing to happen that helps people grow in self-understanding and confidence.

Sometimes it is hard for us to put our story aside and listen to others. That may be the biggest challenge of being a sponsor, but it will also bring the greatest reward. Begin to have conversations about the Candidate's life. It is all right to ask, "How is your faith walk going, or as a Christian how are you doing?" We all have much to teach and much to learn. Listening is one of the best tools we have.

A SPONSOR WITNESSES CHRISTIAN LIVING...

If Christianity could be taught like any other subject, we would not need sponsors. **The ongoing experience of living in Christ can only be handed on from person to person**. Think of Christianity like the emotions felt at an exciting event (a ball game or party). It is alive and active, exists in moments and can only be shared between people, not through a book or lecture.

To be a sponsor, or model, you are passing on values to the candidate. If a person changes their point of view or action, it is because they respect and admire someone who demonstrates a different point of view or action from their own. **Witnessing our faith is everyone's responsibility, but your candidate may look to you before others**. They already do. They have chosen you as their sponsor.

As a witness to the Christian life, you also function as a **bridge**. It is your task to help your candidate know Holy Trinity Parish and its people better and help them accept responsibility to their baptismal call. The way you participate in the faith community will be your greatest gift to your candidate.

A SPONSOR IS SUPPORTED...

The parish community of Holy Trinity supports the sponsor/candidate relationship throughout the preparation journey. If you are coming from outside of Holy Trinity Parish, stop by and celebrate Mass with us! **It is vital that you feel connected to the community of Holy Trinity through worship and prayer** in order to be the best witness to your candidate. Know that our Pastor Fr. Michael, our Confirmation Ministry Lead, our CORE Team, and the parents of the candidates will be walking with you and praying for you. **May God bless you for your loving generosity to be a companion for another in Christ**.