

Confirmation Sponsor Eligibility & Requirements

Congratulations on having been asked to serve as sponsor for Confirmation! This is a wonderful privilege and not one to be taken lightly.

We offer the following to you for your consideration as you become more involved in this new role. You are called—

1. To witness, by your life, how a Catholic Christian lives in today's world. Your concern for life, justice, and peace, for the poor and oppressed, and your involvement in doing good for others are the strength of your life as a witness.
2. To guide in times of doubt, indecision, confusion, to be a good listener, ready to give advice as a Christian adult when asked.
3. to be a friend, one who is "there" when needed, one who can be trusted,
4. to take an interest in the Confirmation program your young friend is involved in,
5. to get to know the candidate in a new way, as a sincerely interested young Catholic, freely coming to Confirmation, and ready to take on a mature responsibility as a Catholic in his or her sphere of influence,
6. to be ready to publicly vouch for the candidate's readiness to take on the role of one sent forth to bring the Good News of Jesus Christ to others by the quality of his or her Catholic life.

Above all, it is expected that, as a person of regular prayer, one who celebrates the Sunday Mass with a parish church and leads a sacramental life, you will begin to pray each day for your young friend.

Duties & Responsibilities

A sponsor for a Confirmation candidate is meant to provide spiritual help to the candidate (Catechism 1311). He or she should be willing to serve as a strong and lasting Christian influence on the candidate. The sponsor enters into a spiritual relationship with the candidate and acts as a sort of spiritual parent and mentor. Therefore, it is both a great blessing and a responsibility to commit to the role of a sponsor.

Each candidate may choose **only one sponsor**; it may be either a man or a woman. A sponsor takes on a life-long commitment to help their candidate persevere in the Faith. According to the Code of Canon Law (892), "The sponsor is to take care that the confirmed person behaves as a true witness of Christ and faithfully fulfills the obligations inherent in this sacrament." The Church states that it is desirable that the sponsor would be one of the person's godparents; however, this is not a requirement (893, §2). The sponsor needs to be a registered member of a Catholic parish in order to get the Sponsor Certificate of Eligibility signed by the pastor.

According to Canon 874, a sponsor must meet the following criteria:

- Must be 16 years old or older
- Must have received the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Eucharist
- Must not be a parent of the one to be confirmed

This canon (874, §1, 1) also states that the sponsor must lead "a life of faith in keeping with the function to be taken on." Therefore, the following persons are **not eligible** to act as a sponsor:

- Persons married outside the Catholic Church
- Persons who habitually miss Sunday Mass
- Divorced persons who have remarried outside the Catholic Church
- Persons cohabiting without the benefit and grace of Catholic marriage
- Persons who neglect the religious education of their children
- High school students who do not attend their parish's RE classes or Youth Group (not striving to grow in their faith)
- Individuals who neglect to fulfill their "Easter Duty" that is, Communion at least once a year during the Easter season and Confession once a year if in the state of mortal sin
- Those who give public scandal in any way

In the event that the sponsor cannot attend the Confirmation liturgy in person, a proxy, explicitly designated by the sponsor, who fulfills the above qualifications, may stand in for the sponsor during the liturgy. If the Confirmation candidate has a proxy, he or she must notify the Religious Education Office in advance. **A parent may not be a sponsor**, though they may act as the proxy if the sponsor cannot attend