

CHOOSING A SPONSOR FOR CONFIRMATION

It is time for your daughter or son to choose a sponsor for Confirmation. The role of the sponsor is to accompany the candidate on his/ her spiritual journey. The sponsor is to help the candidate appreciate the sacrament of Confirmation and to begin an ongoing relationship with God through the parish community. Canon Law #892 states that the sponsor is “..to see that the confirmed person acts as a true witness to Christ and faithfully fulfills the obligations connected with this sacrament”. The sponsor does this by encouraging the candidate to pray, to participate in the Eucharist and other sacraments and to become actively involved in the parish. It is the role of the sponsor, along with the parents, priests, and teachers, to instruct the candidate in the faith. The sponsor’s own witness and model of faith is important for the candidate’s spiritual growth. A sponsor should also be able to serve as a mentor.

A sponsor brings the candidate to receive the sacrament and presents him/ her to the bishop for anointing. Later, after Confirmation, the sponsor will help the young person to fulfill his/ her baptismal promises faithfully under the influence of the Holy Spirit. According to Church Law (Canon 893.2), it is desirable that the person who undertook the role of sponsor at Baptism should also be the sponsor at Confirmation. However, should the baptismal godparent be unwilling or unable to undertake the responsibility of Confirmation sponsor, the candidate would choose a confirmed, practicing Catholic whom he or she admires and who bears witness to the Gospel in everyday life. The qualifications for a Confirmation sponsor (Canon 874) are:

- a) The sponsor must be at least 16 years of age.
- b) The sponsor must be a Catholic who has received Confirmation and Eucharist and is practicing the faith.
- c) The sponsor must not be bound by any canonical penalty (e.g., May not be divorced and remarried without an annulment).
- d) The sponsor may not be the father or the mother of the one to be confirmed.

The sponsor for a candidate may be of either gender, (i.e. a female candidate may have either a male or female sponsor).

It should be kept in mind that a sponsor should be willing to share his/her faith in God and accompany the candidate in searching for God in his/her own life. A sponsor should also be able to serve as mentor, by regularly spending time with the candidate.

CONFIRMATION NAME

Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist together constitute the sacraments of Christian initiation. The reception of these sacraments is the process of initiation into the Church. Because Baptism and Confirmation are both parts of the initiation process, it is best to use your Baptismal name (the name which is on your Baptismal certificate) for Confirmation. This reminds us of the close connection between these sacraments. Knowing this, if you still desire to choose another name for Confirmation, this is permitted. It should be a Christian name which is the name of a recognized saint. Candidates should choose a patron saint’s name, not because of the attractiveness of the name, but because of the attractiveness of the exemplary Christian life that that person led.