

What is a Sponsor/Godparent?

This is the person who accompanies the unbaptized person seeking acceptance into the Order of Catechumens or who accompanies the already baptized person seeking the sacraments of Confirmation and/or Holy Eucharist. The sponsor/godparent is a companion throughout the whole process of the RCIA and beyond.

To serve as a sponsor, one must:

- Be a fully-initiated and active Catholic,
- Live a life of faith,
- Be in good standing within the Catholic Church,
- Be at least 16 years old,
- Have the intention and maturity to serve as a sponsor,
- Not be the father or mother of the candidate,
- Attend all orientation and training gatherings,
- Attend required RCIA sessions and celebrations.
- If married, the marriage must be recognized by the Catholic Church and not be bound by any canonical penalty.
- If not a member of Holy Name of Jesus Parish, the sponsor needs to provide a letter from the Pastor of the Catholic Parish where he or she is registered attesting the sponsor's qualification.

Sponsor Formation

Being a sponsor is like being a trusted friend. Each relationship between a sponsor and candidate or catechumen is unique. Each candidate or catechumen has a distinct history and personality that must be respected.

As a sponsor from the Catholic Community of Holy Name, you will journey with an RCIA candidate or catechumen through a formation process that reaches its climax at the Easter Vigil. This can be a humbling experience. You may be asking yourself whether you are worthy or qualified. Remember St. Paul's words to the Corinthians: "We hold this treasure in earthen vessels, that the surpassing power may be of God and not from us" (2 Corinthians 4:7). Keeping these words in mind may keep you from becoming too worried about being an unworthy sponsor and help you avoid taking too much credit for what God will accomplish through you.

Qualities of a Good Sponsor

- Reflective and prayerful person.
- One who is in touch with his or her faith story.
- One who has the ability to reflect on Scripture.
- One who has the ability to share his or her faith.
- A good listener.
- One with the ability to offer feedback, to affirm, challenge and support.
- One who has an understanding of the Christian Call to Holiness.
- A welcoming and caring person who can journey with another.

What RCIA Asks of a Sponsor

- Share your own faith.
- Attend required sessions, rites and Easter Vigil.
- Develop an open relationship with your candidate or catechumen so that he or she can ask serious questions, relate to, believe in and support his or her journey.
- Listen actively with your heart so that openness, healing and freeing activity may occur in your candidate or catechumen.
- Be in touch with your own moments of conversion.
- Be the welcoming person for your candidate or catechumen. Express your hospitality on all levels – meet informally, call on the phone, send emails.
- Introduce your candidate or catechumen to the community.
- Pray daily for your candidate or catechumen.