

Guidelines for Choosing a Confirmation Sponsor

A sponsor is required for the candidate being confirmed. Canon 872 and 874 of the Code of Canon Law lists those requirements for valid and lawful sponsorship in Confirmation:

- The sponsor's role is to assist the person in Christian initiation.
- The sponsor's role is, together with the parents, to present the child for the sacrament and help him/her live a life befitting a baptized Catholic Christian.

Being a confirmation sponsor is not just an honor given to a good friend or relative. Sponsorship implies a real appreciation of the faith, a practice of the same, and a sense of responsibility toward the person being confirmed.

A sponsor also plays a vital role in the candidate's continuing initiation into full membership in the Christian community. A sponsor of a Confirmation candidate:

- Supports and guides the candidate in their commitment to be a disciple of Christ.
- Must know the candidate and be willing to serve as a strong and long-lasting Christian influence on the candidate.
- May help the candidate prepare for Confirmation.
- Presents the candidate to the Bishop during the Confirmation Mass.

Parents cannot be sponsors for their own children because they are already the child's most important teacher.

The first choice for a Confirmation sponsor would be one of the candidate's godparents, to show the close connection between Baptism and Confirmation. If this is not possible, a second choice would be a confirmed Catholic whom the candidate admires and who bears witness to the Gospel in his or her everyday life. If the sponsor is a high school student, he or she must be an active member of the youth ministry/religious education at their parish.

The sponsors do not have to be the same gender as the candidate. Ideally, the sponsor should be a member of the candidate's parish.

Sponsor Requirements

A Sponsor:

1. Must be mature enough to undertake this responsibility.
2. Must have received the three sacraments of initiation, Baptism, Eucharist and Confirmation.
3. Must be not less than 16 years of age.
4. Must know the fundamental truths of the Faith and be a practicing Catholic who goes to Mass on Sunday, receives the sacraments regularly, and sees to the religious instruction of his/her family.
5. Must be a member of the Catholic Church, canonically free to carry out this office. (This would indicate that Catholics publicly living an invalid marriage (not according to Church regulations) and those who are cohabitating (living together without marriage) are ineligible.)
6. Must not be father or mother of the one confirmed.