

## The Role of the Sponsor

Confirmation is an opportunity to deepen one's commitment to a specific way of life – a follower of Jesus. The sponsor is an important part of preparation for Confirmation. At the time of Baptism, our parents chose for us two sponsors or godparents - people who made a commitment to be an example of the faith and help raise us in the Catholic way of life. For Confirmation, each candidate is once again inviting someone – whether it is one of their godparents or another person – to serve as a sponsor.

A sponsor is to accompany the candidate on the spiritual journey of Confirmation. The prescribed requirements for the role of sponsor are:

- ◆ *To be a fully initiated Catholic; who has celebrated the Sacraments of Baptism, Communion, and Confirmation.*
- ◆ *One who leads a life in harmony with the Catholic faith.*
- ◆ *To be at least 16 years of age.*
- ◆ *To have the intention of performing this role.*
- ◆ *Not be the father or mother of the candidate.*
- ◆ *To be chosen by the candidate, parents or guardian.*

Sponsors are those who will help the Confirmation candidate live his or her baptismal promises. It is the responsibility of the sponsor to:

- Help the candidate understand and appreciate the Sacrament of Confirmation and have the right intention for receiving it.
- Help the candidate prepare for Confirmation by encouraging him or her to pray, to participate in the sacraments – especially Eucharist, and to become actively involved in the life of their parish community.
- Present the candidate for Confirmation and continue to assist the confirmed person in living a Christian life.

## Faith Sharing

The role of the sponsor is much more than simply standing behind a candidate as the bishop confirms. Sponsors are chosen because of their ability to mentor others into the Catholic way of life.

Sponsors are asked to participate in faith-sharing with their candidate. The purpose of this faith-sharing is to promote dialogue between the candidate and his or her sponsor in order to assist parents in leading their children to love and serve God in daily life.

## Prayer and Worship

Discuss the importance of sacred places. Together, you and the candidate write down a place where he or she most feels God's presence. Discuss what circumstances are most conducive to prayer. He or she might mention a quiet, free mind, or objects that remind us of God, such as statues or stained-glass windows, or natural signs such as fire, water, sky, or mountains. Discuss the types of prayer we can use in sacred places and during sacred times: participating in Mass, and other sacraments, private prayer, communal prayer, the rosary, and scripture reading.

## Knowledge of the Faith

Sponsors are those who help the Confirmation candidate live his or her Baptismal promises.

- Do you reject Satan and all his works and all his empty promises?
- Do you believe in God the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth?
- Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary, was crucified, died, and was buried, rose from the dead, and is now seated at the right hand of the Father?

- Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who came upon the apostles at Pentecost and today is given to you sacramentally in confirmation?
- Do you believe in the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting?

Discuss with your candidate what it means to be a witness of your Christian faith.

Talk with your candidate about why you agreed to be his or her sponsor. Discuss the responsibilities of a sponsor and which responsibility you both consider to be the most important.

## **Christian Living**

A sponsor is a person who helps a young person to learn a skill for life. Someone may have taught you to swim or drive a car or how to ride a bike. As a sponsor you will help your candidate learn the skill of living as a follower of Jesus.

- Find one incident in the Gospels that shows Jesus helping others. What do you learn about him in the incident? How can you imitate him in a similar way?
- Talk about the ways you have served. Do you belong to any parish organization or committee?
- Help your candidate find a way he or she can serve others. There is a list in the Candidate Packet.