



Sacred Heart Church

Faith Formation Program

THE ROLE OF THE CONFIRMATION SPONSOR

You have been asked to play a very important role in the life of a young Catholic who is preparing to celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation. Experience has shown that the time of preparing for Confirmation is often the real turning point in the faith life of a young person. Your interaction with your candidate over the weeks and months ahead will contribute in a very vital way to that process of spiritual growth.

You were asked to fill this role because you are the godparent of your candidate, or because of the ties of friendship or family, or because you are viewed by the candidate as a model Catholic. Perhaps all these reasons were involved in the choice. Whichever the case, you are now embarking on a shared faith journey that can enrich both you and your candidate.

The role of the sponsor is more than the honor to stand behind a Confirmation Candidate as the bishop confirms. It is to be the beginning (or the continuation) of a lasting relationship of mentoring and apprenticeship.

The Church sees three roles for Confirmation sponsors:

First, *as a role model in the faith.* Because of this, the Church asks that a sponsor be at least sixteen years of age, have celebrated the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist, and be a practicing member of the Church. He or she does not have to be the same gender as the Confirmation candidate.

Second, *a sponsor is a companion on the candidate's faith journey.* Ideally, this could be one of the candidate's baptismal godparents. This is encouraged by the Church today - to show the close connection of the two sacraments.

And finally, *the Confirmation sponsor witnesses for the candidate before the Church.* By their presence at the Confirmation celebration, the sponsor publicly proclaims the candidate's readiness.

Sponsors are encouraged to become involved with the candidates by:

- Praying for your candidate and yourself.
- Renewing your own appreciation of what it means to be a Christian.
- Growing in your personal relationship with the Holy Spirit.
- Being a living model of faith. Your life doesn't have to become artificially saintly, but your faith should be authentic and sincere.
- Continue to be a source of encouragement and support to the candidate after Confirmation.