

## Why the Sacrament of Confirmation?

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Prior to his ascension into heaven, Jesus told his apostles that he would send them the Holy Spirit to be their advocate and guide, and on the Feast of Pentecost, the promised gift of the Holy Spirit fell on the apostles and the Virgin Mary as they prayed in the Upper Room, empowering them to be witnesses of Jesus in the world. "The Sacrament of Confirmation perfects Baptismal grace; it is the sacrament which gives the Holy Spirit in order to root us more deeply in the divine filiation, incorporate us more firmly into Christ, strengthen our bond with the Church, associate us more closely with her mission, and help us to bear witness to the Christian faith in words accompanied by deeds." (CCC 1316) "Confirmation, like Baptism, imprints a spiritual mark or indelible character on the Christian's soul; for this reason one can receive this sacrament only once in one's life." (CCC 1317)

## What is the role of a Confirmation Sponsor?

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Just as sponsor for baptism takes upon himself/herself the responsibility of helping the newly baptized person mature in the living a Christian life and offers his or her own life and practice of the faith as an example of faith, prayer and service within the Catholic Church, the Sponsor for Confirmation continues that work for the person who is to be confirmed. The Sacrament of Confirmation also creates a strong spiritual bond between the one who is confirmed and the sponsor. The sponsor should be committed to trying to be a part of the confirmand's life by presence and prayer always realizing that a sponsor's prayers for that person are especially efficacious before Almighty God. One's "yes" to be a sponsor for Confirmation is not just a "yes" to the candidate, but also a serious commitment to God in taking on this obligation.

## What are the requirements of the Church for being a Confirmation sponsor?

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1. A sponsor must be someone other than the parent of the one to be confirmed.
2. A sponsor must have received the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Eucharist.
3. A sponsor must be at least 16 years of age and may be male or female regardless of the gender of the candidate.
4. A sponsor must be leading a life in harmony with the faith and the role to be undertaken; therefore, if married, must be married in the Church and if single, must be striving to live a chaste life and therefore cannot be living with a person outside of marriage.
5. A sponsor must be a practicing Catholic, registered in a parish, who regularly attends Mass on Sundays and Holy Days and frequents the sacraments of Holy Eucharist and Confession.

# Sponsor Expectations for St. Mary Parish

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## **Read through the Sponsor Guide**

Please become familiar with this book. You will be using it to have discussion with your candidate throughout this process. The questions you will ask your candidate will be found in here.

## **Set up four meeting times (or more!) to have discussion**

Set up a time for you and your candidate to talk. Ask how classes have been going, what they have learned and if they have any questions. They look to you as a spiritual role model. Don't be shy to share your faith with them! Storytelling and taking time to pray together are also things that the two of you should do.

- Part 1: "The Way" should be completed by the end of February.
- Part 2: "The Truth" should be completed by March 13.
- Part 3: "The Life" should be completed by May 1.
- Part 4 "Mystagogy" should be completed by August 1.

## **Support your candidate during the retreat**

The Letters of Love are a portion of the retreat that is very touching and moving for the teens. These letters are letters of encouragement for the teen(s) you know who are going on the retreat. They are meant to affirm them in their journey towards Confirmation. Please keep this a secret! Aunts, uncles, sisters, brothers and family friends are all great people to ask to write these letters. It allows for family and friends to pray with and for the individual as well as giving the teen encouragement during the retreat. You also may help by chaperoning or providing a need for that weekend. Closer to the date, we will send out reminders and what our needs will be for the weekend.

## **Interview your candidate**

Inside this packet is a copy of the Pre-Confirmation Interview that we ask that you and your candidate complete together. It is to be signed, dated and completed by September 26<sup>th</sup>. You may do them after the retreat until the 26<sup>th</sup>. This is to be returned to the Faith Formation Office with attention to Caitlin Schratz.

**APPLICATION FOR SPONSORS FOR  
CONFIRMATION CANDIDATES  
ST. MARY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION PARISH**

**Full Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address 1:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address 2:** \_\_\_\_\_

**City:** \_\_\_\_\_ **State:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip Code:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Home Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Cell Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**E-mail Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

*A sponsor accompanies any candidate seeking full initiation in the life of Church. Sponsors are persons who have known and assisted the candidates and stand as witnesses to the candidates' moral character, faith, and intention (RCIA 10).*

*Sponsors help the Church discern the Candidate's readiness for initiation by assisting them grow in the Christian life reflected in their:*

- *Conversion in mind and in action*
- *Sufficient acquaintance with Christian teaching*
- *Development of a spirit of faith and charity, and*
- *A deliberate will and an enlightened faith that enables them to have a clear intention to receive the Sacraments of the Church.*

1.) Do you resolve to assist the candidate(s) assigned to you in the above ways by being attentive to their needs in this process of conversion, by attending the gatherings and events that you the sponsor are invited to, by meeting with them outside of the group gatherings to discuss faith or to participate in works of faith, and, above all, *by showing them what it means to live the Catholic faith through your own active participation in the life of the Church?*    Yes     No

2.) Are you fully initiated in the Roman Catholic Church, having received the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist?    Yes     No

3.) If you are married, does the Church recognize your marriage as valid?\*    Yes     No

*\*(Valid marriages are done with the participation of a Catholic priest or deacon in the preparation process and normally they must witness the actual exchange of vows. Depending on the circumstances, the priest or deacon will assist the couple to obtain the necessary permissions for weddings outside of a Catholic Church, or, in a divorce and subsequent marriage, to review the freedom to marry again by having a declaration of invalidity made concerning the earlier marriage(s). Civil marriage ceremonies done without the Church's permission cause the marriage to be invalid for Baptized Catholics.)*

4.) Please describe your love for the Sacraments and the Life of the Church. What role do they have in your life? What role does religious faith play in your life? Do your daily decisions and actions demonstrate a connection between the life you strive to live and the Church's teachings on the Christian life?

5.) Do you strongly object to anything that the Roman Catholic Church believes, teaches, and professes to be true? Please summarize your objection(s).

**Sponsor Applicant Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

#### A Couple Things to Note

*Depending on your responses above, a subsequent one-on-one interview may be sought by those responsible for the formation of the Candidates for Confirmation, usually a priest or deacon, to mutually discern the appropriateness of continuing as a Sponsor.*

*Please understand, those who are not fully initiated (having received the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and who participate continuously in Eucharist), those who hold beliefs that contradict the Catholic faith as taught by the Church, those who have publicly broken communion with the Church because of actions leading to excommunication, invalid marriage, or other publicly known activities or behaviors that contradict the moral life proposed by the Church, may not be considered for ministry as a Sponsor.*