

# Being a Sponsor

Not too long ago, the sponsor for Confirmation was a friend or relative who showed up at the ceremony of Confirmation — and that was about the end of it. Well, the Church has now returned to an ancient practice whereby the sponsor has an active and practical role in the initiation process. A person often wanted to join the Church because of a Christian's personal example. Naturally, that Christian became the interested person's sponsor.

The sponsor walked with the new member, helping him or her understand the way of Christ and the Church. The sponsor served as a model of what it meant to be a person committed to journeying in the way of Christ.

That is where you come in. Today, the Church has reclaimed this ancient way of sponsoring new members. The Church recognizes sponsors as people who are guides, models, friends, companions and witnesses — responsible people the parish entrusts to accompany the candidates on their way towards the sacrament of Confirmation.

A young candidate for initiation from St. Ignatius, Hickory parish has chosen you to be his or her sponsor as he or she approaches Confirmation. Are you ready for it? You probably are, for the role you have been asked to play is not as scary as it sounds. In fact, sponsoring a young person on the way to Confirmation can be an exciting and rewarding adventure for you both.

A sponsor must be a practicing Catholic who has been Confirmed and is at least 16 years old. Parents cannot be sponsors for their own children.

## *Sponsor's Prayer*

Welcoming Lord, stand by me.

Favor me with insight into hearts  
hungry for welcome, with hospitality  
to accept and respect the gifts they  
bear, with the generosity to share my  
gifts, and with faith to share  
the gift that is You.

Fill me with your powerful Spirit,  
that I might lead, guide,  
sponsor, and support.

Speak your Living Word to me and to  
the one I sponsor along Your Way.  
And when I do not know what to say,  
keep me quiet, Lord, and let  
Your Spirit do the talking.

Amen.





## Qualities of a Sponsor

You are not expected to be all-knowing or perfect. However, here are a few qualities that our candidate should be able to expect from you as a sponsor:

### *Hospitality*

A sponsor must be a welcoming person. The sponsor needs to be open to discovering the person and the gifts — sometimes hidden — of his or her candidate. Your personal welcome helps to establish a sense of belonging in your candidate.

### *Prayerfulness*

By being a person of prayer — that is, one who is willing to pray and trying to pray — you will be a person responsive to the needs of your candidate and to the messages of the Holy Spirit.

### *Respectfulness*

As a sponsor, you need to remain open and considerate. You need to value the opinions, ideas, talents, fears, and feelings of your candidate. You also need to show respect by treating all that your candidate shares with you in confidentiality.

### *Generosity*

In the hustle and bustle of today, just being a sponsor takes a certain generosity. You will be called upon to be generous with many precious commodities, such as time, talents, patience, and prayer. Likewise, you cannot be penny-pinching with your feelings; your candidate needs to see and experience what you feel strongly about.

### *Faithfulness*

Faithfulness does not mean perfection. As a sponsor, your faith does not have to be perfect, solid, or totally secure. Rather, it must be steadfast, seeking, open, and growing. The community is made up of journeying people, people who have not yet arrived! It is good to let your candidate see that your faith, like his or hers, is still seeking. That makes it abundantly clear that your faith is alive.



## Responsibilities of a Sponsor

You will be called upon to participate in the following activities:

- ✦ Accompany your candidate at the Rite of Enrollment Mass on **Saturday, January 5th at 5:30PM** in the Parish Church
- ✦ Accompany your candidate to the Sponsor/Candidate Breakfast and Prayer Meeting on **Saturday, March 30th at 10:30AM** in the St. Ignatius Parish Center
- ✦ Meet with your candidate on a monthly basis throughout the entire preparation for Confirmation and the following year, to **provide the candidate with guidance and faith-building**
- ✦ Commit yourself to **daily prayer** for you candidate
- ✦ Be willing to contact **David Sanborn**, Youth Minister at **410 -879-0959** or **david.sanborn@stignatiushickory.org** if you have any questions or concerns
- ✦ **Write a letter to your candidate**, prior to retreat, outlining what you feel are their gifts and talents and pledging your continued prayer and support. **Due by February 1st.**
- ✦ **Attend the rehearsal session** for the Sacrament of Confirmation with your candidate on \_\_\_\_\_ **or** \_\_\_\_\_.  
(date is exactly one week before the assigned Mass date)
- ✦ **Join with St. Ignatius, Hickory and your candidate** in celebrating the Sacrament of Confirmation on either \_\_\_\_\_ **or** \_\_\_\_\_ at 6PM in the Parish Center to meet the Bishop. Confirmation is at 7PM in the Parish Church.  
(date of Mass to be determined by the Bishop)
- ✦ **Continue to support the newly-Confirmed** person as they discover more about the wealth of their faith.

