

## THE SPONSOR

According to Canon Law, the **qualifications for sponsors** are simple:

- The sponsor must be chosen by the one to be confirmed, the parents or in their absence, by the minister.
- The sponsor must be at least 16 years of age.
- The sponsor must be a Catholic who received Confirmation and Eucharist.
- The sponsor must not be bound by any canonical penalty (e.g. he or she may not be divorced and remarried without an annulment.)
- The sponsor may not be the father or mother of the one to be confirmed.

*Canon 874 in the Code of Canon Law*

It further states that a sponsor is “to see that the confirmed person acts as a true witness to Christ and faithfully fulfills the obligations connected with this Sacrament.” The Rite of Confirmation states that the sponsor is to help the candidate “fulfill his/her baptismal promises faithfully under the influence of the Holy Spirit .” Thus the role of sponsor is to be an active one, something similar to a mentor or spiritual director.

### Characteristics of a sponsor

- Should be a practicing Roman Catholic who attends mass regularly and is living according to the teaching of the Catholic Church. They themselves must be fully initiated, having received Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist & should be reasonably informed on church teachings
- Must know the candidate & be willing to serve as a strong and long lasting Christian influence on the candidate. The sponsor must be willing to share their faith in God and accompany the candidate as they search for God in their own lives. They must be willing to address the interests and questions of the candidates. Questions about themselves and their lives, and

- about the Church and its practices. This individual will support the candidate (person to be confirmed) in their commitment to a Christian life. They need to be patient people who are willing to spend time with the candidate.
- May be either male or female for any candidate
- May not be the parents of the candidates
- They must be people who can serve as a mentor as well as be people who are willing to give witness to their faith. They do not have to teach the candidates everything we want them to know.
- **Must submit a verification form from the pastor of the Catholic church they attend.**
- Assist in determining the candidates readiness for the sacrament
- Present the candidate to the Bishop during the Confirmation Liturgy

Preference may be given to the candidates Godparents, which most fully expresses the integral connection between Baptism & Confirmation, but the sponsor does not have to be the Godparent.

A proxy sponsor may sit in for the sponsor on the night of practice, but the sponsor must be present for the Confirmation Liturgy.