



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS REGARDING SPONSORS

WHY DO I NEED A SPONSOR?

Although the responsibility to sponsor a prospective member belongs to the whole church, it is difficult for a large group to minister personally to each catechumen or candidate. That is why sponsors are important. The sponsor acts as the church's personal representative to you and vis-à-vis he or she becomes your personal connection to the parish.

The sponsor "walks" with you on the journey to a new, fuller life with Christ --- serving as your companion who supports and guides you along the way. A good sponsor will offer you understanding when there is doubt, comfort when there is inner conflict, or gently challenge you when your enthusiasm wanes.

In the early Church, the role of the sponsor was to attest to the integrity of the person seeking admission into the Church as well as to assist him in preparing for these sacraments and in living a Christian life. Today, sponsors still play a vital role in helping show what it means to be a Catholic; not by being an authority on religion, but by sharing through their own experiences how God touches us in our daily lives.

WHO CAN BE MY SPONSOR?

You're looking for someone who will be a good spiritual influence on you, whose faith you admire and who will be there for you, to pray and "walk" with you. He or she must be at least 16 years old; a Catholic who has received the sacraments of holy Eucharist and Confirmation, and "leads a life in harmony with the faith and the role to be undertaken." Note that your mother and father cannot serve as your sponsor.

HOW MANY SPONSORS CAN I HAVE?

Strictly speaking, you only need one sponsor for baptism, and or confirmation. But a person seeking baptism may have two sponsors (godparents), one male and one female.

WHAT IS EXPECTED OF SPONSORS?

We expect your sponsor to attend at least one Wednesday evening class with you each month, come to Sunday Mass with you as often as possible, accompany you at the Retreats, and be present at the Rites. More importantly, your sponsor should be able to provide you with spiritual guidance and support throughout your journey. Your sponsor is *not* expected to be a catechist who will know all the answers to your questions about the teachings of the Church.

WHAT IF I CANNOT FIND A RELATIVE OR FRIEND WHO IS WILLING OR ABLE TO BE MY SPONSOR?

The RCIA team can provide you with the opportunity to meet such people from the parish who would be more than willing to be a companion on your spiritual journey.

I HAVE CHOSEN A SPONSOR BUT HE/SHE IS UNABLE TO COME TO THE EVENING CLASSES AND/OR THE RETREATS.

Preferably, your sponsor should have the time and ability to be with you. For this process to be as meaningful as it can be, you need someone to be with you regularly.

In the past, some catechumens/candidates have chosen sponsors who participated only in the special rites and the actual conferral of the sacrament/s while a substitute sponsor (either another friend or relative, or a parish volunteer) accompanied them during the other parts of the journey (e.g. classes, retreats).