

Candidate + Sponsor Session

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION
OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP PARISHES



MARCH 4/8, 2020

Role of a Sponsor

A sponsor has three primary roles: (1) to assist the candidate in preparing for Confirmation, (2) to present the candidate for Confirmation, and (3) to help the confirmed person person to live out his or her Christian faith fully. There are several ways you can help your candidate.

Share your own experiences

Lead him/her closer to Christ by telling your candidate about your own spiritual journey.

Spend time talking and listening

Help your candidate grow in understanding and acceptance of Christ and the teachings of the Church.

Pray for your candidate regularly

Pray that he/she will not only come to know about the Faith, but also will encounter Christ while preparing to receive the sacrament. As a sponsor, commit to lifting your candidate up in prayer every day.

Encourage him or her to grow in virtue

and to set aside any habits that would prevent his or her soul from being fully open and ready to receive all the gifts God wants to give him or her through the Sacrament of Confirmation

What if I am not sure I have what it takes to be a good sponsor?

If you feel spiritually inadequate to be a Confirmation sponsor, consider this as an invitation from God to grow in your own faith. He loves you, after all. If something glaring has been separating you from God, maybe now is the time to bring that to Confession. Your candidate sees something spiritually admirable in you—something in you that inspires him or her in the Catholic Faith. Set aside any self-doubt, and consider that God may be calling you to this role for the sake of examining your own heart as well as guiding your candidate.

Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Wisdom

Knowledge

Counsel

Fortitude

Understanding

Piety

Fear of the Lord

How to Talk With your Candidate

Here are some things to keep in mind as you talk with your candidate:

Avoid presenting yourself as an expert or as someone who never makes mistakes.

Draw from your own life and illustrate a point or emphasize an aspect of faith. Your role is simply to use your own honest experiences to guide him or her.

Listen for the "question behind the questions"

If your candidate asks you a difficult question, seek to discover what he or she is really getting at. Teens often ask a particular question, but there is really a deeper issue they are trying to understand.

Be sure you understand the question before responding

You may want to repeat your candidate's question before answering it, in order to be sure you understand what he/she is asking. As much as possible, talk to your candidate honestly and directly; do not water down the truth. Teenagers appreciate honesty, even if they are not yet fully mature and able to deal with the truth of your answer.

Whenever possible, find a point of affirmation or agreement to build upon.

Avoid conversation-ending statements such as, "That is just how it is" or "You must believe it because that is what the Church teaches." Affirm what is good in your candidate's opinions—even if it is just to praise his/her willingness to grapple with hard questions.

Example: If you are asked about why priests are celibate when we are all called to love, you might say something like, "you are right—everyone has a need for love, not just for those who are married. And yet, Jesus and many of the saints never married—how did they experience love?"

Candidate/Sponsor Questions

Find 5 things that you have in common with your sponsor. Dig deep, look for things beyond the surface.

Sponsors: Share about your experience with Confirmation. How old were you when you got Confirmed? What did your prep look like? Who did you choose as your sponsor? How is your relationship with your sponsor now?

Candidate: Tell your sponsor why you chose them to be your sponsor. What are you hoping they do with you in your faith journey?

Sponsor: How would you describe your personal relationship with Christ? How do you continue to grow in faith?

Candidate: How would you describe your personal relationship with Christ? How has the process of preparing for Confirmation helped or not helped you to grow in faith?

Sponsor + Candidate: How do you see the different Gifts of the Holy Spirit in your own life?

Sponsor: What is your greatest hope for your candidate?

Continuing the Conversation

- What make you happy?
- What was the happiest day of your life?
- What gets in the way of your happiness?
- When have you felt close to God?
- Have you ever felt disconnect, or even abandoned, by God?
- What are some of the questions you have about God?
- How would you describe Jesus to someone who has never heard of him?
- What are some misconceptions you think people have about Jesus?
- What makes the Catholic Church different and unique compared to other churches?
- What are some good reasons to be Catholic?
- Are you planning on choosing a saint name? Who?
- Discuss the Sacrament of Reconciliation with your candidate. THEN go to Confession TOGETHER as your parish. Share about your experience over ice cream or a snack
- Sponsors, talk about your own state in life and how you discerned God was calling you to it.
- Who are some of your role models in life?
- Do you have any fears or apprehensions about vocation discernment?
- St. Teresa of Avila says, "Christ has no body buy yours, no hands, no feet on earth but yours." How can we be Jesus' hands?
- What is a particular type of service to which you feel called?

Continuing the Relationship

- Start praying now! Commit to some small daily act of prayer, service or sacrifice for your candidate. Keep a record and give the journal to your candidate as a keepsake at Confirmation
- Share photos of your Confirmation
- Share your personal testimony. What has Jesus does for your? That faith is most effectively spread by witnesses.
- Go to MASS, RECONCILIATION AND/OR ADORATION together
- Take them out to ice cream or lunch (or call/email) just to chat about faith and life.
- Do a service project together
- Commit to praying a Rosary each week together. In person or remotely.
- Do a donation challenge together. Choose a charitable cause and commit to match the amount of money you candidate donates
- Write a "real" letter to your candidate that expresses how much you appreciate him/her. A handwritten letter can become a lifelong treasure for your candidate to re-read over the years
- Look up the fest day of the candidate's chosen patron Saint. Use this date as an "anniversary" to do something special with your candidate
- Make a prayer journal for your candidate. You can use any notebook and customize it with spiritual quotes and scripture verses that hold significance to you or your candidate.
- Text daily or weekly a Scripture verse for your candidate to reflect upon
- Send brief words of encouragement before a big game or test
- Chat for a few minutes (in person or on the phone) before Sunday mass about the upcoming readings.

Confirmation Liturgy Rehearsal

The Anointing with Chrism

Candidates come forward accompanied by sponsors, as directed by Kelsie and other ushers and stand before the Bishop two at a time.

The Sponsor places his/her right hand on the shoulder of the Candidate.

Candidate: My name is _____ and I wish to be confirmed.

Bishop dips his right thumb in the Chrism and makes sign of cross on forehead of the Candidate.

Bishop: Be sealed with the Gift of the Holy Spirit.

Newly confirmed: Amen.

Bishop: Peace be with you.

Newly confirmed: And with your spirit.

Newly confirmed return to their places and are seated in prayerful silence.

