

Role of the Sponsor

St. Margaret Mary Catholic Community

What does the word “sponsor” mean?

The word “sponsor” comes from the Latin word *spondere*, which means to “give assurance, promise solemnly”. The word “sponsor” also comes from the same root word as the word “responsible.”

By definition “sponsor” means: one who presents a candidate for baptism or confirmation and **undertakes responsibility for** the person’s religious education or spiritual welfare. A sponsor journeys with the young person through the preparation for Confirmation, supporting and nurturing the faith of the young person.

As Church we are all challenged by what we witness in the laying on of hands and in the anointing with chrism – “hence they are, as true witnesses of Christ, more strictly obliged to spread and defend the faith by word and deed.” It may be a godparent or another adult in your child’s life whose life is a witness to Christ and who will marvel at the privilege and opportunity of being a part of your family and your son or daughter’s life by being a sponsor.

Who Can be a Sponsor? (In accord with Canon Law 874)

- A sponsor cannot be a parent of the child to be baptized (confirmed).
- A Sponsor must be at least 16 years old.
- A Sponsor must be fully initiated in the Catholic Church: one who has received the sacraments of Baptism, Eucharist and Confirmation.
- A Sponsor must be in good standing with the Catholic Church:
 - If married, must be married in the Catholic Church and living in accord with Church teaching.
 - *Catholics who were married by a Justice of the Peace, at another Christian church without special permission, and those cohabiting do not meet the requirements of this role.*
 - If single, must be living according to Church teaching.
- A Sponsor must be a practicing Catholic: attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation, and regularly receive the sacraments of Holy Communion and Reconciliation.

Other considerations when selecting a Confirmation sponsor:

- Each Confirmation candidate may only choose ONE sponsor.
- Because the Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation are so closely connected, Church teaching states that it is desirable that the godparent at Baptism also be the sponsor at Confirmation; however, the selection of another adult is also permitted.
- If your sponsor is unable to attend the actual Sacrament of Confirmation, another adult (including a parent), may stand in his/her place as a proxy. The name of your sponsor will still be noted in the official Church record of your confirmation.
- The choice of who should be your sponsor is YOUR decision!

Things to think about before you ask someone to be your sponsor:

- Your sponsor should be willing and able to participate in your formation for Confirmation.
- The person you choose as your sponsor should be someone that you admire and respect and who actively lives out the beliefs of our Catholic faith.
- Your sponsor should be someone that you trust and feel comfortable turning to for help, advice and guidance, especially in regard to your spiritual life.
- Your sponsor should be someone who, through his/her example, shows you what it means to be Catholic and who will **take an active role in your preparation** for Confirmation.
- After you receive the Sacrament of Confirmation your relationship with your sponsor DOES NOT END! You both are called to lead each other closer to God, to continue to grow in knowledge of your faith, and to challenge one another to lead lives of holiness and service.
- PRAY! Spend some time asking God for guidance on who to choose as your sponsor.

*Please contact Emileigh Ledgerwood at eledgerwood@stmm.org with any questions.
St. Margaret Mary | 7813 Shelbyville Rd. | Louisville, KY 40222*