

# Being a Spiritual Guide

## A Handout for Sponsors

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You have been chosen to sponsor one of our candidates for Confirmation in our parish. What an honour! This means that you are regarded as a person of example, a person someone looks up to as a model Christian, someone who can be counted on for support and guidance!

### What is a Sponsor?



Sponsors always ask us: “What do I have to do?” What is a more important question, however, is “Who do you have to be?” Your role is invaluable in the Confirmation candidate’s life. Being a sponsor for someone (either at Baptism or at Confirmation) means living as an example of Jesus’ life and message. It means guiding another person with support and challenge as they make the commitment to live out their Baptismal call as full members of the Church. This is certainly a awesome task, but not beyond anyone’s capacity.

We invite you to find time in your life to develop your companionship with this candidate so that you can deepen the relationship of trust and respect that you already have.

As a sponsor, you do not only act on your own behalf. By your care and example for the candidate, you also symbolize and represent the care and support of the larger Christian community. You represent the Church.

### What does a Sponsor do?

Now, back to the question of “What do you have to do?” The process we use to prepare candidates for Confirmation in this parish entails a series of small group meetings. We invite you to talk to your candidate about their experience of these meetings. Ask them what they talked about, what they learned and how they felt about it.

You are invited not only to the Confirmation but also to the Rite of Enrolment, at which candidates will state their willingness to be confirmed and where the parish will commit to assist them by prayer and example. We understand that some of you will not be able to attend this Rite of Enrolment due to the distance you live from the candidate. If this is the case, it would be a good idea to make your presence felt by a phone call, letter or e-mail.

Your candidate will inform you of the mass Time which they have chosen to celebrate their Confirmation. They will also inform you of any specific instructions regarding the celebration of the sacrament.

Here are some further suggestions about how you can fully live out your role as a sponsor:

- Pray for your candidate. Post their photograph on your refrigerator door (or any other place you see regularly) to help you keep them in your prayers throughout the year they are preparing for Confirmation.
- Arrange for a regular time to be with your candidate. You might go for a walk, have lunch or a milk shake together. Ask how their preparation program is going.
- If you are not a member of the same parish as your candidate, attend Church with them a couple of times before the celebration of Confirmation.
- If you attend the same Church as your candidate, sit together during Mass.
- Attend a celebration of Reconciliation with the candidate, especially during Advent or Lent.
- Share with the candidate your own faith journey. What was “religion” like for you as an adolescent? How did you pray? How do you pray now? What family or cultural religious practices were important to you?
- If you are the candidate’s godparent, talk to them about their Baptism. Pull out any photographs of the day. It is likely that they have never heard (or seen) your version of the day’s events.
- Share a meal with the candidate and their family.
- Attend the Rite of Enrolment for Confirmation on \_\_\_\_\_
- If you live far away from the candidate, write to them or call them regularly during the time they are preparing for Confirmation.

And most important of all ...

- Try to attempt in every way to embody the Spirit of Jesus in your daily life.