

Dear Sponsor,

Congratulations on being asked to be a Confirmation sponsor! These notes are designed to help you decide whether to take on this responsibility.

What does the Church ask of sponsors?

- At the Confirmation Mass, you will stand with the young person at the moment of Confirmation, supporting him or her with your prayer and your faith.
- After the Confirmation, you will continue to be a good example of what it means to be a confirmed Christian, carrying out the mission Jesus has given you to bear witness to him in the world by what you say and do, and by the way you live.
- You will encourage the newly-confirmed to be a faithful witness to Christ, giving support by your prayer, your own example and your weekly participation at Mass.

Who can be a sponsor?

Sponsors cannot do this unless they are going to be in regular contact with the young people, sharing their lives and be there for them at important and difficult times. Will you be able to give ongoing support and encouragement if you live far away? It may be possible given new technology!

Because sponsors represent the Catholic Church, to be a sponsor you must be a confirmed and active member of the Catholic Church. Taking part at Mass on Sundays is a vital part of being such a Catholic. Except in special circumstances, a sponsor should be at least 16. Because Baptism and Confirmation are so closely linked, it is good for the sponsor to be one of a person's godparents, but only if they fulfil all the other requirements above. Parents cannot be sponsors but they can present their children for Confirmation in the absence of a sponsor.

If this all sounds daunting please don't worry! It's not really complicated, **but it does take time**, a caring attitude and a listening ear. Here are a few suggestions on how to be the best possible sponsor for your candidate:

- **Just try to live your faith.** You don't have to be a saint, but your faith should be sincere and provide a model for your young person.
- **Pray for your candidate and yourself.** As candidates decide to be confirmed, they need spiritual strength. Your prayers for them are important, but don't forget to pray for yourself also, that you can share why you value and practice your Catholic faith.
- **Give of your time and share your gifts.** You'll be asked to spend time together with your candidate at least twice during the programme of preparation. If you do not live locally it is still possible to do this by using Skype for example. I will supply you with some suggestions that follow on from the work we will be doing in the candidates group. Candidates will be introduced to silent prayer and you might agree to pray regularly at the same time even though you may not be able to meet face to face.

Thank you very much for your support.