

# Choosing Your Sponsor



## What does the word “sponsor” mean?

The word “sponsor” comes from the Latin *spondere*, which means to “give assurance, promise solemnly.” By definition “sponsor” means:

- 1: one who presents a candidate for baptism or confirmation and undertakes responsibility for the person's religious education or spiritual welfare
- 2: one who assumes responsibility for some other person or thing

The word “sponsor” also comes from the same root word as the word “responsible.”

From the earliest days of the Church, those seeking communion with the Church were supported by specific people chosen from the community. At your Baptism those significant people were your parents and godparents (your baptismal sponsors) who promised that you would be raised in the faith. They professed their faith because you could not speak for yourself. Your parents accepted the responsibility of training you in the practice of the faith. Your godparents promised to help your parents. In Confirmation you will speak for yourself; you will renew your baptismal promises. You will be supported by a sponsor who will stand with you and present you to the Bishop for Confirmation.

## Basic Church requirements to be considered as a sponsor:

To be qualified to be chosen as a Confirmation sponsor an individual must:

- 1) Be at least sixteen years old (by date of Confirmation).
- 2) Have been initiated in the Catholic Church through the three sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist and be in good standing with the Church.
- 3) Display a visible commitment to living out the Catholic faith and have the ability and intention to carry out his/her responsibility as a spiritual guide in your life.
- 4) If married, the sponsor's marriage must be canonically valid and recognized as such by the Catholic Church or married in the Catholic Church.

## Other considerations when selecting a Confirmation sponsor:

- A sponsor **CANNOT** be a parent of the one to be confirmed.
- Each Confirmation candidate may choose only **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 a special sponsor is also permitted.
- **Your sponsor should attend the Candidate/Sponsor Day of Reflection (Parent may sub if needed.)**
- If your sponsor is unable to attend the actual Sacrament of Confirmation, another adult 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*. They should nurture a close personal and spiritual relationship with the Candidate during the Confirmation preparation and throughout their lifetime.
- ◆ 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. The Sponsor should listen to and share in the Candidate's maturing struggles and triumphs in living a Christian life.
- ◆ Your sponsor should be someone who, through his/her example, shows you what it means to be a committed practicing 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.

(OVER)

# Choosing a Confirmation Name

*“I will give them an everlasting name.” ~ Isaiah 56*

Keep in mind: You don't pick the saint; the saint picks you. But you still need to prepare.

## What's in a name?

When you were born, your parents chose your name. They may have chosen your name in honor of a special person in their lives: a grandparent, aunt or uncle, or close friend. They may have chosen your name for the meaning behind it. Perhaps they chose your name because they felt a close connection to a holy man or woman of our faith - one of the saints. Maybe they just really liked your name! Most likely, it was a combination of many factors. (If you do not know why your parents chose the name they did for you, why not ask them about it?)

Your name gives you an identity; it tells others who you are. Throughout our lives, we will identify ourselves with many names - the name of the mascot of our high school or college; the name of the region of the country we live in; the title of the career we choose.

However, there is a name above all names that, through our Baptism, we should strive to be known to the world by - and that name is Catholic Christian. At your Baptism, you were called by name, and christened to become a child of God. You entered into the Catholic community by name.

## Now it is your turn!

As part of your preparation to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation, you have the privilege and responsibility, just like your parents did when you were born, to choose a name.

- ✦ **Your Confirmation name should reflect your closer identification as a member of the Catholic Christian community.**
- ✦ The name you select can be associated with someone in your life, your parish, or your community whom you respect and admire. Some Confirmation candidates select a name from a parent or grandparent, honoring them for their example of love and holiness.
- ✦ **Your Confirmation name should be the name of a saint.**
- ✦ **You can choose your baptismal name (Church recommends) or you can choose a new name.**
- ✦ **PRAY!** Just as you should pray about any decision you have to make, ask the Holy Spirit to guide you as you choose a saint as your patron.
- ✦ In the course of making your decision you should read material on the lives of various saints. Keep a list from your studies of saints you like and feel an affinity for. You can also pick saints from regions that your ancestors are from. Add to that list the names of people in your family who are particularly close to you or names that have some personal meaning to you. Then check and see if that name has a saint associated with it. There is no St. Katrina but there were plenty of Katherines for one to choose from. Once you've made your list of saints ask each one to pray for you as you make this decision. You may find the list shorten or grow as you go through the process. That's OK. Take your list to adoration and make an effort to pray about it daily.

## Where should I begin to choose a Confirmation name?

There are a variety of books and websites depicting the lives of the saints and that is a great place to start! Some of these books and sites tell the life story of one saint in particular, and others give info about the lives of numerous saints, so you can read about many holy men and women all in one place. Dennis has sent a list of websites.

(OVER)