

A tall, weathered wooden signpost stands against a soft, hazy sunset sky. The signpost has several rectangular directional signs attached to it, some pointing in different directions. The signs are blank, with some showing red and white diagonal stripes. The overall mood is contemplative and hopeful.

CONFIRMATION

CANDIDATE & SPONSOR GUIDE

WELCOME

Thank you for saying "yes" to being a Confirmation Sponsor for one of our students at Pax Christi. You were likely chosen by this particular young person because he or she views you as a role model in the faith. So now what? Whether you have been a sponsor before or are new to this, we are sure you have some questions. This guide will walk you through the expectations we have of Confirmation Sponsors at Pax Christi. Use it as a guide. If you have further ideas about how you'd like to walk with this individual who asked you feel free to explore those as well. If you have any questions please don't hesitate to reach out to our formation staff.

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LET US KNOW YOU ARE A SPONSOR

Confirmation Candidates are supposed to submit their sponsor's name and contact information so we can make sure you stay in the loop on important details, especially related to the Confirmation Liturgy/Ceremony. Please make sure your Candidate has submitted your information. If you don't receive an email from Pax Christi welcoming you as a Sponsor by January 15th of your candidate's second year (usually 10th grade year) you probably aren't on our list yet.

ROLE & QUALIFICATIONS

THREE FOUNDATIONAL SPONSOR ROLES

1. To assist the candidate in preparing for Confirmation
2. To present the candidate for Confirmation
3. To be a witness of and support in the candidate's spiritual journey through life

PRACTICAL WAYS TO FULFILL YOUR ROLE

Share Your Story

Be vulnerable enough with your candidate to share with him or her how God has been active in your life. Tell them about your prayer life, how you continue to grow in knowledge of the faith, what role the Sacraments play in your life, the ways in which you serve the Body of Christ through your vocation, etc...

Pray for Your Candidate

Pray for your candidate to be open to receiving the gifts of the Holy Spirit while he or she is preparing to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. Ask your candidate on a regular basis if he or she has any intentions you can pray for. Pray with your candidate often, teach them how to pray.

Encourage Virtue

High school is a battlefield. Peer pressure and social norms make it difficult to lead virtuous lives and to strive for holiness. Your encouragement in striving to be a saint and supporting good habits will bear much fruit.

Talk & Listen

Young people want real and authentic relationships more than they might seem. Engage them in conversation even if they don't respond the way you hope the first few times. Do something fun with them to break the ice, work and serve with them side-by-side, invite them into your life... They will open up once they know you love and care about them.

SPONSOR REQUIREMENTS

Canon Law provides some requirements of sponsors (Code of Canon Law 874):

- Age - a sponsor must be at least 16 years of age
- Confirmed - a sponsor must have already been Confirmed
- Catholic - a sponsor must be a practicing member of a Catholic parish who leads a life of faith "in keeping with the function to be taken on"
- Non-parent - a sponsor cannot be a parent of the individual seeking Confirmation

CANDIDATE-SPONSOR CHECKLIST



Responsibilities & Tasks for Candidates & Sponsors

- [] Ensure sponsor meets the requirements outlined in Canon Law (see page 3)
- [] Submit sponsor name and contact info at paxchristchurch.org/confirmation
- [] Meet for Candidate-Sponsor Conversation I - Identity by May 1st, Year I
- [] Meet for Candidate-Sponsor Conversation II - Relationship by May 1st, Year I
- [] Meet for Candidate-Sponsor Conversation II - Mission by April 1st, Year II
- [] Complete your Candidate-Sponsor Service Project by April 1st, Year II
- [] *Attend the Confirmation Liturgy/Ceremony Practice
- [] **Attend the Confirmation Liturgy/Ceremony

**Date will be communicated as soon as we know the Confirmation Liturgy Date, your sponsor cannot attend a parent may stand in his or her place.*

***Date will be communicated as soon as we are assigned a date from the Diocese.*

CANDIDATE-SPONSOR CONVERSATIONS & SERVICE PROJECT

Pax Christi invites all sponsors to meet with their candidates at least four times before they are Confirmed. While it is ideal to meet in person, we realize this is not always possible. Pax provides three different conversations sponsors ought to have with their candidate as well as some guidance for a Candidate-Sponsor Service Project.

WAYS TO MEET

- Virtual Meetings - one benefit of today's technology is the ability to meet virtually through Zoom, FaceTime, etc...
- Over the Phone - teens today converse very little over the phone (besides texting or apps), this could be a great way to encourage a different form of communication with your candidate
- In-person - a great time to meet in person with your candidate is when you will already be in the same town for a family function, or throughout the summer when teenagers and families tend to have more time free time.

CONVERSATIONS & SERVICE PROJECT DETAILS
FOUND ON THE NEXT FEW PAGES -->



CANDIDATE-SPONSOR

CONVERSATION I - RELATIONSHIP



Your candidate's initial formation will focus on discovering where he or she is at in a relationship with Jesus Christ. This first meeting will attempt to allow your candidate the opportunity to share about:

1. How he or she views God's role in his or her life
2. His or her personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

You (his or her sponsor) will also share about how you decided to follow Jesus.

"THE NEXT DAY JOHN WAS THERE AGAIN WITH TWO OF HIS DISCIPLES, AND AS HE WATCHED JESUS WALK BY, HE SAID, "BEHOLD, THE LAMB OF GOD." THE TWO DISCIPLES HEARD WHAT HE SAID AND FOLLOWED JESUS. JESUS TURNED AND SAW THEM FOLLOWING HIM AND SAID TO THEM, "WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR?" THEY SAID TO HIM, "RABBI" (WHICH TRANSLATED MEANS TEACHER), "WHERE ARE YOU STAYING?" HE SAID TO THEM, "COME, AND YOU WILL SEE." SO THEY WENT AND SAW WHERE HE WAS STAYING, AND THEY STAYED WITH HIM THAT DAY. IT WAS ABOUT FOUR IN THE AFTERNOON."

-JOHN 1:35-40

QUESTIONS FOR CONVERSATION I

1. How have you seen God at work in your life?
2. What is your view of God?
3. Read John 1:35-40 together. Ask your candidate "what are looking for" in life. How did the disciples respond when they were asked this question?
4. Close with prayer. Ask your candidate for any intentions he or she might have.

CANDIDATE-SPONSOR

CONVERSATION II - IDENTITY



An encounter with God leaves us desiring to know him more intimately. This second conversation will focus on what your candidate has learned so far in her time of preparation, what questions she might have, and how the Catholic faith applies to her daily life. You (her sponsor) will share your own personal story about how the faith applies to your life.

SO STAND FAST WITH YOUR LOINS GIRDED IN TRUTH, CLOTHED WITH RIGHTEOUSNESS AS A BREASTPLATE, AND YOUR FEET SHOD IN READINESS FOR THE GOSPEL OF PEACE. IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES, HOLD FAITH AS A SHIELD, TO QUENCH ALL [THE] FLAMING ARROWS OF THE EVIL ONE. AND TAKE THE HELMET OF SALVATION AND THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT, WHICH IS THE WORD OF GOD.

WITH ALL PRAYER AND SUPPLICATION, PRAY AT EVERY OPPORTUNITY IN THE SPIRIT. TO THAT END, BE WATCHFUL WITH ALL PERSEVERANCE AND SUPPLICATION FOR ALL THE HOLY ONE AND ALSO FOR ME, THAT SPEECH MAY BE GIVEN ME TO OPEN MY MOUTH, TO MAKE KNOWN WITH BOLDNESS THE MYSTERY OF THE GOSPEL FOR WHICH I AM AN AMBASSADOR IN CHAINS, SO THAT I MAY HAVE THE COURAGE TO SPEAK AS I MUST.

-EPHESIANS 6:14-20

QUESTIONS FOR CONVERSATION II

1. What have you learned recently about Catholicism? How has that affected you? How has it influenced your world view?
2. Have weekly discussions with your small group influenced you? Has anything changed in you since you first began preparing for Confirmation?
3. What questions have come up in your heart during this preparation process?
4. How could we find answers to those questions together?
5. Read Ephesians 6:14-20. What stands out in these verses? How can you and I live this out?
6. Invite your candidate to lead a closing prayer.

CANDIDATE-SPONSOR

CONVERSATION III - MISSION



Every person God creates has a unique and unrepeatable purpose and mission. God has a plan for you and has created you with the capacity to find real joy and peace by living for Him. This world would be incomplete without you or your candidate. This third conversation highlights your candidate's unique gifts and talents as well as the desires of his heart.

NOW IN REGARD TO SPIRITUAL GIFTS, BROTHERS, I DO NOT WANT YOU TO BE UNAWARE. YOU KNOW HOW, WHEN YOU WERE PAGANS, YOU WERE CONSTANTLY ATTRACTED AND LED AWAY TO MUTE IDOLS. THEREFORE, I TELL YOU THAT NOBODY SPEAKING BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD SAYS, "JESUS BE ACCURSED." AND NO ONE CAN SAY, "JESUS IS LORD," EXCEPT BY THE HOLY SPIRIT.

THERE ARE DIFFERENT KINDS OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS BUT THE SAME SPIRIT; THERE ARE DIFFERENT FORMS OF SERVICE BUT THE SAME LORD; THERE ARE DIFFERENT WORKINGS BUT THE SAME GOD WHO PRODUCES ALL OF THEM IN EVERYONE. TO EACH INDIVIDUAL THE MANIFESTATION OF THE SPIRIT IS GIVEN FOR SOME BENEFIT. TO ONE IS GIVEN THROUGH THE SPIRIT THE EXPRESSION OF WISDOM; TO ANOTHER THE EXPRESSION OF KNOWLEDGE ACCORDING TO THE SAME SPIRIT; TO ANOTHER FAITH BY THE SAME SPIRIT; TO ANOTHER GIFTS OF HEALING BY THE ONE SPIRIT; TO ANOTHER MIGHTY DEEDS; TO ANOTHER PROPHECY; TO ANOTHER DISCERNMENT OF SPIRITS; TO ANOTHER VARIETIES OF TONGUES; TO ANOTHER INTERPRETATION OF TONGUES. BUT ONE AND THE SAME SPIRIT PRODUCES ALL OF THESE, DISTRIBUTING THEM INDIVIDUALLY TO EACH PERSON AS HE WISHES.

-1 CORINTHIANS 12:1-11

QUESTIONS FOR CONVERSATION III

1. What are you passionate about in life? How might God be calling you to use your gifts?
2. Have you thought about a saint for Confirmation? If so, talk about why you chose that saint. If not, spend some time looking up possible Saints together.
3. Read and discuss Romans chapter 12 together. What stuck out to you in this chapter?
4. Read and discuss 1 Corinthians 12:1-11. Ask your candidate which Gifts of the Spirit he would most like to receive.
5. Close in prayer together.

CANDIDATE-SPONSOR SERVICE PROJECT

Serving together is a great way to grow in your relationship with Jesus Christ and to further discover the plans he has for you. If you aren't able to serve with your sponsor, we would still like you to discuss and reflect on the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy.

CORPORAL WORKS OF MERCY

MATTHEW 25:31-46

- Feed the hungry
- Give drink to the thirsty
- Clothe the naked
- Shelter the homeless
- Visit the imprisoned
- Visit the sick
- Bury the dead

Read through Matthew 25:31-46

What is Jesus saying in these verses about the importance of helping others and how does it affect our salvation?

Review the Corporal Works of Mercy. How can you and your sponsor seek to fulfill one of these works of mercy? Which ones might be difficult for you, why do you think so?

SPIRITUAL WORKS OF MERCY

MATTHEW 22:37-40

- Admonish the sinner (encourage someone to lead a better life)
- Instruct the uninformed
- Counsel the doubtful
- Comfort the sorrowful
- Be patient
- Forgive offenses
- Pray for the living and the dead

Review the Spiritual Works of Mercy, which are inspired by Matthew 22:37-40 as well as St. Thomas Aquinas' *Summa Theologica*.

How might you and your sponsor seek to fulfill one or more of these Spiritual Works?

Which ones do you think might be difficult for you, why?

PUT THE GOSPEL INTO ACTION

After discussing and reflecting, plan a service project with your sponsor that is connected in some way to one or more of the Works of Mercy.

BEYOND SACRAMENTAL PREP

One of your most important roles as a sponsor extends well beyond preparing your candidate to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. The role of being a model in the faith and of providing spiritual support is a lifelong commitment. We want you to be successful in this role. Here are some ideas for on-going guidance and growth.

WEEKLY TEXT

This one is simple and easy. Text your candidate/confirmand once a week. Ask how you can pray for them. Let them know how they can pray for you.

MONTHLY CHECK-IN (IN PERSON OR PHONE/VIDEO CALL)

Take some time to talk with one another on a monthly basis. During the conversation ask questions like: have you been going to Mass? When is the last time you received the Sacrament of Penance & Reconciliation? What does your prayer routine look like right now? What's stressing you out at school/home/with friends? What good things are happening? What are some ways you have been aware of God's presence lately? How have you served somebody else recently?

QUARTERLY FREE DAY

Every three months or so plan to do something fun together. You could go out to eat, spend time playing a game at a coffee house, go to a sporting event, take in a show/movie, go for a walk, ski together, binge watch your favorite TV series, serve in the parish/community. This can even take place of your monthly check-in (or better yet you can do that monthly check-in while doing something fun).

TWICE A YEAR CELEBRATION

If you don't already regularly attend Mass together, make it a point to go to Mass together twice a year, we suggest around your candidate's birthday and around the anniversary of his or her Confirmation date. Go out for brunch or dinner afterwards to celebrate how the Holy Spirit has been working in your lives.

YEARLY RETREAT

Encourage your candidate to go on a yearly retreat/religious trip and do so yourself as well, maybe you can even go together! Debrief with each other afterwards either way. Talk about how the Holy Spirit moved and acted.

BONUS - DISCIPLE YOUR CANDIDATE MORE FORMALLY

Pax Christi has a formal and intentional discipleship process for adult mentors (or guides) and teen's seeking to grow as disciples. If you would like more information about this process, resources, and ideas (all of which will help you with much of what is above) please reach out. We would love to provide you with some training and resources to get you started.

YOUTH MINISTRY AT PAX CHRISTI

We have a lot to offer your candidate here in Youth Ministry at Pax Christi. It wouldn't hurt for you to become familiar with what's going on here from time to time. Encourage your candidate to get involved, the more they are plugged into the community of their parish the more support and encouragement he or she will find as they seek to grow in relationship with God.

"LIFE WITH CHRIST IS A WONDERFUL ADVENTURE."

-POPE SAINT JOHN PAUL II



STOPPING POINTS ALONG YOUR JOURNEY

Our activities, events, small groups, camps, retreats, and trips serve as waypoints, "stopping points along the journey," in the lives of our teens. Waypoints offers opportunities for community, support, and reflection with the goal of inviting teens to commit to life as a disciple of Jesus Christ.

WE ALSO OFFER A FEW TOOLS TO ASSIST TEENS ALONG THEIR DISCIPLESHIP JOURNEY

DISCIPLINES

A list of foundational habits which we have identified as being instrumental in developing and growing as a disciple throughout life.

ROAD MAP

An evaluation and goal setting tool our teens use to be intentional about developing and growing in their relationship with Jesus Christ and his Church.

DISCIPLESHIP GUIDES

One-on-one mentoring is a game changer in developing and growing as a disciple of Jesus Christ. Our Guides walk with teens along their journey.

BASE CAMP

A central location where our teens, families, and adults will find resources which have been tried and tested over time and proven to assist in developing and growing disciples of Jesus Christ.

LEARN MORE AT [PAXCHRISTICHURCH.ORG/YOUTHMINISTRY](https://paxchristichurch.org/youthministry)

WE ARE HERE TO ASSIST

Thank you again for saying yes and being willing to guide your candidate as they prepare for the Sacrament of Confirmation and beyond.

If you have any questions or concerns after reading through this or at any time during and after the Confirmation preparation process please don't hesitate to reach out. Our staff is here to serve you and assist in making you the best Confirmation Sponsor you can be.

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