

Confirmation Sponsor Eligibility Duties & Responsibilities

The sponsor for a Confirmation candidate provides spiritual help to the candidate (CCC 1311). He or she should be willing to serve as a strong and lasting Catholic influence on the candidate. The sponsor acts as a spiritual parent and mentor. Therefore, it is both a great blessing and a responsibility to commit to the role of a sponsor.

A candidate chooses one sponsor, either a man or a woman in a life-long commitment assisting perseverance in the Faith. “The sponsor is to take care that the confirmed person behaves as a true witness of Christ and faithfully fulfills the obligations inherent in this sacrament.” (Code of Canon Law, 892). It is desirable that the sponsor would be one of the person’s Baptismal godparents, but not required (893, §2).

When advising a sponsor to obtain a “Sponsor Certificate of Eligibility” signed by the pastor, the sponsor must practice his faith and should be a registered member of a Catholic parish.

Basic eligibility

A sponsor must meet the following criteria (Canon 874):

- Must be 16 years old or older
- Must have received the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Eucharist
- **Must not be a parent of the one to be confirmed**

Eligibility based on the practice of the Faith

The sponsor must lead “a life of faith in keeping with the function to be taken on” (Canon 874, §1, 1). Hence, the following persons are **not eligible** to act as a sponsor:

- Persons married outside the Catholic Church.
- Persons who routinely miss Sunday Mass and Holydays of Obligation and/or consider Sunday Mass and Holydays of Obligation optional.
- Persons cohabiting without the benefit and grace of Catholic marriage
- Persons who neglect the religious education of their children
- Individuals who neglect to fulfill their “Easter Duty” that is, Communion at least once a year during the Easter season and Confession once a year, if in the state of mortal sin.
- Those who give public scandal in any way.

Confirmation Proxies

If the sponsor cannot attend the Confirmation liturgy in person, he may designate a proxy to stand in for him. The proxy must also fulfill the qualifications described above. **A parent may not be a sponsor**, though they may act as the proxy. The Confirmation candidate must notify the Religious Education Office in advance.