

St. Charles Borromeo Religious Education

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Fort Wayne, IN 46815

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February 2019

Dear Confirmation Sponsor:

My name is Amy Johns and I am the Co-Director of Religious Education at St. Charles Borromeo Parish along with Lisa Schleinkofer. We are very excited to begin this journey of growing deeper in our Faith with our students this year while preparing them for the sacrament of Confirmation. I taught Junior High religion for 4 years, so I know how excited and serious this sacrament truly is for our young men and ladies. Each year, I am reminded just how rich and wonderful my Faith is to me and the important role it plays in my life. It is rewarding to watch the students grow and receive this final Sacrament of Initiation.

The students chose you as their sponsor for a multitude of reasons, the most important being you are a good Catholic role model who actively lives his/her Faith in his/her daily life. By accepting this role as a Confirmation sponsor, you are testifying that you are an active Catholic in good standing with the Church. That means that you meet the following requirements of a sponsor:

- You are a Confirmed Catholic over the age of 16, by the date of Confirmation
- You attend and participate in Sunday Mass regularly
- You receive Reconciliation at least one time a year
- You have a marital status that is in keeping with the Catholic teaching
- You uphold the moral teachings and authority of the Church

Please be sure to fill out the Confirmation Sponsor Certificate. This ensures that you do meet the Church's guidelines for being a sponsor. If you are a member of St. Charles Borromeo Parish, you need only fill in the top portion, above the stars. We will have Fr. Tom verify the bottom portion for you. If you are a member of another Catholic Church, you will need to have the form completed in its entirety including being signed and sealed at your home parish. This form needs to be returned to us no later than **March 25, 2019**. Please return it to us via mail at the address shown above, by email, or by fax to 260-482-2006. Please put it to the attention of Amy Johns. **ALL sponsors are required to fill out this certificate, even if you have been a sponsor in the past.**

Whew! That is a lot, but obviously you must be a great role model in the eyes of those preparing for this special sacrament. Your role in the life of the candidate is important---you are to be his/her Christ-like example. To better understand this role, I have enclosed part of an article written for "Catholic Update" on the role of a sponsor in the preparation for Confirmation. Feel free to look over it and gain further insight. I have also included some "Tips for Confirmation Sponsors". When I have been a sponsor in the past, these were some helpful suggestions that opened the door for me to talk to my candidates about their Faith life. Please review them and use them through this coming year.

As a sponsor, you should be willing to:

1. Help the candidate live out his/her baptismal promises
2. Share your Faith life with the candidate and spend time together regularly
3. Pray and challenge the candidate to live a Christian life
4. Be active in their life and be available to them

On Confirmation day, you will stand behind your candidate and confidently present him/her to the bishop as a person ready to be sealed with the Gifts of the Holy Spirit. Through the many activities, the students will be

confident and knowledgeable in their decision to be Confirmed. Each candidate is required to take part and complete the following activities/commitments in order to be prepared for Confirmation:

- *Service Project with a minimum of 15 hours of service
- *Saint Project
- *Participation in a retreat
- *Completion of the necessary course-work (catechesis)
- *Write a letter requesting the sacrament and be interviewed by a member of the parish staff

This may sound like a lot, but the students experience a deepening of their Faith during the learning process. The “seed” was already planted at Baptism; it is just growing deeper as they become strengthened with the Gifts of the Holy Spirit. This presents a great time to grow with your candidate and participate in these projects with him/her. Do their service project with them if it is feasible. Ask them about the saint he/she has chosen and why. Look at the Confirmation text and discuss some of the ideas presented in it. Be active and involved in his/her life!

I did want to share some important dates with you as well. I know for some it may be difficult to make it, due to various circumstances, but I do hope that you will be able to make it to as much as possible. Please mark your calendars and remember the dates. The items UNDERLINED are the ones you should be present at if at all possible, but the rest of the dates are important to your candidate. (Each candidate and his/her family have this same timeline.)

Confirmation Timeline 2019

February 2019-September 2019

Work on the 15 hours of service—Keep your log!

Monday, March 25, 2019

Confirmation Sponsor Certificate Due—Responsibility of the sponsor to get completed by his/her parish priest, unless you are a St. Charles parishioner.

August/September 2019

Work on Saint Project (Paced in class by the teacher in a step-by-step process. Outlines and information will be sent home as the project begins.)

Monday, September 16, 2019

SERVICE HOURS DUE TO TEACHER!

Saturday, September 21, 2019

Confirmation Retreat at St. Charles for Candidates only. 12:00pm-6:00pm. Ending with 5:00pm Mass in Church with the Rite of Enrollment.

OR

*Diocesan Confirmation Rally @ St. Joseph HS, South Bend from 9:00-3:30. **Not required, but let the RE office know if you're interested in attending. An adult chaperone must attend with the candidates. There is a cost for this retreat.*

***A retreat experience is required of all candidates wishing to be Confirmed!*

October 2019

Saint Project Presentations—Date of class presentation is set by the teacher.

Monday, October 7, 2019

Sacrament Request Letter Information and pre-write done in class

Monday, October 14, 2019

Sacrament Request Letter Due in Class

Week of October 21, 2019

Interviews by Parish Staff of Candidates (during RE Class time or during the school day for SCB students)

Sunday, November 3, 2019

Confirmation Practice at 6:15pm (after the 5pm Sunday Mass) meet in School Cafeteria then over to Church. Enter at Door 9/10. Park in Church Lot. Practice will last about 1 hour.

Monday, November 4, 2019

Confirmation Mass in Church at 7pm with reception to follow in cafeteria. There is no RE class this night, it has been cancelled.

Again, feel free to contact me at any time with questions regarding Confirmation or your candidate (260-484-7322 or by e-mail). We also can be found on the web at <http://stcharlesfortwayne.org/> under "Faith Formation" and then click on the "Children's Religious Education" tab. Scroll down the page to the "Sacrament Information" line. It will send you to the information. You can view the packet that each candidate received in January outlining the sacrament components in more detail.

We have a parish library full of helpful resources and adult learning books, if you are interested. The library is open Tuesdays through Thursdays during school hours 9:00am-12:00pm and on Monday evenings 4:00-8:00pm. I truly look forward to this working with you and your candidate. It is wonderful to watch the students grow in their Faith as they begin their preparation for this very special sacrament!

God's blessings,
Amy Johns & Lisa Schleinkofer
Directors of Religious Education
St. Charles Borromeo Parish

St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Church

Religious Education Office
Attn: Amy Johns or Lisa Schleinkofer (Directors of Religious Education)
4910 Trier Road
Fort Wayne, IN 46815

Phone: 260-484-7322
Fax: 260-482-2006
Email: scbreligiouseducation@gmail.com

Please complete and sign this form.

****If you are not** a registered member of St. Charles Borromeo Church, take this form to your parish to have it signed and sealed at the bottom by your parish priest by **March 25, 2019**.

****If you are** a registered member of St. Charles Borromeo Church, please fill out the top portion above the starred line and return it to the Religious Education office. Please return the completed form by mail, scanned to an email, or fax to the numbers listed above by **March 25, 2019**.

Confirmation Sponsor Certificate

I, _____, am a registered member of the Roman Catholic parish of _____
(Print your name as it is to appear on your Sponsor Certificate)

(Name of Church)

(City)

(State)

have been asked to be a sponsor for _____
(Candidate's Name)

as he/she receives the Sacrament of Confirmation in the Fall of 2019.

As a sponsor, I am accepting the responsibility to be a visible representative of the Catholic Community, the Body of Christ. I will assist the parents in raising this child in the Spirit and teaching of the Roman Catholic Church. I intend to encourage this child in the practice of our Catholic Faith by being a role model in the Catholic way of living through my love, example, support, and prayers. Please check all that apply:

___ I am at least 16 years of age.

___ I am a Catholic who has received the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist.

___ I regularly participate in the celebration of Mass every Sunday and on Holy Days of Obligation.

___ If married, I was married in the Catholic Church. _____
(Name of Church) (City, State)

I attest that the information provided above is accurate: _____
(Signature of Sponsor)

(Street Address)

(City)

(State)

(Zip)

(Phone Number with Area Code)

I certify that, to the best of my knowledge, this person is capable of assuming the duties and responsibilities of the role of a sponsor for the Sacrament of Confirmation. (Needs to be completed for non-St. Charles members only.)

(Signature of Priest/Deacon of Sponsor's Home Parish) (Date)

Church Seal

Tips for Confirmation Sponsors

1. **PARTICIPATE IN ACTIVITIES:** Take your candidate out to a movie, go out to dinner or ice-cream, go on a walk, bike and talk about Confirmation. Spend time together!
2. **ESTABLISH TIME TOGETHER:** Come up with a regular time to listen and be with your candidate. Share your Faith life with him/her. Let your friendship grow! If you can't meet face-to-face, pick up the phone and call!
3. **KEEP A JOURNAL:** Encourage your candidate to journal about their learning and reflect upon what is going on in the world and in their life. Share the journal together when you meet.
4. **HAVE A DISCUSSION:** The candidates will be learning a lot in their Confirmation studies and about his/her saint....use this to enter into a deep discussion with him/her. Discuss differing viewpoints and probe into the Catholic beliefs.
5. **SPIRITUAL READING:** There are a lot of great books, magazines, and materials to share. Consider purchasing one for your candidate.
6. **VOCATIONAL FIELDS:** Expose your candidate to various professions with personal acquaintances you may know. This will help them explore possible vocations (religious, priesthood, single life, or married life) and their professions. How do they live their Faith?
7. **SHARE MOMENTS IN YOUR LIFE:** Share big moments in your life, especially regarding your Faith. Ask open-ended questions that allow your candidate to open up.
8. **PARTICIPATE IN SERVICE:** Each candidate is required to complete 15 hours of service, this serves as great time to share time together and be an active part in a large component of the Confirmation requirements.
9. **ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION IN THE PARISH:** Encourage your candidate to take a more active role in the parish. Maybe they can help in a ministry?
10. **PRAY:** Discuss the different forms of prayer, what type they enjoy the best, and pray together. Talk about the weekly Mass and what was said in the homily. If you don't go to the same parish, this serves as a great way to compare the homily's message.
11. **PRAY FOR YOUR CANDIDATE DAILY:** Try to have your family pray for him/her as well or other significant adults in your candidate's life.
12. **CREATE A PRAYER SPACE:** It may sound "kiddish," but we all need that space/spot that is our place to think of God. It may include a picture, symbol, Bible, prayer book, etc.... Most importantly it will serve as a reminder to pray. Work on making a prayer space together for your candidate.



13. SEND A CARD: Send a card to your candidate out of the blue to tell them you are thinking of him/her and praying for him/her.
14. GET TO KNOW YOUR CANDIDATE'S SCHEDULE, INTERESTS, ATHLETICS, ETC...: What better way to take an interest in your candidate's life than to know what they are up to! Show up at an event, send a good luck wish their way, be creative!
15. GO TO MASS, A SERVICE, OR SACRAMENT: Go to Mass together and discuss the readings and homily afterward! Go to Reconciliation together on a weekend. (They are held each Saturday from 2-4pm at St. Charles in the Chapel!)
16. CRACK OPEN THE BIBLE: Share your favorite Bible story or verse, discuss its meaning in your life and why it is special. Take a Bible and just open up to a page and begin to read. What meaning can you draw from it?



“...Confirmed by the gift of the Spirit,
that they give witness to Christ by lives
built on Faith and love....”

~General Intercessions from the Rite of Confirmation

Godparents and Sponsors What Is Expected of Them Today?

by William F. Wegher

Have you ever wondered why some people have very involved godparents and sponsors, while others don't even know theirs? Perhaps part of the problem is that many godparents and sponsors were chosen for the wrong reasons, or because those same people don't really know what they're supposed to do! Do you? This *Update* will help us to better understand these roles.

Most of us at some point have to choose either a godparent for our children or a sponsor for ourselves, but how do we choose these people? Or you yourself may someday be asked to be a godparent or sponsor. What is expected of a sponsor or godparent today?

Take for example Julie and John, a happy, "thirty something" couple who have just had their first child. They're really into their Catholic faith, so they're excited to have their baby baptized. A big family celebration is planned, but John and Julie are wondering about godparents. What about John's sister and her husband who helped Julie out so much during her pregnancy? It would be a great way to thank them—but they don't practice their faith. Or how about Julie's best friend, Mary, who is actively involved in a young Catholic adult program, even though Mary's husband is a devout practicing Protestant? Will this be all right with the Church?

Or take Kevin, an eighth-grader who will be confirmed at the end of the school year. He has asked his cool older brother, Mark, who goes to college 300 miles away, to be his Confirmation sponsor. Mark, who looks like he just stepped out of the latest teen TV show, knows how much Kevin idolizes him, but he feels a bit uneasy about being a sponsor. Mark respects Kevin's faith and his decision to be confirmed, but he really hasn't gone to church or practiced his faith these last few years. Should Mark be honest with Kevin, and "just say no"? Should he not say anything and just accept? Or should Mark accept, but take a new, more serious look at his own faith?

Adults going through the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) may have the same questions. In reality, a lot of Catholics are confused over the difference between a godparent and a sponsor. Let's look at the role of godparents first, then examine the purpose of a sponsor, and finally we'll look at what all of this means for your family, parish or RCIA.

FOR CONFIRMATION CANDIDATES

How to choose a sponsor

Confirmation can be a great experience, and hopefully you've thought a lot about what this sacrament means, and how the Holy Spirit will affect your life. You'll be required to have a sponsor—someone who will guide you and share the story of faith with you. A good sponsor will make this process a little easier and even more fun.

If all has gone as planned, the best person will be one of your baptismal godparents. The *Catechism* (#1311) and canon law (#892-893) both tell us that you need a sponsor. Having one of your godparents helps us to see how Baptism and Confirmation are connected. Sadly, by the time they get to Confirmation, many young people no longer know their godparents, or they're no longer good role models. Or maybe they just live too far away. These young people will need to choose a new sponsor.

Some advice to the candidates: You're looking for someone you trust, whose faith you admire and who will be there for you. The requirements mentioned for godparents earlier also apply to sponsors: that they be *confirmed Catholics, at least 16 years old* (for maturity) and *practicing members of the Church, while not being your parents*. This means you can choose a relative, friend or someone from your parish as your sponsor. Remember Kevin and his brother Mark of uncertain faith that we mentioned earlier? Let's see how all this applies to them.

As much as Kevin admires his brother, Kevin shouldn't choose Mark as a sponsor. And Mark shouldn't accept either. He isn't a bad person, but Mark has some faith issues he needs to work out first. Right now, Kevin needs someone who is active in church, can share why faith is important to him and who lives close enough to help Kevin with his preparation. So in choosing a sponsor, Kevin needs to take all these things seriously. So do you! Pray about it, and when you think you have the right person, ask him or her to help you grow in faith by being your sponsor!

FOR SPONSORS

Be at your best

If you have been chosen to be a Confirmation sponsor, congratulations! This person sees in you a profound faith commitment, finds trust and knows you are someone who will care about them and their faith. Sounds impressive, doesn't it? It's not all that complicated, but it does take time, a caring heart and a listening ear. If you're a practicing, mature Catholic, don't get too worried. Here are a few suggestions on how to be the best possible sponsor for your candidate:

- **Be a living model of faith.** At least a part of what this young person admires in you is your faith! If the way you practice your faith is not what it should be, "get it together," so to speak! If you honestly can't, this is understandable, but maybe you should decline the invitation to be a sponsor. Your life doesn't have to become artificially saintly, but your faith should be authentic and sincere.
- **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 Catholicism. Attend Mass together, or even have the courage to come to Reconciliation together.
- **Give of your time and share your gifts.** You'll be asked to spend time together on various activities. This may mean preparing lessons or even working on a Christian service project. You could also share your own experiences or write a letter of encouragement. Let your unique God-given talents and gifts shine! Offer a gift of spiritual significance—a new Bible, rosary or book about our faith or about the saint the candidate has chosen for a Confirmation name—but *be creative and relevant!*
- **Don't miss the ceremony.** Participating in the ceremony is the easiest part of being a sponsor. Your basic job will be to place your hand on your candidate's shoulder, and tell the bishop your candidate's Confirmation name. You're there to be a support, but your role on Confirmation day is only beginning.
- **Don't forget this newly confirmed Catholic.** After Confirmation day, remember birthdays and this anniversary. Send a card or make a phone call. Continue to worship together, or from time to time do some Christian service. Put those "Gifts of the Spirit" into practice.