

# HANDBOOK FOR SPONSORS OF CONFIRMATION

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## The Sacrament of Confirmation

Contrary to popular misconceptions, Confirmation is NOT “Catholic graduation” nor is it a time for a teen to decide if he/she should “stay” Catholic. Confirmation, along with Baptism and Holy Eucharist, constitute the Sacraments of Initiation, and is necessary to increase sanctifying grace in one’s life, to strengthen one’s Faith, and to fully receive the Gifts of the Holy Spirit.

After confirmation, the adult Catholic Christian endeavors to live the Christian life by continuing to study the Faith, discern their vocation, and serve the Body of Christ. See CCC 1285-1231.

*This booklet  
belongs to:*

*My candidate is:*

Dear sponsor,

Thank you for saying yes as a sponsor for a candidate of Confirmation. If this is your first time as a sponsor or even if you have been a sponsor before, you may find this guide helpful as a primer to begin the journey with your candidate as a mentor in the Faith. Please take this time to go over this booklet, and I look forward to having your candidate complete the program with your faithful assistance and guidance.

Sincerely,  
Chad Lucero,  
Pastoral Assistant for Youth Ministry

## Who can be a sponsor?

The Rite of Confirmation designates that the sponsor chosen by the candidate for Confirmation satisfy these requirements:

- Must be at least 16 years of age and be sufficiently mature to take on the role
- Must be a Catholic who has already received the Sacraments of Holy Eucharist and Confirmation and lives a life of faith
- Must not be bound by any canonical penalty
- Must be someone other than the candidate's parent, stepparent, or guardian; and freely chosen by the candidate



You must have the pastor or designated priest of your Catholic community sign and certify our **Godparent/Sponsor form**, which testifies that you meet these eligibility requirements. This is to be turned in by your candidate to our parish office.

Remember also that all Catholics must observe the five **Precepts of the Church** (CCC 2041-2043):

1. Attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation
2. Receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation at least once a year
3. Receive the Eucharist at least during the Easter season
4. Observe days of fasting and abstinence (e.g. Ash Wednesday & Good Friday)
5. Help to provide for the needs of the Church

# What does a Confirmation sponsor do?

## **Sponsors affirm Catholic Identity and relationship with Christ**

As a confirmation sponsor you will support your candidate in the struggle to live the Christian life. This is not easy, and we continually must strive to do better. This is why regularly receiving the sacraments of Reconciliation and Communion sustains us as God gives us the graces we need to live our state in life.

As a mentor of the Christian life, you will challenge the candidate on unchristian attitudes or actions. You will also pray with and for your candidate. This relationship should continue in life well after the celebration has ended.

## **Suggestions of things you can do:**

- Be able and willing to listen and share your faith experience
- Give them a call or invite them to lunch or for coffee
- Invite them to Sunday Mass
- Send a card or email occasionally
- Pray for your confirmand every day and invite them to pray for you as well as for their personal needs and concerns
- Invite them to parish activities and go with them
- Participate with them in some other ministry in the parish
- Introduce them to members of the parish
- Encourage and affirm their growth in the faith

## **Building a Relationship with your Candidate**

You may feel some of these symptoms: *Some anxiety or nervousness • Hesitancy and Confusion • Awkwardness • Growth and Maturity • Enthusiasm and Friendship • Joy and Hope • The Gifts of the Holy Spirit*

However, as a sponsor, you can expect to receive: Renewal and deepening of your faith, Strong experience of community and belonging, Better sense of identity as a child of God and mentor of a child of God, and Amazing Grace

## What are some topics that will be covered during Confirmation classes?



During the first year, we will be using the *Chosen* program, offered by Ascension Press. This is a dynamic, small-group focused program that will explore many topics of the Catholic Faith with videos and discussion. More information may be found at [ascensionpress.com](http://ascensionpress.com). A list of topics may be found on our website.

During the second year classes will focus on the symbolism of the various sacramentals used during the Rite of Confirmation, in addition to catechesis on the Holy Spirit and how Confirmation ties in with the other Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism and Holy Eucharist).

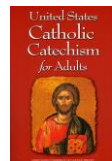
After receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation the candidates will enter into a period of "Apprenticeship in the Faith" in which they will learn how to live their lives as newly confirmed Christians. Topics may include but are not limited to Mystagogy (participation in the sacramental mysteries of the Church), Vocational Discernment, and Theology of the Body.

## What are some other resources to help me become a prepared sponsor and to help my candidate grow in their faith?

**The Bible** (e.g. New American Bible, NRSV Catholic Edition) Complete and approved Catholic Bibles have all 73 books and a special statement of approval called an Imprimatur.

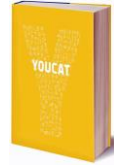
**Catechisms:** These are helpful guides to lookup specific teachings of our Catholic Faith.

The *United States Catholic Catechism for Adults* is in an easy-to-read format with accounts of Americans who have lived



the faith, find the online version at: <http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/what-we-believe/catechism/us-catholic-catechism-for-adults/>

The *Youth Catechism (YouCat)* is in a question and answer format, written for the youth of today.



*The Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC)* is the official catechism promulgated by St. John Paul II, arranged by topic. The entire text is available online at <http://ccc.usccb.org/flipbooks/catechism>.

### **Catholic Radio and Television**

Sacred Heart Radio	1240 AM/FM 104.7
EWTN	Channel 233 on Comcast, <a href="http://ewtn.com">ewtn.com</a>

**Podcasts:** Each of these programs offers excellent information about our faith by speakers who are both engaging and entertaining. Podcasts are portable on-demand audio shows sent straight to your smart phone, tablet, or computer. To subscribe to podcasts search for them on your favorite podcast app by name or listen online on their websites.

- *Christ is the Answer* [avemariaradio.net/christ-is-the-answer/](http://avemariaradio.net/christ-is-the-answer/)  
Fr. John Riccardo, priest of the Archdiocese of Detroit
- *Catholic Stuff You Should Know*, [catholicstuffpodcast.com](http://catholicstuffpodcast.com)  
Frs. John Nepil, Nathan Goebel, and Michael Rapp, priests of the Archdiocese of Denver
- *The Word on Fire Show* [wordonfireshow.com](http://wordonfireshow.com)  
Bishop Robert Barron, an auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles
- Talk: "We Must Go Out", Fr. Mike Schmitz,  
<http://lifeteen.com/blog/we-must-go-out-confirmation-podcast/>

### **FORMED.org**

Saint Columban Parish has a subscription to this FORMED, an online gateway to the best Catholic content, all in one place. This includes Catholic movies, videos, ebooks, and audio presentations. Parishioners may contact the parish office for the Parish access code to register.

## What does the program at St. Columban expect of every candidate for Confirmation?

The Confirmation preparation program at Saint Columban Parish is a two year program. Attendance in Confirmation classes also includes involvement with the parish Youth Ministry program. Specifics are found in the packet given to your candidate and may be found on our website.

As a sponsor, we and your candidate need your help to encourage them in the participation of the Catholic Community, this includes:

- Sunday Mass
- Attendance at Mass on Holy Days of Obligation (e.g. Christmas, Jan. 1 Mary Mother of God, Nov. 1 All Saints etc.)
- Reconciliation when he/she knows they are in need of God's sacramental forgiveness for serious sins
- Attendance of all classes of the Confirmation Preparation Program
- Participation in one Parish Mass ministry
- One Service Project that benefits the Parish Community and promotes belonging

## How do I help my candidate find a Saint Name for Confirmation?

In the Archdiocese of Seattle, candidates are encouraged to use their baptismal names as a sign of the unity and completion of the Sacraments of Initiation. They may also take on the name of a particular saint to whom they have a strong devotion. As a sponsor other suggestions to help them find a saint include:

- A saint to whom they, share the same name
- A saint whose feast day falls on your candidate's birthday
- A saint to whom their ethnic culture has a particular devotion to

We will encourage them to research this saint, but it is not required that they have a separate name on the day of their Confirmation.

# How do I set an example as a sponsor during Mass?

## **Preparing for Mass**

Getting ready for Mass includes ensuring you have made time for prayer and are away from distractions. One way is to read the Sunday Mass readings before Mass and to silently pray once you arrive in church. You can encourage your candidate to practice these and other ways to better prepare for Mass and to always observe simple church etiquette.

## **Dress Code**

As a sponsor you are required to attend the Rite of Confirmation along with other ceremonies that mark your candidate's journey to confirmation. All of these ceremonies are celebrated within the Liturgy of the Mass. The confirmation candidates will be presented to the assembly and should present themselves in appropriate attire for each occasion—especially when presented to the Bishop at Confirmation.

Ladies:

- No plunging necklines! No spaghetti straps or halter tops!
- No bare stomachs, no short skirts or shorts. Mid-thigh is too short for a skirt at church—closer to the knee or below is more acceptable.
- Dresses, skirts or nice slacks are encouraged.
- Nylons or panty hose should be worn with skirts and dresses.
- Bare legs and open-toed shoes are not acceptable.
- Definitely no flip-flops.

Gentlemen:

- No jeans! Preferably, no tennis shoes.
- No casual T-shirts, to include screen tees, V-necks, or anything with advertising!
- Anything from khakis or Dockers with a nice shirt to a suit is acceptable.

This dress code is to be exemplary for all liturgical celebrations.

## Sponsor's Checklist

- Read this Sponsor guide
- Turn in your **Godparent/Sponsor Form** to your candidate before the due date
- Have a Catholic Bible and Catechism handy (See page 4)
- Mark your personal calendar with important dates for (found on our website)
- Fill out Questionnaire about your Candidate (found below)
- Volunteer for a Confirmation retreat/class
- Make sure Candidate is signed up for a Service Project and, in conjunction with his/her parents, ensure they fulfill all program requirements
- Make time for Sunday Mass

### *Get to know your Candidate Questionnaire:*

My Candidate's Name

Nickname/likes to be called

---

Email address

Phone Number

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Hobbies & Special interests

Mass usually attends

---

Birthday

Baptism Date/Location

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First Communion Date/Location

Favorite prayer

---

Special saint he/she has a big devotion to

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[www.saintcolumbanyelm.org/ym](http://www.saintcolumbanyelm.org/ym)