

DIOCESE OF DAVENPORT

Confirmation Sponsors

“As far as possible the person to be confirmed is to have a sponsor. The sponsor’s function is to take care that the person confirmed behaves as a true witness of Christ and faithfully fulfills the duties inherent in this sacrament.” (Canon 892)

To the extent possible, it is desirable that the candidate chooses his or her own sponsor. The person chosen must be suitable for this role and willing to fulfill it. If for some reason the candidate is unable to choose a sponsor his or her parent(s) or legal guardian(s) may choose the sponsor. Failing these, the sponsor may be chosen by a pastor or by the minister of the sacrament himself. However, the priest or bishop may choose the sponsor only in extreme cases, or when a chosen sponsor is deemed inadequate to the task.

A baptized person who belongs to a non-Catholic ecclesial community may not be a sponsor but may be a witness to Confirmation together with a Catholic sponsor (Canon 874).

It is desirable that the one who undertook the role of sponsor at Baptism be the sponsor for Confirmation (Canon 893).

The sponsor is strongly encouraged to meet/talk with the Confirmation candidate at least once a month to discuss: the candidate’s spirituality and prayer life, the service project in which the candidate is involved, the candidate’s relationship with others, the candidate’s school life, where the Holy Spirit is leading the candidate, etc. In this respect, it is advisable that the Confirmation sponsor be a person who lives in close proximity to the Confirmation candidate.

The sponsor is strongly encouraged to attend Mass with the candidate during the Confirmation process. Sharing a meal together after Mass is another way to “reach out” to the Confirmation candidate.

The sponsor is strongly encouraged to show his/her support for the candidate through prayers, cards or letters, and phone calls during the Confirmation preparation and to continue to lend spiritual support after the Confirmation catechesis and liturgy is over.

Qualifications for Sponsors

The following are qualifications for a person to serve as a confirmation sponsor in the Diocese of Davenport (Canon 874). A sponsor must:

1. be 16 years old unless the pastor makes an exception to this for a just cause;
2. be Catholic and have received all of the sacraments of initiation (Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Eucharist). The sponsor should lead a life in harmony with the faith.
3. not labor under a canonical penalty, whether imposed or declared;
4. be neither the father nor the mother of the person to be confirmed.

NOTE: Any confirmed Catholic, including a parent, can be a proxy. However, record the actual sponsor and not the proxy in the records.