

Roles of the Candidate, Parent, and Sponsor

What is the Sacrament of Confirmation?

Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist are the sacraments of initiation. Through these sacraments we become members of the Catholic Church, a community of Spirit-filled people who have been saved by Christ and who witness Christ's love in the world. Confirmation completes and seals our Baptism. Through the fullness of the Spirit's gifts, we are led to Eucharist through which we become the Body of Christ. Through the Sacrament of Confirmation, the candidates are:

- Enriched by the gift of the Holy Spirit.
- Are bound more perfectly to the Church.
- Are strengthened in faith.
- Enabled to courageously witness to Christ and to spread and defend the faith.

The Role of Those to Be Confirmed

Those to be confirmed must freely choose to be confirmed and must be willing to participate in the Confirmation Preparation program, consisting of study, service, and prayer. Their faith in God must be evident through their participation in the sacramental life of the Catholic Church. They need to be attending Mass regularly on Sundays, and living an active Christian life. Knowing that there are those times when we turn away from God or fail to follow his will for us, the candidates are encouraged to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation during this preparation process. The expectations of the Candidates are to:

1. Enter the journey with a willing heart and an open mind.
2. Commit oneself to consistent personal prayer throughout the journey.
3. Attend all sessions. (Excused absences require completion of work missed).
4. Willingly engage in community service.
5. Participate in the Confirmation retreat.
6. Complete all entries in the candidate's book.
7. Support and encourage other candidates on the journey.
8. Maintain an open and honest relationship with one's sponsor or mentor.

The Role of the Parent (or adult family member)

Parents play a primary role in the sacramental preparation process. The parent:

1. Models the commitment to personal prayer, community worship, and ministry expected of a mature Christian.
2. Assumes responsibility to assist the candidate in meeting the program's attendance and service requirements.
3. Agrees to help the candidate understand the experience of the journey—enters into dialogue with the candidate, prays for and with the candidate, is willing to share his or her personal faith story with the candidate.

4. Is willing to step in for the mentor at any time if the mentor is unable to fulfill his or her commitment.

The Role of the Sponsor

Each candidate, with parental help, is expected to choose a sponsor. The sponsor:

1. Models the commitment to personal prayer, community worship, and ministry expected of a mature Christian.
2. Agrees to discuss the Catholic faith with the candidate, using the supplied text, and completing with the candidate the entries in the sponsor and candidate's books.
3. Supports the candidate during the journey of preparation through ongoing dialogue, notes of encouragement, and a willingness to listen to the concerns and hopes of the candidate.
4. Prays for and with the candidate.
5. The sponsor must be a confirmed, practicing Catholic, and sufficiently mature for this role. By canon law, parents cannot be Confirmation sponsors for their own children. It is greatly encouraged that the baptismal sponsor also be the confirmation sponsor to more clearly illustrate the relationship between Baptism and Confirmation. The sponsor presents the candidate to the bishop for the anointing.