

## **On being a Sponsor for a Confirmation Candidate**

When our young people seek to reaffirm their baptismal vows (commonly called Confirmation), the service is preceded by a period of reflection and preparation.

At Church of the Holy Spirit, we ask current members to meet with our candidates for a series of meetings one on one to discuss issues of spirituality and life in Christ.

We provide a conversation guide to assist you in sharing your faith and life experience with the candidate. It is up to each candidate to select a sponsor of their choosing. We hope there are three separate meetings of an hour or more in length to offer insight and listen to the stories of God's activity in each of your lives. Sponsors are not simply talking the whole time but also listening and asking questions of the candidates on his or her experience in Christ. We will provide prayers to conclude each time together. The third meeting is special dinner cooked by the candidates for all the sponsors and time will be set aside for one on one time afterward.

Beyond these three meetings, we encourage you to create a real friendship Sunday by Sunday and even perhaps at a family meal or by attending a candidate's sports game etc. It is our hope that you might want to have more times together as your friendship develops.

Confirmation Camp is an intensive three day event during the summer. We will be explaining to the candidates the experience of sharing time with Sponsors and we expect them to choose their sponsors as soon as possible after Camp..

## **Suggestions for the Three Sponsor Meetings**

1. Allow for wait time - be comfortable giving the candidate silent time to respond. Don't fill up the quiet with your own talking. Breathe instead.
2. Be honest about what you know and don't know. No harm in saying "let's find out together".
3. Do your best to make the connections between events, people, and things with Jesus as you understand and love Him.
4. Be prepared to be challenged and allow yourself to say, "wow, I am impressed by your thoughts and questions and I might need some time to get back to you on that".
5. If you hear a disclosure of something troubling to you, seek out the counsel of the priest. Best not to add your anxiety but suggest you both consider going to talk with Fr. Phil or some other person you trust.
6. Meetings are to take place in a public space with other people nearby though a private place is expected.

## **Content for the Meetings**

I. Why did you choose me to be your sponsor...Why did you say "yes" to my asking you to be my sponsor? Tell me about what is most important to you right now. (Focus at the first meeting on basic life things such as work, school, family, hobbies, etc.) This is how

I hope to support you. Close with this prayer:

*God our Father, you see your children growing up in an unsteady and confusing world: Show them that your ways give more life than the ways of the world, and that following you is better than chasing after selfish goals. Help them to take failure, not as a measure of their worth, but as a chance for a new start. Give them strength to hold their faith in you, and to keep alive their joy in your creation; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

II. Spiritual Autobiography: Make connections between life events (significant joys, losses, troubles, victories, challenges) and when you were closest to Jesus and/or when God felt far away. Close with this prayer:

***A Prayer attributed to St. Francis***

*Lord, make us instruments of your peace. Where there is hatred, let us sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is discord, union; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy. Grant that we may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen.*

III. At Dinner Meeting is scheduled on a Sunday evening at which time conversation items will be provided. Prayers will be handled as a group.