

2024 Sponsor's Guide



Mark your calendars!!!

Sponsor Meeting via Zoom

Thurs. May 16, 7:00-8:00 PM

OR Sun. May 19, 1:00-2:00 PM

St. Pius X Confirmation

Sunday, December 8, 2024

11:30 AM

Practice and photo at 11:00 AM

What Is Confirmation?

Confirmation is a sacramental outpouring of the Holy Spirit that leaves a permanent imprint on the soul, completes Christian initiation, and empowers us to be witnesses to Christ (CCC 1302-1305).

As with every sacrament, Confirmation does not merely symbolize a spiritual reality – it actually effects what it signifies. In Confirmation, the senses are fully engaged: the bishop’s hand is seen as he raises it in anointing, the candidate feels and smells the chrism oil and hears the bishop proclaim the words, “Be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit.” These visible elements are not merely symbolic: they simultaneously bring about a permanent change to those receiving the sacrament.

Confirmation empowers receivers with the same Holy Spirit poured out on the apostles at Pentecost. This outpouring has five effects:

- It affirms our identity as children of God.
- It unites us more firmly to Christ.
- It increases in us the Gifts of the Holy Spirit.
- It strengthens our bond with the Church.
- It strengthens us to spread and defend the faith by our words and actions.

What Is the Role of a Sponsor?

The sponsor is to take care that the confirmed person behaves as a true witness of Christ and faithfully fulfills the obligations inherent in this sacrament (Code of Canon Law 892).

The most important job of a sponsor is to be a spiritual help to the candidate. The primary mission is to ensure that the candidate is genuinely ready to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation. A special young person, your candidate, has called you into deeper relationship with faith at its heart.



In a particular way, your unique ability to share your faith with your candidate is more important than the Confirmation program itself.

How do you ensure your candidate's readiness to receive the sacrament?

- Discuss the Catholic faith and share your own faith.
- Provide a sounding board for your candidate to talk about his or her spiritual life, habits, hopes, fears and struggles.
- Be a good example of the Christian life.
- Pray with and for your candidate.
- Encourage your candidate to live as Jesus would by practicing mercy.



A Sponsor's Prayer

Lord Jesus, you are not merely the teacher of truth, you *are* the Truth that brings order to everything.

When I am tempted to settle for half-truths, distortions, or outright lies, draw me into the light of your presence so that I might seek you with my whole heart.

Help me to experience the church as a sanctuary of timeless truth in the midst of an ever-changing world.

Through the Holy Spirit, give me the courage to speak and live the truth in love, even when it is difficult, inconvenient, or dangerous.

Help me to grow in love and knowledge of truth.

Through your grace, may I always be a witness to my candidate of the guiding presence of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

A Prayer for the Candidate

Holy Spirit, strengthen (name) with your gifts of grace, to love and serve as a disciple of Christ. Give (name) a heart for Christ to use your gifts to live and spread the good news of Jesus. Fill (name) with the joy of your presence and increase the fruits of Your Spirit. Amen.

The Confirmation Ceremony

The sponsor's part of the sacramental rite is simple. You and your candidate will process to the front of the church in a line similar to a Communion line with the other sponsors and candidates. When you get to the front of the line and your candidate is before the bishop, hand your candidate's Confirmation name card to the priest, who will be standing beside the bishop. Place your right hand on the candidate's right shoulder while the bishop confers the sacrament.

Prayer from the Rite of Confirmation

All powerful God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
by water and the Holy Spirit you freed your sons and
daughters from sin and gave them new life.

Send your Holy Spirit upon them
to be their help and guide.

Give them the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of right judgment and courage,
the spirit of knowledge and reverence.

Fill them with the spirit of wonder and awe
in your presence.



Ideas for Sponsors

Here are ideas to assist you in your role as a sponsor:

- **Make a date!** Go to Mass or Reconciliation together. Or, grab a sandwich and talk about questions the candidate has about his/her faith. Plan (together) some kind of service project that you can do.
- **Follow the Pope!** For bite-sized papal commentary to share and discuss with your candidate, follow the Holy Father on Twitter. His handle is @pontifex.
- **Share that photo!** Show your candidate a picture of you on your Confirmation day. It can start a conversation about the sacrament.
- **Share stories!** God has moved in and through your life. Tell those stories and invite your candidate to do the same.
- **Affirm!** Tell how you see Jesus in your candidate's words and actions.
- **Give a gift or card!** A simple gift or card for your candidate's room can be a reminder of the sacrament and your interest in their faith life.
- **Stay connected!** After Confirmation, continue to stay connected with texts, notes, phone calls. Or, attend a faith formation speaker or event together. Send a clear message that Confirmation is not a graduation from religious education and formation!

Sponsor/Candidate Conversation Starters: The Gifts of the Holy Spirit in Your Life

Wisdom

- Name two people you consider truly wise and why.

Understanding

- Who are people you know who seem to have the gift of understanding? Why do you say this?
- Who are three people with whom you need to be more understanding: How can you work on this?

Counsel

- What decisions have you made that have long term consequences? (good and/or bad)

Knowledge

- What are some things you have knowledge about?
- How can you grow in knowledge about the truths of your faith?

Courage

- Who are three people you consider to have courage? What have they done to show courage?

Reverence

- Name someone who you know is very prayerful.
- How can you become more prayerful?

Wonder & Awe

- What things in this world fill you with wonder and awe?

Living as a Disciple of Jesus

- What is the difference between living as a disciple and serving as a volunteer?
- Does thinking of yourself as a disciple make you do anything differently?

For the Sponsor's Calendar

April 12

Return the completed Sponsor Eligibility form, signed by your home pastor to Colleen Ciciulla, St. Pius X Sacramental Coordinator, 6905 Blondo St. Omaha, NE 68104.

May 16 or 19 (Thur. 5/16 @ 7pm; OR Sun. 5/19 @ 1pm)

Zoom meeting for all sponsors. The meeting link will be sent the week prior to the Zoom.

September 14 – letter to your Candidate due

Write a letter or card to be given to your Candidate during a Candidate-only retreat (on Sat., Oct 19). Mail the card to Colleen in advance (address above).

October/November

Plan a “retreat” during which you and your candidate complete a service project and spend time reflecting on the works of mercy. Ask about the Discipleship Journal the candidate has been keeping. Help your candidate prepare for the Confirmation Interview by talking about the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Use the Conversation Starters on page 7.

December 8

11:00 AM Practice (with sponsor) and photo

11:30 AM Confirmation liturgy