

CONFIRMATION REQUIREMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS

St. Mary's Cathedral, Amarillo, Texas

When a young Catholic is to be confirmed, he or she must have a sponsor. It is the custom for some cultures to have a couple serve as the sponsors. However only one of the persons is listed on the certificate as the official Confirmation sponsor. When there are two, one must be male and the other a female.

A sponsor or sponsors must meet all of the following criteria, which are established by universal Church law and which do not vary from place to place. Sponsors must:

- (a) Be Catholic
- (b) Have been baptized, confirmed and have received Communion
- (c) Be 16 or older (although there may be exceptions to this rule at the discretion of the bishop.)
- (d) Must be living a life consistent with their baptismal vows.

This means that they must be practicing the faith, cannot be engaging in public and/or serious sin, and cannot have taken public positions on opposition to Catholic faith or morals. If a sponsor is married, their marriage must be recognized by the Church. A potential sponsor cannot be cohabiting with a partner outside of marriage as this is contrary to Christian teaching and values. A practicing Catholic also includes being registered in a Catholic parish and participating in parish life (attending Mass every weekend, contributing to the life of the parish through stewardship of time, talent and treasure, attending parish functions and engaged in ongoing faith formation such as adult faith classes). If a potential sponsor is not a member of the parish where the confirmation is to take place, he or she must obtain a letter or certificate from their own parish pastor which affirms that they meet the above requirements.

****St. Mary's parishioners serving as sponsors must be approved by the pastor by his initialing next to their name on the information form.***

*****Sponsor letters of permission from other parishes must be turned in before March 25, 2018***

People sometimes object to the requirements for a sponsor. They argue that candidates for Confirmation should have the freedom to choose their own sponsor. In order to understand the Church's position, several points must be kept in mind. The celebration of any sacrament like Confirmation is not a private act. It is a public official liturgy of the Church that seals someone into full membership in the Catholic Church. Therefore, the Church has the duty and obligation to require reasonable criteria for being a sponsor. The sponsor is to assist a young person in living a Catholic life. In order to do so, the sponsor needs to provide a good example of living that life. A person who is not Catholic, or who is not living in a way consistent with the faith, obviously cannot provide the example that is part of the task of being a sponsor. The role of a sponsor is a role of service done in the name of the Church, and the person who is a sponsor should be capable of performing that service.



Choosing a Confirmation Saint Name

Choosing a saint name is an essential part of Confirmation and it is an acknowledgement that the Holy Spirit will change you through the grace of this Sacrament. We see in Scripture that Jesus changed the name of some of his disciples to signify that their role had been changed and that they were becoming, in a sense, a new person. For example, Abram became Abraham (Genesis 17:5), Sarai became Sarah (Genesis 17:15), and Simon became Peter (Matthew 16:18). When choosing a saint, you should choose someone who exemplifies a quality that you wish to have, somebody whose life you want to emulate, or somebody you have something in common with. You should also be asking for the prayers and intercession of the saint that you choose. If you are a musically inclined, you may choose St Cecilia, the patroness of musicians and singers. If you admire purity, St. Maria Goretti, virgin and martyr, would be a great intercessor. There are thousands of saints that are acknowledged for a wide variety of reasons.

Here are some questions that are important to know about a saint when deciding what saint you like.

When was he/she born? Where did he/she live?

What made them stand out? Were they well-liked or persecuted?

What are they patron saint of? (I.e. sports, animals, bee keeping, etc.?)

Why did you pick this particular saint? What do you have in common with this saint? In what way, and why, do you aspire to be like this saint?

****Saint names are due with your “Sponsor Information” sheet by December 3, 2017.***

If you need assistance finding more information on saints you can contact Joshua Dutchover in the Youth Office. Some good online resources are www.catholic.org/saints & www.catholicsaints.info

