



**Being an RCIA Sponsor at
Immaculate Heart of Mary
2016-2017**

What does it mean to be a sponsor? As a sponsor you will be paired with a candidate (baptized adult) or catechumen (unbaptized adult) whom you will accompany throughout the RCIA process. Your role is to be a traveling companion, someone who can help the candidate navigate the liturgy and lifestyle that they are embracing. You will share your faith. You will offer counsel and support as you are able and to the extent that it is needed or desired. You will serve as a bridge to the larger IHM community and provide a model of what the Christian life looks like. You will listen and pray. Each relationship between a sponsor and a candidate is different, but the primary job of all sponsors is simply to “be there” for their candidates as they begin their Catholic lives.

Am I qualified to be a sponsor? The qualifications for being a sponsor are quite simple: you must be a practicing Catholic who has received all the sacraments of initiation (Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist) and continues to live a sacramental life. That’s it. You don’t need to be theologian or a person who has all the answers. You are not expected to know every aspect of the Church’s teaching or be a flawless example of Christian piety. Sponsors who can admit their limitations and who continually try to grow make excellent models of faith.

What is the time commitment asked of a sponsor? As a sponsor, you are expected to attend catechetical sessions along with your candidate on Wednesday nights, 7:00-8:30, beginning in October and continuing through the Easter season. It is also important for sponsors to be present at the RCIA retreat that takes place just prior to Holy Week (April 8, 9:30–3:30, at IHM), as well as the rites that mark the successive stages of the initiation process. These rites include:

Rite of Acceptance and Welcome	November 20, 11:30 am
Rite of Sending	March 4, 4:00 pm
Rite of Election and Call to Continuing Conversion	March 5, 2:00 pm (Cobb Galleria)
The Scrutinies of the Elect	March 19, 26; April 2, 11:30 am
Easter Vigil—Initiation of Catechumens	April 15, 9:00 pm
Octave of Easter—Reception of Candidates	April 23, 11:30 am

Everyone has busy schedules, of course, and perfect attendance may not be feasible. We ask that you prioritize being present at the rites and coming to our Sunday meetings as often as possible. If you are unable to attend one of the rites, you have the option of finding a substitute ahead of time who can stand in for you.

If you are interested in sponsoring someone on this journey of faith, please pray about it and then contact Drew Denton at ddenton@ihmatlanta.org.