

Sponsoring in the process of Christian Initiation

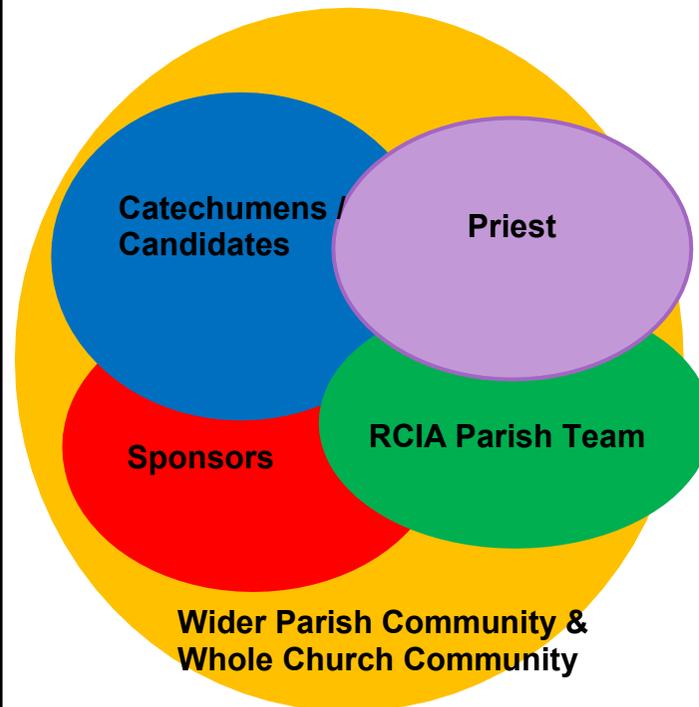


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Consider your rights and responsibilities as a Catholic.
How can you actively live out your response to your Baptismal call?

Sponsoring an adult through their conversion journey of faith is a wonderful example of sharing your faith and life experience as a Catholic.

Sponsors are the bridge to the wider Church community.



The Parable of The Sower Luke 8:4-8

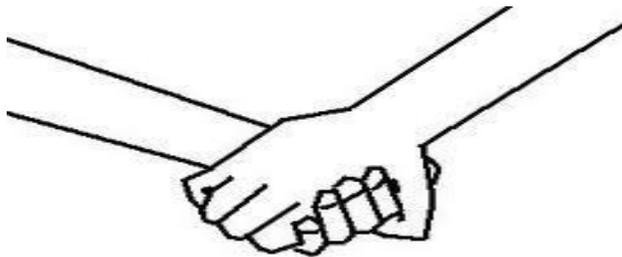
When a great crowd gathered and people from town after town came to Him, Jesus said in a parable: 'A sower went out to sow his seed; and as he sowed, some fell on the path and was trampled on, and the birds of the air ate it up. Some fell on the rock; and as it grew up, it withered for lack of moisture. Some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew with it and choked it. Some fell into good soil, and when it grew, it produced a hundredfold.' As He said this, He called out, 'Let anyone with ears to hear, listen!'

Scriptural support for sponsoring... Luke 6: 36-38

Be compassionate as your Father is compassionate. Do not judge, and you will not be judged; do not condemn and you will not be condemned; forgive and you will be forgiven. Give and there will be gifts for you: a full measure, pressed down, shaken together, and overflowing, will be poured into your lap, because the standard you use will be the standard used for you.

What is RCIA?

The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults is a process through which people deepen their personal relationship with Christ, set within a Parish Community of faith. Christ initiates the invitation to come and see how Catholics live, pray and worship. Christian Initiation is a journey of faith formation.



What is a sponsor?

The sponsor is a fully initiated practicing Catholic who supports the catechumens / candidates and help them to live as part of the Catholic community. [The Parish Companion; p.13]

What qualities do I need to be a sponsor?

- Be a good listener
- Trustworthy
- Gentle & Sensitive
- Honest
- Person of prayer
- Flexible
- Have a sense of humour
- Offer friendship

What does a sponsor do?

Journey with the person seeking to join the Catholic Church within a parish community. Share your faith and life experience as a Catholic. This will include introducing the catechumen / candidate to other members of the parish. Support and encourage the candidate along their conversion journey. Be a witness to the conversion process the candidate is going through. This will include standing with them during the Rites of Christian Initiation and at the Sacraments of Initiation.

What is the difference between sponsoring a catechumen or candidate?

A catechumen has not been previously baptised. Thereby, the sponsor may also act as a God-parent. A candidate has been previously baptised in another Christian denomination. The sponsorship process is the same as that for a catechumen.

But what if my knowledge of faith is limited?

As a sponsor you do not need to know all the answers, but should be ready to act as a witness to your Christian faith. You are also supported by the Parish Priest and the RCIA team, who also journey with the catechumens and candidates along their conversion process.

How long is the process?

Offering friendship is not about quantity but quality. Friendship does not have an expiry date.

Commitment includes flexibility appropriate to your life circumstances.



The initiation of catechumens is a gradual process that takes place within the community of the faithful. By joining the catechumens (and candidates) in reflecting on the value of the paschal mystery and by renewing their own conversion, the faithful provide an example that will help the catechumens' (and candidates) to obey the Holy Spirit more generously.

[Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults #4]

The people of God, as represented by the local Church, should understand and show by their concern that the initiation of adults is the responsibility of all the baptised. Therefore the community must always be fully pre- pared in the pursuit of its apostolic vocation to give help to those who are searching for Christ. In the various circumstances of daily life, even as in the apostolate, all the followers of Christ have the obligation of spreading the faith *according to their abilities*.

[Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults #9]