



Saint Rose of Lima Church
Confirmation: *Summons to Discipleship*

SPONSOR FORM

Candidate's Full Name: _____

Choosing a Sponsor:

The person must be a full initiated Catholic who is at least 16 years of age. A parent may not serve as their child's sponsor. Consider a person you know who is a role model in the practice of the Catholic Faith and discipleship. We encourage our candidates to choose their sponsor early in the preparation process so that they may be part of their journey. See back of form for more information on the role of the sponsor.

Sponsor Name: _____

Sponsor email: _____

Address: _____

Relationship to Candidate/Reasons for choosing: _____

Please complete and return as early as possible, and no later than March 1, to:
St. Rose of Lima Church/Confirmation Program
50 Short Hills Avenue – Short Hills, NJ 07078
Fax to: (973) 379-5356
Email: reled@stroseshorthills.org

THE ROLE OF SPONSORS

A sponsor can make an enormous difference in the preparation of a candidate for the Sacrament of Confirmation. It is important, therefore, that the candidates are encouraged to choose sponsors who are well suited to the role and who will be integral to the preparation process.

The Church's tradition of involving a sponsor in the preparation of candidates for the Sacraments of Christian Initiation is one of our most ancient approaches to faith formation. In the early centuries, when the catechumenate was the entry point for anyone seeking to become a Christian, the sponsor played an extremely vital role.

The sponsor was a living witness and mentor who represented the Christian community (its values, beliefs, behaviors, and so on) to the catechumen. The sponsor would, in turn, witness to the community on behalf of the catechumen's readiness for the initiatory sacraments.

The role of a sponsor was not over with the celebration of the sacraments, however. It was seen as a lifetime commitment, a relationship that would last throughout the individual's journey of faith.

In the early Church the three Sacraments of Christian Initiation were always celebrated at one time; therefore, there was never a different sponsor at Baptism and Confirmation. In subsequent centuries, however, with the separation of Confirmation from Baptism, it became more common to have different persons act as sponsor for those two sacraments.

Both the Code of Canon Law (Canon 893.2) and the introduction to the Rite of Confirmation (5) suggest that in view of contemporary pastoral circumstances, it is desirable to have one's baptismal sponsor act as sponsor at Confirmation. While this remains the ideal, it seems much more important that the sponsor chosen be available and involved with the candidate in a significant way, and be able to offer an authentic example of lived Christian faith.

As a bare minimum, the Code of Canon Law specifies that the requirements for acting as a sponsor at Confirmation (Canon 893) are the same as those for godparents at Baptism (Canon 874). Briefly, that canon directs that the person must have completed their sixteenth year, be fully initiated, live a life of faith, not be the parent, and not be bound by any other canonical restrictions.

One of the challenges that might exist occurs when sponsors live at a distance and cannot interact in person with their candidate. However, in this day of instantaneous Internet and cell phone communication, only a little extra effort is required to maintain regular contact between sponsor and candidate. It is important that interaction occurs on a consistent basis and that sponsors are informed. We encourage our candidates to choose their sponsor at the beginning of the preparation process so that they may be a part of their formation.