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RESURRECTION CONFIRMATION 2010 - 2011

Dear Confirmation Sponsor,

You have been chosen as a confirmation sponsor. This is truly an honor and a privilege. This letter is to inform you about your responsibilities as a sponsor of a candidate at Resurrection parish.

There are some specific Catholic and archdiocesan requirements regarding the selection and approval of the confirmation sponsor. The requirements are:

- The sponsor must be at least 16 years of age
- The sponsor must be a practicing catholic in good standing who has received the sacraments of initiation; Baptism, Eucharist and Confirmation
- **The sponsor cannot be a parent**
- The sponsor can be the baptismal godparent
- The sponsor does not have to be a relative
- The sponsor does not have to be the same gender as the candidate

We need to verify that you meet the requirements listed above. **Enclosed you will find a Sponsor Verification Form. Please fill in your name and the candidates name that asked you to be a sponsor and give or mail the form to your parish pastor. The pastor is asked to sign and return the form to the Resurrection Confirmation office by December 1, 2010.**

We are excited about our confirmation preparation program at Resurrection parish. The candidate who chose you as a sponsor has a busy year ahead. Candidates meet with fellow candidates several times during the year to prepare for the reception of the sacrament. Candidates are asked to do a service project with you the sponsor. We encourage you to attend Mass together and spend time talking about each of your faith experiences. Please read "**Regarding the Role of a Confirmation Sponsor**" enclosed to help clarify your role as a confirmation sponsor.

We have a few things we would love to have you participate in this year with your candidate:

1. **We invite you the sponsor to attend the Call to Commitment for the Candidates, at either the 9:00 or 11:00 Mass on October 31st.**
Candidates will state publicly that they are ready to prepare for the sacrament of confirmation and receive a blessing from the parishioners.
2. **We ask that the sponsor do at least one service project** with the candidate if possible. If you the sponsor live out of town, the parent may do the service project with the candidate instead.

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3. **We ask you the sponsor to spend some time in person with your candidate discussing your Catholic faith. If it is not possible to be together, please at least visit by phone.** A quick email or facebook note once in a while asking how the candidate is doing or how you can help is a great way to keep in touch throughout the year. Help the candidate understand how to live as a Catholic in the community. You might discuss the following: What challenges have you faced in your faith life? How has your faith helped you? Why is going to Mass every week important to you and your family?
4. **We ask that all candidates and his/her sponsor attend the confirmation rehearsal on Wednesday, May 4th, 2011 from 6:30 to 8:00 PM.** A parent or other adult is required to stand in for the sponsor at the rehearsal if the sponsor is unavailable to attend.
5. **The confirmation celebration will be on May 5th, 2011** The night of confirmation, we will ask that the candidate arrive in the school gym by 5:45 PM for a group picture at 6:00 PM. **Sponsors need to arrive by 6:00 PM.** The candidates and sponsors will process into Mass together and sit together.

I have enclosed a schedule of our program this year so you are aware of what your candidate will be doing. Please support them in this preparation process and offer to help them in any way that you can. If I can help you or answer any questions you may have during this preparation period, please don't hesitate to ask. You can reach me in the youth office at 563-556-7511 or by email at DBQ058YM@arch.pvt.k12.ia.us.

Sincerely,

Laurie Ready
Confirmation Coordinator
Church of the Resurrection

Regarding the Role of a Confirmation Sponsor

Sponsors are commissioned by the local faith community to assist the confirmation candidate. The sponsor adds a special dimension to the life of the candidate by supplementing the faith sharing of the parents. It is the responsibility of the sponsor to stand before the faith community of the local church at confirmation and testify to the archbishop on the readiness of the candidate to receive the sacrament of confirmation. This witness is a specific prerequisite of the candidate's reception of the sacrament.

These two items are from the Canon law of the Catholic Church:

Canon 892: Insofar as possible, *there is to be a sponsor for the person to be confirmed; the sponsor is to take care that the confirmed person behaves as a true witness of Christ and faithfully fulfills the obligations inherent in the sacrament.

Canon 893: It is desirable to choose as sponsor the one who undertook the same function in baptism (the godparent).

The *Rite of Confirmation* states:

. . .there should be a sponsor for each of those to be confirmed. These sponsors bring the candidate to receive the sacrament, present them to the minister for the anointing, and will **later** (after confirmation) help them to fulfill their baptismal promises faithfully under the influence of the Holy Spirit whom they have received.

The primary role of the sponsor is to **present** the candidate for confirmation, and then **after** she/he is confirmed, to see that they fulfill their baptismal promises faithfully. This is exactly the same role the godparent has. That is why it is desirable (and practical) to have the same person fulfill both roles. (Note: Baptism requires only one godparent; there can, however, be two.)

Thus, while the pre-confirmation activities which link sponsor and candidate are nice to do, they have no essential connection to the role of the sponsor. And, if the sponsor were the godparent, the presumption is that that person would already have been involved in the candidate's life—sharing faith, seeing that they live their baptismal promises, and encouraging them in stewardship. Those things are properly the role of the godparent (and then only when the parent does not fulfill that obligation).