

A Thought for Sponsors

(from your Confirmation candidate)

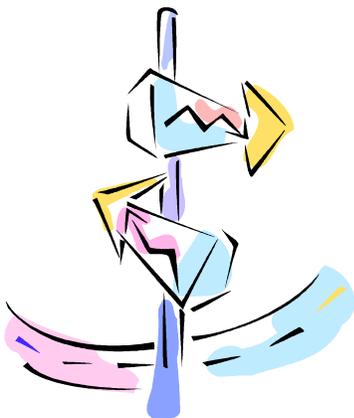
**I'd rather see a sermon,
Than hear one any day;**

**I'd rather you walk with me,
Than merely point the way;**

**The eye's a more ready pupil,
Than ever was the ear;**

**Good advice is often confusing,
But example is oh so clear!**

Author Unknown



Begin with the End in Mind!

In all aspects of our lives we should keep this simple phrase in mind. **"Begin with the end in mind,"** means to look ahead and plan. It encourages us to evaluate the consequences of our decisions before we make them. As a sponsor we would like you to look forward and contemplate what the "end" should

look like. What kind of relationship do you want to have with this young person who has asked you to be involved in this very important aspect of their lives? Please take a few minutes and answer the questions listed below. These are for your eyes only - unless you choose to share them with your candidate or their parents.

1. What relationship do you want to have with your Confirmation candidate in the future? In 1 year? In 5 years? In 10 years?

What do you feel your obligations are, to Christ and to this young person, into the future as a result of this unique relationship?

How will you go about fulfilling these obligations and building this relationship? Periodic meetings? Attend Church activities together? Be specific!

Reflect on the cover poem, "A Thought for Sponsors." What sermon will your candidate see in you? Will you be there for them or just full of advice? What kind of Christian example will you be for them?

Tough questions, right? It's OK if you are feeling inadequate. Keep in mind that none are *worthy* of salvation! It is only through *God's grace* that we will enter the kingdom. As sponsors, each of you has been asked to become a spiritual mentor for someone *who looks up to you*. You already have a bond that is unique and based on love. As you reflect on your role as a Confirmation sponsor, think back to your own Confirmation. How did you and your sponsor relate to one another? What could that person have done to help you on your journey? Did they meet your expectations and set a good Christian example?

Begin with the end in mind, and determine what kind of sponsor you want to be. Then, lay out a plan for the future which involves personal contact on a regular basis with your candidate. Consider setting up a regular time when the two of you can be together. Combine a fun activity with a quiet time over a sandwich or pop where you can discuss his or her Christian walk.

Be brave! You have been charged with a great responsibility. You are commanded to help your candidate persevere in the faith and in their lives as Christians. Your role is as a mentor, a role model and as a spiritual friend. You must be willing to share your faith journey, listen to your candidate's questions, encourage them in the walk with Christ and present a good Christian example.

As a sponsor you also represent the larger faith community. Don't be afraid to turn to that community for answers to questions you may not have.

Finally, it is customary for many sponsors to give their candidate a "gift" to recognize the importance of the day. If you elect to give your candidate something, please pray and reflect on what meaning you are trying to convey. I encourage you to make it personal in some way, either by inscribing it or something else which makes it unique and special.

We wish you the best in the journey you are embarking on. Know that God is with you, in this, as in all things. Remember that Jesus commanded us: "love one another as I have loved you." If you keep that in mind, your candidate will grow and fondly remember you when they are selected as someone else's sponsor.

May the Lord be with you and keep you.