

Sydney Emmaus Community

SPONSORING FOR AN EMMAUS WALK

SPONSORSHIP is a privilege. It requires a lot of prayer and being attentive to God's leading as to who we ask and talk to about participating in an Emmaus Walk. **A SPONSOR** is one who takes responsibility for another. ***If you're unable to carry out these responsibilities, please organise another person to do this for you.***

1. Who to invite

Consider sponsoring people who are committed to living a life that is pleasing to God and want to grow and increase their knowledge and understanding of God and His will. An Emmaus Walk is designed to encourage and equip Christians for service in the Church so invite Christians who are keen to grow spiritually – Church Leaders, Pastors, couples and singles.

2. Who not to invite

An Emmaus Walk is designed for Christians. It is not designed for people involved in unresolved emotional distress. People who have strong theological hang-ups may not want to listen to others and may not be open to God's love and what God has to say to them during the Walk.

People with severe medical problems may prefer an Alarga Stroll as an Emmaus weekend involves long periods of sitting and concentration. Enquire when the next Alarga Stroll will be held.

3. Talk about the Walk

When you feel God has led you to talk to a person about an Emmaus Walk, explain the weekend's basic format and purpose – it is structured, with fifteen talks and group discussion. There is also plenty of good food, fun and serious times. If the person is married, speak with their partner and encourage equal commitment by both.

Answer any questions the person may ask, always giving an honest and truthful answer. Remember there are **NO SECRETS** about an Emmaus Walk. You don't have to mention every detail about what happens on a Walk, eg that there will be agape in abundance! It is better to tell more than necessary than to be secretive.

You probably won't be asked about Candlelighting or Dying Moments but if you are, answer truthfully. No matter how you might try to describe Candlelighting, it is still an awesome experience for most people.

Don't assume the person you are sponsoring will experience the same things you did. Each of us is at a different place on our spiritual journey. For some, the Emmaus experience will be mountaintop, a new beginning. For others, it will be strengthening for the journey they are already on. We must not pre-judge our candidate or set them up with unhelpful expectations.

Explain that part of being a sponsor is for you to bring them to the Conference Centre on the **Thursday night**, come back to the Closing gathering on **Sunday afternoon** and take them home. Tell them the three days should be uninterrupted with no business matters to attend to, no phone calls and ideally leaving mobile phones and cameras at home. Phone calls are only for an emergency.

Over the weekend you may need to offer help to the family at home, eg minding children, meals, fellowship, and being available if an emergency arises.

4. Application and Registering

Now that your friend has decided to come on the Walk ask them to fill out the two pages of the Application Form, then give it back to you. You complete the Sponsor section. Don't delay in getting applications completed and sent to the Registrar with the specified deposit. It's essential to allow plenty of time to organise agape letters and pray for your Pilgrim. If there is any additional information that should be known, discuss this with the Registrar.

5. Fees

Sponsors do not have to pay for their Pilgrims. If you are able to and want to give that as a gift to your pilgrim that is OK or you may wish to pay the deposit but it is not essential. Please let the Registrar know if there is difficulty with payment - we do not want anyone to miss out because they are not able to raise the money.

6. Application Acceptance

The Registrar submits Application Forms to the Sydney Community Board for approval or between meetings, the Community Executive. Following the Board's approval the Registrar advises the Sponsor and Pilgrim that their application has been accepted.

7. Agape Letters

We recommend that you ask 12 people to write an agape letter or card to your pilgrim. Include spouse, family and good friends (church or other). The Registrar will provide a **form letter** to use as an example for those who are writing letters or cards. Ask for letters and cards to be sealed in an envelope addressed to the pilgrim (*not their sponsor*). This envelope should be placed inside another envelope and sent to you. If you don't know the person well or it's hard to get letters, please let the Registrar know and she/he will arrange for people to write a letter even though they may not be known to the writer.

In the unusual circumstance that you are **sponsoring someone you don't really know** and you don't know their family or close friends you will need to ask the person for the names and a contact phone number or address of three or four people close to them who you could ask to pray with you for the weekend. Contact these people, ask them to pray and write a letter. Also ask for two or three names of other people you can contact.

If you are **sponsoring a couple** it's appropriate to ask both people to write a letter to the other person. Ask separately, not when they are together. Lots of people have written an Emmaus agape letter long before they have gone on a Walk.

Bring the **bundle of letters** to the Prayer Chapel at the Conference Centre on the Thursday night (drop them off just before you go home so your pilgrim doesn't see what you are doing) or bring them to Candlelighting and place them in the receptacle which will be near the entrance to the Church. **Please do not mail letters to the Conference Centre.**

8. Couple Sponsoring

If you are sponsoring a couple, a partner can share in sponsoring for the Women's Walk after the Men's Walk. He could pray for the Walk, come or bring his wife, partner or friend on Thursday night, come to Candlelighting, volunteer for the Prayer or Kitchen Roster, and come to the Closing.

9. Arrival at the Conference Centre

Arrive by 7pm at the Conference Centre on the Thursday night. Allow plenty of time so your pilgrim can join in from the very beginning. Your pilgrim needs to have had a meal before arrival.

10. At the Conference Centre

The Registrar will meet you and your pilgrim. He or she will be given their name badge and room allocation. Escort your pilgrim to his or her room, maybe help make their bed and then proceed to the meeting hall where drinks and nibbles will be available. Stay with your pilgrim but introduce him or her to other people. When announced, you should say farewell and then go to the Prayer Chapel to pray for your pilgrim and hang their neck cross on the larger cross. You may also leave your Agape letters.

11. Sponsor Responsibilities during the Walk

After your Pilgrim's Application has been accepted you will be informed about selecting a half hour prayer slot on the **Prayer Vigil** which covers the 72 hours of the Walk. There will also be a **Kitchen Roster** if you can help for one of the meals. Sponsors will be expected to **attend Candlelighting, pray for your pilgrim, attend the Closing Service** and take your Pilgrim home. Also attend to any help the pilgrim's family at home may need.

12. After the Walk

Encourage your Pilgrim's Fourth Day involvement. Give them an opportunity to talk through their experience. Help them find a Reunion Group and go together to Gatherings, at least a few times.

Continue your involvement with the Emmaus community by Sponsoring, attending Gatherings, coming to Candlelighting and Closings. The Community Newsletter and the Website show how you can take a place on the Prayer Vigil and Kitchen Roster for future Walks.

Contacts

Registrar Cathy Thompson, phone 9838 0656, 0408 878 808, email registrar08@sydneyemmaus.org.au.
Prayer and Kitchen Roster go to www.sydneyemmaus.org.au and look up the Contact list.