

Sydney Emmaus Community

SPONSORING FOR AN EMMAUS WALK

A SPONSOR is one who takes responsibility for another. **SPONSORSHIP** is a privilege. It requires a lot of prayer and being attentive to God's leading as to whom we ask and talk to about participating in an Emmaus Walk.

1. Who to invite

Consider sponsoring persons who are committed to living a life that is pleasing to God, those who want to grow and increase their knowledge and understanding of God and His will. The program is designed to encourage Christians and to equip them for service in the Church. Invite Christians who are keen to grow spiritually, Church Leaders, Pastors, Invite 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 with severe medical problems may find the weekend difficult – there are long times of sitting and concentration – enquire when an Alarga Walk will be held. People who have strong theological hang-ups may not want to listen to others and be open to God's love and to what God has to say to them during the Walk.

3. Talk about the Walk

When you feel God has led you to talk to a person about the Emmaus Walk explain what the weekend is about. Explain the basic format of the Walk and its purpose – it is structured, fifteen talks, group discussion, 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 they may ask. Always give an honest and truthfully 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 no need to detail that there will be agape in abundance! It is better to tell more than necessary, than to be secretive.

They probably won't ask about Candelighting or Dying Moments, but if they do – answer truthfully. No matter how you might try to describe Candelighting for most people it is still an awesome experience.

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 that you will bring them to the Conference Centre on the **Thursday night** and will come back to the Closing gathering on **Sunday afternoon** and take them home. Tell them the 3 days should be uninterrupted with no business matters to attend to, no phone calls and ideally leaving mobile phones at home. Phone calls only for an emergency.

Over the weekend you may need to offer help to the family at home eg minding children, meals, fellowship and to be 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 2 pages of the Application Form, then to give back to you and 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 takes the Application Form to the Sydney Community Board, or between meetings the appointed person, usually the Community Lay Director, for approval. Following approval the Registrar will acknowledge to the Sponsor and to the Pilgrim that the Application has been accepted.

7. Agape Letters

The Registrar will forward on to you the **form letter** to use as an example to send when contacting people to write an agape letter or card to the pilgrim. We recommend that you ask 12 people to write a letter or card, seal it in an envelope, then place in another envelope and send to you. The people you should ask to write an agape letter are – spouse, family, good friends – church or other. 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 3 or 4 people close to them whom you could contact to ask them to pray with you for the weekend. Contact these people and ask them to pray and also write a letter and for another 2 or 3 names of 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 to Candelighting and place in the receptacle which will be near the entrance to the Church.

8. Couple Sponsoring

If you are sponsoring a couple – after the Men's Walk of course he can share in the sponsoring for the Women's Walk i.e. pray for the Walk, come or bring his wife, partner or friend on the Thursday night, come to Candelighting, and take a place on 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 bed. 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 sponsors should say farewell and leave – 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 bundle of collected Agape letters.

11. Sponsor Responsibilities During the Walk

After your Pilgrims Application has been accepted you will be informed of how to select a half-hour prayer slot on the **Prayer Vigil** which covers the entire 72 hours of the Walk. Also there will be a **Kitchen Roster** if you can help for one of the meals. Sponsors will be expected to **attend Candelighting and pray for your pilgrim and attend the Closing Service** and take your Pilgrim home.

Also attend to any help the pilgrim's family left at home may need.

12. After the Walk

Encourage the Pilgrims in their 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 Candelighting 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: 02 9838 0656, Mobile: 0408 878 808

Email: registrar08@sydneyemmaus.org.au

Prayer and Kitchen Roster go to www.sydneyemmaus.org.au and follow links