THE BROTHERHOOD OF ST. ANDREW
NEW CHAPTER SPONSOR GUIDE

THE SOLE OBJECT OF THE BROTHERHOOD IS
THE SPREAD OF CHRIST'S KINGDOM AMONG MEN AND BOYS

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THE NEW CHAPTER SPONSOR GUIDE

Purpose

This New Chapter Sponsor Guide is designed for the Brothers Andrew who is sponsoring a new chapter, and to give him practical insights in how to ensure that the new chapter continues to thrive and develop a mission purpose in their local parish. Regardless of the literature we supply, or how sincere the intentions of the new chapter are, early support is needed from an experienced member of the Brotherhood of St. Andrew. Without his support, some chapters may fail soon after they begin, and some may never become active in the life of the Brotherhood. The purpose of the new chapter sponsor is, very simply, to prevent failure of the new chapter and of its developing Christian ministry.

Section One

Why Do Chapters Succeed?

Chapters succeed because of: (1) good leadership, (2) support by the clergy, (3) understanding the Brotherhood’s mission purpose, (4) selection of a convenient meeting time, (5) the right frequency of meetings, (6) experienced Brotherhood members and (7) selecting service projects that are enjoyable and fulfilling.

1. **Good leadership** is a reflection of accepting Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior for every officer and member of the chapter. A willingness to lead by example and to mentor the new members who join the chapter is also the role of the chapter officers. The chapter director however, should ensure that training takes place and that he utilizes any training guides produced by the Brotherhood that are designed for this purpose. Preparation and planning for meetings and activities are essential to the organization of the chapter, and these events need to be communicated to the members.

2. **Support by the clergy** is very important, but at times there may be a feeling that the Brotherhood is a layman’s organization and the priest may not want to interfere. However, the parish priest is important in the worship and prayer life of the parish and the chapter. The clergy may work closely with the director to develop study programs, and service projects that benefit the parish. Their advice and assistance should be asked for, and all service projects need to obtain their approval before implementation.

3. **Understanding the Brotherhood’s mission purpose** is a common problem associated with the new chapter. As a sponsor it is your responsibility to clearly communicate this to the chapter members, as well as the clergy. The spread of Christ’s Kingdom among men and boys is the mission of the Brotherhood. It is now and always has been our mission.
4. **Selection of a convenient meeting time** is very important and one which should be most convenient to the chapter officers, members and their rector. The time agreed upon should be one that allows for the best attendance possible, to attract more men who will be able to attend. There is no time of day, or day of the week, which will satisfy everyone. Having more than one meeting a month is a solution to accommodate every potential member who may wish to join, and if they are held on different days, some who have difficult work or family demands, can then attend.

5. **The right frequency of meetings** should be given serious attention as to what is reasonable. Some chapters hold weekly meetings, some twice a month, and others once a month. At the start it may be practicable to hold training sessions more frequently and then decide what frequency will be followed thereafter. An important point should be remembered, the Brotherhood of St. Andrew does not take a summer vacation. The discipline must be maintained, and even if some of the Brothers Andrew may be away on vacation, there will be those who can, and want, to meet. This is a full time men’s ministry.

6. **Experienced Brotherhood members** may not exist at the inception of a new chapter, and it is the role of the sponsor utilizing the New Chapter Sponsor Guide as a “how to” manual, to train the members in their responsibilities, especially the officers. The officers and members belonging to the new chapter, working with their parish clergy as a team, and initially their sponsor will all benefit and experience will be gained in time. Being a sponsor is unquestionably the most important ministry a Brothers Andrew can pursue to further the work of our men’s ministry and establish new chapters. The experience of the sponsor or another Brother, both with years of experience, is the stabilizing factor that will fulfill our mission purpose of bringing men and boys to salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. That is what we are about, and what we are trying to accomplish in this worthwhile ministry.

7. **Selecting service projects that are enjoyable and fulfilling** is of utmost importance, and not to be ignored. Some chapters have only the best intentions and then set service goals that are unrealistic and difficult to maintain, ongoing. Service projects should be centered on bringing men and boys to Christ through their efforts to reach out, and evangelize in their community.

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**Section Two**

**Qualifications to be a Sponsor**

The qualifications to be a Sponsor are important:

- At least one year of experience with a successful chapter
• A commitment to personal spiritual growth through adhering to the disciplines of Prayer, Study and Service
• An awareness that our disciplines are a rule of life to be followed, and working with a small group Christian fellowship that can bring men and youth to a closer relationship with Jesus Christ, is a rewarding and a dynamic ministry for you and the parish you are sponsoring
• Willingness to witness to other men and youth what the Brotherhood has meant to you and how it has contributed to your personal growth as a Christian
• The Christian humility to accept the call to be a sponsor, and making the time to help others form new chapters

How Much Time is Required?

The amount of time you spend cannot be measured in a simple manner. It can only be said that some chapters take more or less time to form, than others. You will have to determine what amount of time should be spent by you in this ministry as a sponsor for a new chapter. What needs to be done is as follows:

1. Your sponsor assignment will be sent to you by the National Office, Provincial President, or Diocesan Coordinator prior to the chapter formation. You will also organize the chapter installation. It is possible that you will be the person who has introduced the Brotherhood to the new chapter and will have signed the chapter application as sponsor. The chapter sponsor acts as the Presenter during the chapter installation and institution of Chapter Officers, at a regularly scheduled Sunday service for this special occasion.

2. You should meet with the new chapter leaders and their priest before the first chapter meeting to decide if they want to proceed further, answer all their questions, and then help them plan the first meeting. They will need your help throughout the early stages of the chapter formation.

3. The sponsor should attend the first chapter meetings, as is possible, distance permitting. These are crucial meetings, and the new members will need your suggestions and answers to their questions about conducting meetings, and developing a mission purpose.

4. It is vital for the new chapter leadership to be able to reach you, so having your telephone and e-mail address is essential. Be sure they know when it is best to reach you by phone if your advice is needed in between meetings. Your scheduled visits will provide a mentoring opportunity for the officers and members, and eliminate any concerns by anyone inexperienced in how to proceed with future meetings. The leaders especially need to know that what they are doing is important enough for you to stay in contact with them.
5. The chapter will be very effective simply by inviting other men and youth to become involved in the ministry of the Brotherhood. If the Chapter is properly trained, it will encourage an atmosphere in a small group where an individual can grow and mature in the knowledge of the Word. Then next, be led to accept Christ in his life and be committed to be a servant of our Lord. The first Brotherhood chapter in Chicago had up to 400 men in church attendance on Sunday mornings, while not belonging to the Brotherhood, they had participated in the chapter bible study and prayer time which led them to being baptized and later confirmed in the parish. This happened in less than four years, during which time the chapter grew in membership from 12 to 40 men.

6. After you attend a couple of meetings, you can then decide if you should attend any more meetings. If the chapter is progressing well as you determine, then tell the chapter members that you are pleased with their efforts and you will return at a future date, assuming the chapter is installed already. An occasional brief telephone call to the director or their priest, just to say hello and to inquire about how things are going is an important tool to ensure the success of the new chapter. Answer any questions you may be asked and tell them they will continue to be in your prayers.

This is a guide to follow as a new chapter sponsor. Lifting up the chapter, its leaders and their clergy in your daily prayers is part of your ministry to them.

Help for the Sponsor

The chapter sponsor is the man “in the field,” but do not feel that you are alone. Our Lord Jesus Christ will hear your prayers and the Holy Spirit will be your constant guide and companion. The Brotherhood is a ministry to men, by men, and through our faith in God, and our willingness to serve him we will be fulfilling our mission purpose of spreading the message of Christ’s Kingdom, here on earth.

Please remember not to overlook the advantage of a telephone call to the National Office for advice or materials to help you fulfill your role as a chapter sponsor. Most especially your field officer, such as Provincial President, Diocesan Coordinator or any other National officer, including the President, is vitally concerned with the ministry of the chapter sponsor and is available by telephone or e-mail to help in any way to support you.

Section Three

Sponsors’ Challenges

There are many chapters which have flourished since they began, even through changes in rectors, chapter directors and membership. The Holy Spirit is present at all times and working through the men to continue with its ongoing success.
However, the new chapter sponsor can play an important role in helping the new chapter get off to a good start. He should mentor the new chapter leadership with training as to their individual responsibilities. Meeting other chapter leaders at meetings enables the sponsor to identify future leaders, who can potentially take on positions at a provincial or national level. The sponsor’s experience is an invaluable resource for the chapter’s members to learn from, while they work towards becoming a group of men establishing a Christian men’s ministry at their parish.

When the clergy is not asked to support the chapter by the chapter leadership, it may be because no one has told them differently. The chapter and clergy may both consider the Brotherhood only to be a lay ministry in which the clergy has only a limited part. This occasionally may develop into an adversarial relationship between the chapter and their clergy. The sponsor can help to avoid this from occurring right from the beginning by including the priest in all the initial planning stages, and the chapter installation. A chapter not only needs the permission of its clergy to form, but it will grow with its support. The clergy can help in identifying service projects that benefit the parish, and the community.

If you believe that another priest with a well established chapter in his parish, could telephone the priest in the parish with the new chapter, to lend support and be willing to answer questions that the priest may have, and to dispel any concerns, then do so. If you are not sure who to contact and need assistance on this, contact the National Office, your Diocesan Coordinator or Provincial President and they will give you the name of clergyman who may be willing to assist with this worthwhile effort.

You may face the belief that some men think the Brotherhood is a social organization or another name for a parish men’s club. It may happen in a few instances, but that is why the sponsor needs to effectively train the new chapter and direct it towards a men’s ministry, and not just a work group to be used to maintain the parish property. It is, first and foremost, an affiliation of men and youth interested in maturing in their Christian faith, by following the disciplines of prayer, study and service. The sponsor mentors the chapter to reach out to other men and youth, in and outside the parish, offering the Good News of Jesus Christ. He and all Brothers Andrew are not asked to be an evangelist who only quotes the Bible, but one that is called to be a witness of how God’s redeeming grace has changed his life, and to share this with others.
New Chapter Sponsor’s Prayer and Pledge of Support

Please pray for this new ministry on which you are about to begin, for the new chapter, its officers and members, and especially for the Brotherhood of St. Andrew:

Heavenly Father, I fully accept Jesus Christ as your only Son and my personal Savior, and the Savior of all people everywhere. I lift up this ministry as a Chapter Sponsor for your blessing and guidance by the Holy Spirit. Direct me, Lord, and direct the new Brotherhood Chapter, its members, its leaders and clergy, that what we begin together will bring glory to you, our God and Creator. And, Lord, I pray for your blessings on the Brotherhood of St. Andrew, that this Ministry be so guided as to bring to men the saving knowledge of the Good News you have provided for us all. These things I pray in the Name of Jesus Christ, your Son and our Savior. Amen.

I hereby pledge to support this chapter (name of parish) as its sponsor to the best of my ability, utilizing all resources and training materials at my disposal, and through constant prayer, so help me God.

______________________________  
Signature

______________________________  
Print Name/Title

______________________________  
Date/Phone #

Send a copy of this page only to the Provincial President, Diocesan Coordinator and National Office. Keep a copy for yourself as your pledge.