

Why Sponsor? Who to Sponsor?

The sole purpose of the Emmaus Movement is to strengthen disciples within the ministry of individual congregations. The unique role of the Walk to Emmaus is spiritual renewal. *Day Four: The Pilgrim's Continued Journey*

Good sponsorship is the first act of agape before a Walk ever begins, good sponsorship undergirds the whole weekend, and good sponsorship is the foundation for a healthy, effective Emmaus Movement.

Emmaus comes from the church, and Emmaus returns to the church. With that in mind, we sponsor people who are:

- Christians who want to reclaim their Christian heritage with enthusiasm and to return to their churches with new vision and commitment;
- church leaders;
- dependable church members who are the quiet backbone of the church;
- less active members who need their awareness of grace rekindled and their commitments renewed;
- Christians who are hungry for “something more” and who want to grow spiritually;
- members and leaders who represent a cross section of the church;
- respected laypersons and clergypersons whose participation, support and leadership will encourage others to take the Walk and will build a sound, balanced leadership base for the movement in the community; and
- members of diverse congregations, denominations and ethnic groups.

We sponsor people who are members of a church or are actively participating in a church.

Emmaus is right for many people-but not for everyone. With that in mind, we do not sponsor people who are:

- Non-Christians;
- Christians whose theology is incompatible with traditional theology;
- persons undergoing an emotional crisis or who are psychology unstable;
- persons who decide not to make a Walk after being presented the opportunity;
- “church hoppers”; and
- persons who are always looking for another spiritual high or another experience to help them “arrive.”

The Emmaus handbook asks: Are active Christians sponsored for their spiritual formation, which is the purpose of Emmaus, or are non-Christians sponsored for their conversion?

It is important to keep in mind that The Walk to Emmaus is not designed for marriage enrichment or to facilitate communication between partners. However, The Walk to Emmaus has a very important role to play when both partners are committed to attending. Please remember that in the Letter of Agreement (which is our covenant with The Upper Room) it states that “husbands and wives are encouraged to make an equal commitment to participate.” This guards against the Emmaus experience becoming a divisive influence in a marriage, and when the rule is followed, Emmaus can indirectly strengthen the spiritual bond in a marriage and family as well as increase participation of many grateful husbands and wives.