



South Sydney/Illawarra 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. Invite Church Leaders, Pastors, lay people, and 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 a 'Face to Face' 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. Pray first, then sponsor wisely.

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 short 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 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 e.g.: 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 then 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, cameras, watches & laptop computers at home. For privacy reasons we do not have any cameras in the Conference room over the weekend.

For an emergency contact only the sponsor or family can call the Tops Conference Centre on (02) 4294 1430 or 0418 970 381 over the weekend.

Over the weekend you may need to offer help to the family at home e.g.: 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 first page of the Application Form, then to give it back to you for you to 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.

Application & Registering continued:

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.

5. Application Acceptance

The Registrar sends the Application Form to the Community Lay Director & Community Spiritual Director, for approval. If approved the Registrar will acknowledge to the Sponsor and to the Pilgrim that the Application has been accepted.

6. Agape Letters

The Registrar will forward on to you a sample **form letter and instructions** on how to contact 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 that envelope in another envelope and send or give it 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 three or four 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 two or three names of people you can contact.

If you are **sponsoring a couple** it is 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 Auditorium.

7. 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.

8. Arrival at the Conference Centre

Please arrive at the Conference Centre **no later than 7pm** 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. Please note: The program is due to start at 7.30pm and late arrivals delay the whole program.

9. At the Conference Centre

The Registrar will meet you and your pilgrim and it is at this time that any outstanding fees must be paid. He or she will then be given their name badge and room allocation. Escort your pilgrim to his or her room, maybe help make their bed. Then proceed to the conference room where drinks and nibbles will be available. Stay with your pilgrim and introduce him or her to other people.

At 7.30pm when it is announced the program is commencing, sponsors should say farewell and it is at this point that Team and Pilgrims will go to the Prayer Chapel. You and the other sponsors will be asked to stay in the conference room to pray for your pilgrim and hang their neck cross on the larger cross. You may also leave your bundle of collected Agape letters in the Prayer Chapel.

10. 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 are expected to:

1. **Bring your pilgrim to Registration** on the Thursday evening & help them get settled.
2. Attend **Candlelighting on Saturday** night & pray for your pilgrim at the allotted time in the service.
3. Attend the **Closing Service** on Sunday afternoon and take your Pilgrim home.
4. Also attend to any **help the pilgrim's family** left at home may need.

(These are the minimal requirements that sponsors should uphold – there are plenty of other areas of service: prayer roster, dining room, set up/clean up teams)

11. After the Walk

Encourage the Pilgrims in their Fourth Day involvement. Give them an opportunity to talk through their experience. Help them find an Accountability 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.

The South Sydney-Illawarra Emmaus webpage can be accessed via the National Emmaus webpage at:

<http://www.emmaus.org.au/>

and go to the SSI Community page, or you can go direct to the local SSI website at:

<http://www.southsydneyillawarraemmaus.org.au/>

2016 Contacts for South Sydney-Illawarra Emmaus Walks:

Registrar: Peter Low

Telephone: **0414 685 031** or email
ssiregistrar2017@gmail.com

Mailing address for Pilgrim Applications:

Unit 3/23 Hopetoun St, Woonona 2517

Prayer Roster: Pura Brindley

Telephone: **0439 346 474**, or register on line at this address and scroll down to the South Sydney-Illawarra Walks:

<http://www.3dayol.org/Vigil/GetComm.phtml>

Kitchen Roster Co-Ordinator:

Contact **Robyn O'Dempsey** to have your name placed on the Kitchen Helpers roster for the Walks.

Telephone: **4422 7873** or **0413 937 089**

h_odempsey@bigpond.com

Please note: Kitchen helpers for the Saturday evening meal are generally reserved for sponsors and Emmaus friends of the pilgrims.

