



Emmaus

AUCKLAND EMMAUS COMMUNITY

SPONSORSHIP

SPONSORSHIP: THE MOST IMPORTANT JOB OF ALL

Most communities take sponsorship for granted; they assume that everyone knows the how and why of sponsorship. It is more than 'signing up people'. The quality of sponsorship influences the pilgrim, the health of the Emmaus Movement, and the churches affected by the movement.

First, good sponsorship is the first act of agape before a Walk ever begins.

Second, good sponsorship undergirds the whole weekend with sacrificial love on behalf of each pilgrim... These acts of agape include **prayer, agape letters, presence at Candlelighting and Closing, and follow-up.**

WHY DO WE SPONSOR? WHAT IS OUR AIM?

The aim of the sponsor should not be 'to get all my friends to go', to fill up the 3-day event, to fix people's problems or to reproduce one's own religious experience in others. Rather, the aim is to bring spiritual revitalization to Christians to build up the body of Christ.

WHOM DO WE SPONSOR?

Emmaus is for active Christians and members of churches whose own renewal will mean new energy, commitment and vision in the church... for Christ's sake.

Those sponsored could include the following:

- Church leaders (pastors and laypersons)
- 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... hungry for 'something more' and who want to grow spiritually;
- Members and leaders who represent a cross section of the church and who will help Emmaus remain theologically sound, centred on the essentials of our common faith, and open to different perspectives
- Respected laypersons and clergypersons whose participation, support and leadership will encourage others to take the Walk and build a sound, balanced leadership base for the movement
- Members of diverse and varied congregations, denominations and ethnic groups.

Emmaus is right for many people – but not for everyone. Sponsorship requires sensitivity. Some examples of potentially unwise pilgrims are;

- Non-Christians
- Christians who may not accept the traditional theology and practice represented by The Walk to Emmaus, members of groups who will feel a need to defend the uniqueness of their beliefs throughout the Walk.
- Persons undergoing an emotional crisis.
- Persons who decide not to make a Walk after being presented the opportunity. A potential sponsor need not feel like a failure. Perhaps the timing is not right. Perhaps God will renew the person in another way.

HOW DO WE SPONSOR?

1. Pray for the person's openness to God's call to discipleship, not for how to get him or her to go on a Walk.
2. Make an appointment with the person or couple for the purpose of discussing participation in Emmaus.
3. Extend an invitation to attend for the sake of a more vital relationship with Jesus Christ, not just an event to go to. Share your faith; explain the basic elements of the Walk, its purpose, and follow-up dimensions that help us live in grace for the rest of our lives. that you are giving the person a wonderful gift rather than that he or she needs to go.
4. Ask the person to make a commitment by filling out the **registration form**. If the person is married, speak with both partners.
5. Continue to pray for your prospective pilgrim, prepare agape letters, and enlist the support of their pastor. Collect 8 to 12 personal agape letters. Do not ask the team to deliver personal gifts during the 3 days.
6. Support the Walk through your prayers during the 72-Hour Prayer Vigil and your presence at Send Off, Sponsors' Hour, Candlelighting and Closing. Support the pilgrim's family by baby-sitting, feeding pets, or just checking in with a spouse to see if any help is needed.
7. After the walk encourage the pilgrim in their Fourth Day involvement. Help the pilgrim find a group or start a group with him or her for a period of time. Take the pilgrim to Gatherings as your guest for a couple of months.
8. Help the pilgrim re-enter their church and consider ways to act out new commitment and enthusiasm.
9. Inform the pilgrim of ways to serve the Emmaus community and future Walks.
10. Help the pilgrim sponsor others.

Sponsorship is an act of love for God, for the pilgrims, for the Emmaus community and for the church...

(Note: Sponsors should not serve as team members on Walks with persons they are sponsoring... they should find others who will sponsor the particular persons they would... sponsor. ... Team members cannot support a pilgrim during the 3-day event in the manner intended, such as Sponsors' Hour, the 72-Hour Prayer Vigil and Candlelighting... pilgrims should not see their sponsors during the event. The absence of the sponsor gives the pilgrims the space they need for their own special interaction with and experience of God during the 72-hour Walk.)