



Godparents / Sponsors

| GODPARENT / SPONSOR REQUIREMENTS FOR CATHOLIC BAPTISM |

Since Baptism is the initial and foundational Sacrament in the life of a Catholic, great care must be taken in deciding who will serve as a Godparent / Sponsor for your child. The guidelines below are meant to assist you as parents in making a reasonable and secure decision as to who will fulfill this critical role for your child. There are also norms for Godparents / Sponsors set by the universal Catholic Church to help you as parents to raise your child in the Catholic faith into which you have chosen to baptize him/her. The role of a Godparent / Sponsor, is to be an example to their godchild as the child grows and matures, helping them to learn their faith and to be a source if your child has questions about the faith. A Godparent / Sponsor is also called to support you as parents and to reflect with you on ways you can strengthen the role of faith in your family.

From time to time questions and controversies arise as to who may serve as a Godparent / Sponsor within the Sacrament of Baptism. Therefore, the following norms should be observed concerning Godparent / Sponsor eligibility. These requirements must be considered before you as parents of the child ask someone to be a Godparent / Sponsor for your son or daughter.

1. The decision as to who should be a Godparent / Sponsor should be based upon who would provide the best example of Catholic living for your child and not merely for reasons of maintaining family harmony or honoring a friend. A Godparent / Sponsor is chosen not primarily to honor the Godparent / Sponsor, but for the well-being and faith development of your child.
2. In order to be a Godparent / Sponsor for Baptism, an individual must meet all of the following:
 - a. be at least sixteen years old
 - b. not the parent of the child to be baptized (grandparents may be godparents)
 - c. be a fully initiated Catholic (have celebrated the sacraments of baptism, confirmation and Eucharist)
 - d. be a Catholic in good standing in the Church
 - e. if married, be in a valid Catholic marriage
 - f. be a practicing member of the Catholic faith
3. Only one Godparent / Sponsor is required by Church law. This Godparent / Sponsor may be a man or a woman. However, if two Godparents are selected (the more common practice), then there should ordinarily be one man and one woman chosen.
4. In extraordinary situations when two Catholic Godparents / Sponsors meeting all of the above requirements cannot be found, then a baptized person who belongs to another Christian denomination (e.g. Episcopalian, Methodist, Lutheran,) may serve as a Christian Witness alongside a Godparent / Sponsor who does meet the criteria. However, Catholics who have joined another Christian denomination are not permitted to serve as Christian Witnesses.



