

GODPARENTS

Choosing the godmother and godfather is a very exciting part of the preparation for Baptism. The title of godparent (the theologically correct term is “sponsor”) is not just an honorary title, but carries with it many responsibilities to the child, the family and the Church.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church says this about godparents: “So too is the role of *godfather and godmother*, who must be firm believers, able and ready to help the newly baptized....on the road of Christian life. Their task is a truly ecclesial function.” (CCC 1255)

The godparent (sponsor) is seen as the official representative of the Catholic community, the Mother Church, into which the child is being baptized. The Church asks that the god parents offer their help and support to the parents in the faith formation of the child. The godparents should be role models of Christian living, offering guidance and inspiration to the child.

So the choosing of the godparents is a serious undertaking. It requires much thought, prayer and discussion between the parents. According to Canon Law, the qualifications for the godparents are: (Canons 872-874).

The godparent must:

- Be at least sixteen years of age
- Be Catholic, confirmed, already have received Eucharist, and lead a life of faith in harmony with the duty undertaken
- Not be one of the parents of the person being baptized
- Not be under Canonical penalty.

Only one godparent (sponsor) is required for Baptism. The person must fulfill all of the canonical requirements for this role. There can be no more than two sponsors. When pastoral circumstances warrant, one of the two godparents may be a baptized non-Catholic Christian Theologically, this person is termed a Christian witness of the Baptism.

These are the guidelines of our Archdiocese. Our Parish adheres to them.

Many questions are asked about Sponsors for Baptism. We will try to answer the most common.

Our tradition always has many sponsors for a child. What will we do?

The Church record book follows Church law. Only two lines are provided for godparents. You must select the two who will be listed as official sponsors. You may have ceremonial sponsors in your own records.

My brother, sister, relative, etc. was baptized Catholic but left the Church and attends another denomination. May they be godparent?

If someone has denied the teachings of the Catholic Church, how will they be able to instruct and guide someone in the practice of our Faith? This person is not eligible to be a Catholic godparent.

May a divorced Catholic be a godparent?

A divorced person, who has not remarried, may be a godparent as long as they meet all other requirements. Divorce does not deny Sacraments to anyone. Re-marriage outside the Church would.

May we have two sponsors of the same sex? (two brothers, two sisters, etc.)

Canon 873 states: Only one male or one female sponsor, or one of each sex shall be a sponsor.