

Godparent Guide

Requirements to be a Catholic Godparent:

"Each child may have a godfather and a godmother, the word 'godparents' is used in the rite to describe both." (Rite of Baptism for Children 6)

Only one godparent is necessary. The godparent must be a fully initiated Catholic (Baptized, Confirmed, received Eucharist), at least 16 years old, and must be leading a sacramental life in harmony with the church. (Cf. CIC, can. 874) The godparent should be willing to accept the responsibility of assisting the parents in developing the faith life of the child.

The godparent may not be the father or the mother of the one to be baptized. (Cf. CIC, can. 874) 4. Although people of some cultures sometimes choose multiple godparents, only two names can actually be entered in the Baptismal Register. (CIC, can. 873)

A baptized and believing Christian from a separated church or community may act as a Christian witness at the request of the parents, but there must be a Catholic godparent. (Cf. CIC, can. 874.)

Godparents should be invited and encouraged to attend Baptismal Preparation in order to better understand their role as godparents. If they are from another parish, a letter of recommendation from their pastor is required.

Choosing a Godparent:

The day of Baptism is a very special day. Baptism is the first of the seven sacraments of the Catholic Church and the gateway into the Christian life. This sacrament is celebrated only once in a person's life, making it a day to be remembered.

How to choose:

- 1)** Prayerfully consider a few things: 1) Does the person truly exemplify the faith, by living according to the teachings of the Catholic Church?
- 2)** Does the person live a life in harmony with the Church? 3) Does the person regularly practice their faith by participation in the sacramental life of the Church?
- 3)** Godparents should not be chosen because of family expectations or pressure. The role of the godparent(s) is to be a presence, specifically a spiritual presence, in a child's life.

The Role of a Godparent in the Child's Spiritual Life

Godparents are a very special part of the sacrament, as they support and bolster the mission of the parents to bring up their child in the faith and to know God. The Godparents have two primary responsibilities:

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- 1)** To accept the responsibility to help the parents to raise the child in faith.
- 2)** To represent the entire Church

Expectations of a Godparent:

- 1)** To be part of the child's lifelong journey of faith.
- 2)** To be a model of faith through the lived example of life in harmony with the Catholic Church.
- 3)** To be a good example to the child
- 4)** To practice the Catholic faith regularly.

Reference: The Catholic Telegraph, February 17, 2022.