

ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF A GODPARENT AT BAPTISM

Role of Godparent:

It is an ancient custom of the Church that at baptism, godparents be present to represent the expanded spiritual family of the person being baptized. Godparents then assist the parents in their role of developing and safeguarding the grace given to their child in Baptism. They provide ongoing spiritual influence and guidance in their godchild's life. Each baptized child may have a godfather or godmother, or both a godmother and a godfather.

Requirements for a Godparent:

1. The godparent should be mature enough to understand, accept and carry out the duties of a godparent. That person normally should be at least 16 years of age, but exceptions are possible.
2. The godparent must have received the three sacraments of initiation: baptism, confirmation and Eucharist.
3. The godparent should be living an exemplary life consistent with Christian faith and the responsibilities of a godparent. This entails observing the Ten Commandments, assenting to the teachings of the Catholic Church and doing one's best to follow the Precepts of the Church:
 - a. Attend Mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation and rest from servile labor (unnecessary work and activities).
 - b. Confess serious sins at least once a year.
 - c. Receive the Sacrament of the Eucharist (Holy Communion) at least once per year during the Easter season.
 - d. Observe the days of fasting and abstinence established by the Church. These include fasting on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, and abstaining from meat on the Fridays of Lent.
 - e. Help provide for the material needs of the Church according to your ability.
4. The godparent must be a member of the Catholic Church. However, a baptized and believing Christian not belonging to the Catholic Church may act as a Christian witness as long as there is also a Catholic godparent.

Godparent's role at the celebration of Baptism:

1. Stand with the parents, since the mother or father usually holds the child.
2. Respond "I am/We are" when asked if you are ready to help the parents "in their duty as Christian parents."
3. Trace a sign of the cross on the child's forehead at the conclusion of the reception rite.
4. Listen to the admonition at the Renunciation of Sin and Profession of Faith, responding "I DO" to each of the questions asked of you and the parents.
5. Join in the Lord's Prayer and the various prayer responses.
6. Following the baptism in water, the newly baptized is anointed with Chrism and reference is made to the white garment which he or she wears. The godparent then lights the baptismal candle from the Easter candle, symbolizing that the newly baptized is filled with the Light of the World, Jesus Christ. It is the responsibility of the parents and godparent(s), to enable the child "to walk always as a child of the light," keeping the faith alive in his or her heart.

St. John the Evangelist Church



**55 Martha Street
Spencerport, New York 14559
(585) 352-5481**

**CERTIFICATE OF ELIGIBILITY
TO SERVE AS A GODPARENT AT BAPTISM**

**I, _____, understand my role as a godparent
Godparent's name (Please Print)
and the requirements needed to be a godparent for:**

Child's name (Please Print)

I accept these responsibilities and acknowledge that I have received the three sacraments of Christian Initiation (Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Eucharist) and that I strive to live the teachings of my Catholic faith.

Godparent's signature

Date

The undersigned acknowledges the godparent's signature by which the godparent attests to knowing and meeting the requirements of a godparent.

Signature of Godparent's Pastor/Pastoral Administrator

Date

Name of Parish

Address of Parish

Parish seal