



Saint Edward Roman Catholic Church
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GUIDELINES for BAPTISMAL GODPARENTS and CONFIRMATION SPONSORS

Being a godparent for Baptism or a Sponsor for Confirmation is an important role in the Catholic Church. It is not merely ceremonial. It is a ministry and a responsibility. The Sponsor stands for the Church and this "standing" must manifest an authenticity.

The Church has requirements that must be fulfilled in order to be a Godparent/Sponsor. However, the first question is not whether or not the Church will permit me to be a one, but whether I can allow myself to be one. You are promising to lift that child up in prayer, and to serve as a mentor and guide throughout their life. Each one of us must ask, "Does my integrity allow me to stand at the altar and publicly profess that the faith I proclaim in word is truly a faith I practice?"

The following guidelines are meant to assist your evaluation to take on the role of being a Godparent or Sponsor.

REQUIREMENTS FOR GODPARENTS & SPONSORS:

1. The Godparent/Sponsor needs to be at least 16 years old unless the pastor grants an exception for a lower age, provided there is just cause.
2. A Catholic who has received the sacraments of Confirmation and Holy Eucharist. *If you have not received these sacraments, we encourage you to complete the Christian Initiation at an appropriate time.*
3. A Catholic who has left the Catholic Church may not be a sponsor. A non-practicing Catholic may be admitted as a sponsor only if the pastor or minister of the sacrament can determine that the person is in the process of returning to the regular practice of the faith.
4. A Catholic who does not attend Mass weekly and does not participate in the life and support of the Church is considered non-practicing, and should not be a sponsor.
5. A person who has left the Catholic Church may not be a Christian witness, nor may a non-baptized person serve in this capacity.
6. A parent cannot be the sponsor for his/her child. An adoptive parent is discouraged from exercising this function.
7. If the Godparent/Sponsor is married, the marriage must be recognized by the Catholic Church. If you are a Catholic who is married without the blessing of the Church, you may not serve as a Godparent/Sponsor.

Thank you for your willingness to be a Godparent or Sponsor!



Diocese of Bridgeport
BAPTISM AND/OR CONFIRMATION GODPARENT/SPONSOR AFFIRMATION

I. Some Basic Church Norms Concerning Godparents / Sponsors

It is the very ancient custom of the Church that at the celebration of the sacrament of baptism or confirmation, a godparent/sponsor is present. The function of the godparent/sponsor is; A) together with the celebrant who baptizes or confirms, to represent the Church in receiving the person into the communion of the Church; and B) to support the person in living the Catholic Christian life.

In accord with **Canon 874 of the Code of Canon Law**, the Church can admit a person to the role of godparent/sponsor if; A) he or she is more than sixteen years of age; B) is a baptized Catholic who has been Confirmed and has already received the Blessed Eucharist and lives a life of faith which befits the role to be undertaken; and C) is neither the father or the mother of the person.

Given the functions and role a godparent/sponsor exercises, a non-Catholic Christian cannot be admitted as a godparent/sponsor; however, he or she can be a witness. A person baptized as a Catholic who is now sacramentally or canonically ineligible to serve as a godparent may not serve as a Christian witness. These include those who subsequently renounced the faith in favor of another church community or entity. Those unbaptized and those whose Baptism is considered invalid by the Catholic Church may not serve in the role of Christian witness, but are welcome to be present at the ceremony.

Note that the Catholic seeking to be admitted as a godparent/sponsor “lives a life of faith which befits the role to be undertaken.” This phraseology means that the candidate for godparent/sponsor; A) sincerely believes and strives to put into practice the Word of God as taught by the Catholic Church; B) regularly takes part in the Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation; and C) if married, was married in accordance with the requirements of the Catholic Church.

II. Affirmation of the Prospective Godparent /Sponsor

If therefore, you seek to be admitted as a godparent/sponsor, and are convinced that you qualify in accordance with the conditions listed above, kindly make the following **solemn affirmation** before God:

I, *(print full name)* _____, a practicing Catholic seeking to be admitted as a godparent/sponsor; solemnly affirm that I fulfill the requirements of the Catholic Church for this role as presented above. I **intend**, with the grace of God, to continue the practice of my Catholic faith, and I will, to the best of my ability, carry out the obligations of my role as godparent/sponsor.

(PLEASE PRINT)

Date of Ceremony

Name of Baptism or Confirmation Candidate (circle one)

Parish/Town

Signature of Godparent/Sponsor

Today's Date

Godparent/Sponsor's email address

Godparent/Sponsor's phone number

On completion of this form, please present, mail, or fax to the Priest or Deacon seven (7) days prior to the date the sacrament(s) will be celebrated.