

How to Choose Godparents according to the Guidelines of the Catholic Church

The Godparent serves three important functions:

1. The child being baptized is welcomed into the Church community. The Godparent represents the Church community, the family of God.
2. The Godparent is to be a model of one who strives to live the Catholic Faith. Thus, the role of Godparent is not a one day, ceremonial role during the rite of Baptism. Throughout the child's life, the Godparent should offer an enriching spiritual relationship-guiding, advising, and nurturing the child in his faith development.
3. The Godparent acts as a loving support to the parents who are the primary religious educators of their child.

Guidelines for Godparents:

- Only one sponsor is necessary. There may be two, one of each sex.
- The Godparent you choose must be a member of the Catholic Church, canonically free to carry out this office. [*This would indicate that Catholics living in an invalid marriage (not according to the Church regulations) and those who are cohabiting (living together without marriage) are ineligible.*]
- The Godparent must know the fundamental truths of the Catholic faith, **be a practicing Catholic who attends Sunday Mass**, receives the Sacraments regularly, and sees to the religious instruction of his family.
- The Godparents you choose must be mature enough to undertake this role, at least 16 years of age.
- Must be fully initiated, having received the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist
- Must not be the mother or father of the one to be baptized.
- Catholic sponsors must submit a **Godparent Certification** form at least two weeks prior to the baptismal date.
- Both parents and each sponsor must attend a one-hour seminar about the Sacrament of Baptism. This requirement may be waived for any parent or sponsor who has attended a similar seminar within a three-year period before the Baptism. A letter or certificate must be presented as witness to having attended the seminar.

Please note that a non-Catholic Christian may be named as an official witness only if there is another sponsor who is Catholic.