

GUIDELINES FOR SPONSORS IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

We provide the following guidelines for parents to assist in selecting a suitable sponsor for your child at Baptism. The role of sponsor/ godparent is a religious function and requires that the person chosen as sponsor for your child be an example of living as a good Catholic.

Each child being baptized is to have a sponsor. Parents themselves may not act as a sponsor for their child.

While it is traditional to have two sponsors at Baptism, having only one sponsor is acceptable. However, no more than two sponsors are permitted at Baptism and the two may not be of the same sex.

A Sponsor/godparent has to be at least 16 years of age who has received the sacraments of Baptism, Eucharist and Confirmation.

A Catholic, who does not attend Mass and receive the sacraments regularly, would not be suitable as a sponsor.

A Catholic who is married outside the Church and living in an invalid marriage or one who has chosen to "live together" outside of marriage would not be eligible for sponsorship.

A Baptized Non-Catholic may be admitted as a "Christian Witness" at Baptism together with a Catholic Sponsor. Similarly, a Catholic may act as a Christian Witness for a person being baptized in another Christian community.

A Catholic who has left the Catholic Church and joined another church could not be admitted as a sponsor nor Christian Witness.

Sponsors / godparents need to obtain a **Letter of Eligibility** from the parish in which they now live. No one can be admitted to this important role without such certification. Letters should be presented at the Rectory at least one week prior to the Baptism.

Baptized Non-Catholics should provide proof of their Baptism in a Christian Church.

This list may seem unduly long but it can help to avoid very serious problems should your choice for sponsor be turned down because of one or more of the items listed above. Remember, being a sponsor is not a mere "title of honor". It requires a serious commitment to your child and to the Church.