

Godparents

Those chosen to be godparents must provide a letter from their parish certifying they are practicing Catholics and fulfill the Church's requirements for godparents [See Godparent section below]. Use forms furnished by St Raphael Church.

The Role of the Godparent

Godparents play a very special role in the faith life of the Child. They are chosen because they are an inspiration of how one is to live the faith. Thus godparents are model Catholics who assist and support the parents in handing on the faith to their child. Choosing someone to be a godparent is separate from choosing someone who will take care of your child in the event of your death. The person who is chosen to be a godparent is someone who is an active participant in the life of the Church and proclaims their faith through their everyday actions. Ideally this person may also serve as a sponsor for confirmation.

Requirements to be a Godparent

Given the above, the Roman Catholic Church has the following requirements to be a godparent. These requirements are universal. Thus, before you invite someone to be a godparent, please make sure they fulfill the Church's canonical requirements.

A godparent:

- Must be at least 16 years of age;
- Must have received Catholic baptism, confirmation, and first communion
- Must be practicing Catholics [regularly participating in Sunday Mass and reception of communion; must be living a life in conformity with Catholic teaching].
- May not be a parent of the child receiving baptism.
- If married, the marriage must be recognized by the Catholic Church.

Godparents must also provide the following:

1. A letter from their parish certifying they are Catholics in good standing and fulfill the canonical requirements of the Church; Forms included in your baptism packet.

Number of Godparents

There may be a **godfather** and a **godmother** for baptism. **You may not have two** godfathers or two godmothers. A family may also choose to have just one godparent.

Christian Witness

A baptized non-Catholic may serve as a Christian Witness along with a Catholic godparent. If the Catholic godparent is female, the Christian Witness must be male [and vice versa]. A Christian Witness at baptism does not take the place of a godparent. A Christian witness is exactly that: a witness that the baptized person did receive the sacrament of baptism.

The name of the Christian witness must be provided ahead of time along with the information for the godparent. Requirements for a Christian witness are:

- Must be at least 16 years of age;
- A validly baptized Christian [baptized with water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit];
- Someone other than a parent;
- Must be living an upright Christian life.