

# Godparent/Sponsor Eligibility Requirements

## **CODE OF CANON LAW: BOOK IV. FUNCTION OF THE CHURCH (Cann. 834-848)**

### CHAPTER IV.

#### SPONSORS (applicable for both baptism and confirmation)

Can. 872 Insofar as possible, a person to be baptized is to be given a sponsor who assists an adult in Christian initiation or together with the parents presents an infant for baptism. A sponsor also helps the baptized person to lead a Christian life in keeping with baptism and to fulfill faithfully the obligations inherent in it.

Can. 873 There is to be only one male sponsor or one female sponsor or one of each.

Can. 874 §1. To be permitted to take on the function of sponsor a person must:

1) be designated by the one to be baptized, by the parents or the person who takes their place, or in their absence by the pastor or minister and have the aptitude and intention of fulfilling this function;

2) have completed the sixteenth year of age, unless the diocesan bishop has established another age, or the pastor or minister has granted an exception for a just cause;

3) be a Catholic who has been confirmed and has already received the most holy sacrament of the Eucharist and who leads a life of faith\*\* in keeping with the function to be taken on;

4) not be bound by any canonical penalty legitimately imposed or declared (*i.e. formally excommunicated*);

5) not be the father or mother of the one to be baptized.

§2. A baptized Christian person who belongs to a non-Catholic community may participate together with a Catholic sponsor only as a witness of the baptism.

\*\*What constitutes a "life lived in harmony with the Catholic faith" as selection criteria for a godparent/sponsor?

- a person who has a prayer life and worships regularly with their parish community;
- a person who treats and compensates his/her employees justly and fairly;
- a person who practices chastity in a dating, engaged or marital relationship;
- a person who stewards their money or material treasures to their parish and/or a charity of their choice;
- a person who accepts and respects the dignity of other human beings regardless of race, ethnic origin, etc.
- If married, must be in a valid marriage recognized by the Church.
- in short, a person who is happy being Catholic, freely acknowledges it to others, is aware of God's mercy and endeavors to live Catholic, biblical values to the best of their ability.

If you have further questions about this contact Amy Allert at [amy-allert@sttaustin.org](mailto:amy-allert@sttaustin.org).