

**Ask a Priest!**  
**June 21, 2021**

***Question: Do I have to be confirmed to serve as a Godparent at someone's Baptism or Confirmation?***

**Answer:** Like most organizations, in order to mentor a newcomer in a serious way, Catholic Godparents/Sponsors need to be full-fledged & active members themselves. Confirmation is the step that publicly affirms one's full initiation and willingness to give public witness to others regarding Christ and the Christian & Catholic Faith. It also follows and completes one's Baptism (see CCC n. 1285, 1298, & 1304).

Young people are usually given the opportunity in high school to choose whether they wish to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation and be fully initiated, allowing them to one day assume the privilege & responsibility of mentoring others in such a significant way. Should they opt out in high school, Confirmation is still a necessary step before they can serve in either of these two roles. For serious reasons, the Bishop may consider exceptional circumstances for those wishing to serve as Godparents.

Godparents & Sponsors usually sign a form solemnly swearing to their readiness to stand as an example of Christian & Catholic living, including that they are...

- "a Catholic in Good Standing who regularly practices his/her Catholic Faith" (implying regular Mass and Confession, and striving to live a life that imitates the challenging Ways & virtues of Jesus).
- "at least 16 years of age."
- "If married, living a married life recognized as Valid by the Catholic Church, not living together without marriage" (appreciating Christ's teaching and bearing witness to His high estimation of marriage.)
- "Planning to attend or already having attended a seminar on Baptism"

Non-Catholic Christians are invited to bear witness to all that they accept of the "universal" Catholic Faith in Jesus Christ, aware that there are elements they do not accept. They cannot be fully-fledged Godparents since they do not share some elements of Catholic belief in Jesus Christ. However, appreciating what we have in common they can serve as a "Christian Witness" at a Catholic Baptism.