



## Godparent/Sponsor Qualifications for Baptism/Confirmation



To avoid embarrassment or hard feelings (which happens almost once a month it seems), please consider these requirements before asking someone to serve in this NOT HONORARY, but CRITICALLY IMPORTANT ROLE. Godparent/Sponsor requirements consist of:

1. Being at least 16 years of age and having received all the *Sacraments of Initiation*, namely *Baptism*, *Confirmation* and *Eucharist/Communion*.
2. If there are two godparents, one must be male and one must be female, corresponding to biological parents.
3. Being currently registered and active in a parish. That is, the godparent/sponsor attends Mass weekly; is involved in the life of the parish; and supports the church monetarily according to his/ her means. (A Catholic parish donation envelope, even an empty one if finances warrant, placed regularly in the offering, is a good indicator of ongoing attendance at weekly Mass, especially if the person is not known by parish staff.)
4. If married, being in a valid Catholic marriage.

Please note that being baptized, confirmed and/or having received First Holy Communion at a church years ago does not equate to *current, active membership*.

All baptized Catholic godparents/sponsors are asked to provide a *Sponsor Certificate* from the parish where they practice their faith weekly in order to attest to their suitability to serve as a godparent or sponsor. This is not done to create unnecessary hurdles for parents, godparents and sponsors. This is not a case of “the Catholic Church has too many rules”. Holy Mother Church desires the best, the *absolute* best, for her children, particularly in matters of Faith, Her most important and vital concern. She wants to ensure that the child has a godparent/sponsor who can indeed serve as a good role model and fitting mentor for the child in his/her life of faith. Parents would never entrust the health of their child to a pediatrician who did not actually practice medicine, nor to a teacher who did not know the subject matter. Similarly, children, our most precious gift from God, should grow, develop and be nurtured in the Catholic faith by those who know “The Way”.

Only one eligible Catholic godparent/sponsor is required for baptism/confirmation. A baptized Christian of another denomination who is at least 16 years of age, may serve as a *Christian Witness* for baptism. Baptized Catholics, even non-practicing ones, may not serve as a Christian Witness. By its very definition, a Christian Witness is a person of another ecclesial community other than Catholicism. Furthermore, a non-practicing Catholic cannot serve as a suitable role model for the new initiated Catholic who deserves a good mentor in the Faith.