

About Godparents And Confirmation Sponsors



Ancient custom in the Catholic Church

teaches that all of the baptized must have a godparent, or two godparents (one godfather and one godmother). When a baptized person is later confirmed, they must have one Confirmation Sponsor. Godparents and Confirmation Sponsors must be fully initiated members of the Catholic Church, who themselves have been baptized, confirmed and have received their First Holy Communion, and who believe and practice the Faith. If married, they must be in a marriage recognized by the Church.

Godparents and Confirmation Sponsors

accompany the baptized and confirmed on their journey to holiness and heaven in the Way of Life revealed to us by Jesus Christ and his Church. Godparents and Sponsors help the Christian persevere in faith, grow in the holiness, and cooperate with grace received in the Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Communion). Godparents have a special role in helping the baptized person prepare for first Confession and First Holy Communion.

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become a spiritual member of the baptized person's immediate family. Being a good example and witness to the Faith are among their most important duties.



Qualifications to be a Godparent or Sponsor

- Sixteen years of age (minimum).
- Mature enough for the responsibility.
- Example of Christian living.
- Received the Sacraments of Initiation: Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Communion.
- Regular practice of the Catholic faith, including weekly Mass attendance.
- Married within the Church (if married).
- Cannot be a parent of the one to be baptized or confirmed.



Requirements for Two Godparents

For Baptism, there may be ONE or TWO Godparents. When there are TWO, one must be male (godfather) and the other female (godmother).

What is a Christian Witness at a Baptism?

If one Godparent is a qualified Catholic, then the other may be a baptized person of another denomination, known as a Christian Witness. This person's name will be recorded in the sacramental registry and notated "Christian Witness." However, a Christian Witness's name will not appear on the Baptismal Certificate.

Requirements for a Christian Witness

- The other Godparent must be Catholic.
- At least sixteen years of age.

- Baptized Christian.
- Living according to the moral teachings of Christianity.
- Cannot be a parent of the one to be baptized.
- Cannot be an inactive Catholic or a former Catholic.

Some Questions and Answers:

If the Godparent or Confirmation Sponsor can't be present, will a proxy do?

Yes. Godparents and Sponsors can still take on this role if they can't be present when the sacrament takes place. However, a proxy must be present in their stead. The proxy's name is also entered in the parish's sacramental register, with the notation "proxy." However, the proxy's name does not appear on the Baptism or Confirmation Certificate.

Can an unbaptized person be a Godparent, Sponsor or Christian Witness?

No. All Godparents and Sponsors must be fully initiated Catholics. Moreover, the Rites of Baptism and Confirmation entail a renewal of baptismal promises, which only a baptized person can make.

Can a priest be a Godparent?

Yes. If he is the Celebrant, he must designate a proxy.

Can a priest or deacon be a Confirmation Sponsor?

Yes. A priest may concelebrate a Confirmation Mass and be a Sponsor at the same time. If the priest is the Celebrant, he must designate a proxy to stand-in as Sponsor on his behalf.

