

THE ROLE OF **GODPARENTS**

What is a godparent?

A godparent's responsibilities extend far beyond standing with the family at church on the day of baptism. A godparent is expected to be a spiritual guide for the child through their whole life. Whether the godparent is a blood relative of the child or a close friend of the family, the expectation is that every effort will be made by the godparent to get to know their godchild well and help the parents by sharing their Catholic faith with the child in every way possible from the day of the baptismal ceremony to all the days beyond.

Each godparent must meet all the following criteria per the Code of Canon Law of the Catholic Church:

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 (godparent) a person must:

- 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;
- 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;
- 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;
- not be bound by any canonical penalty legitimately imposed or declared; (i.e. in need of marital annulment etc.)
- not be the father or mother of the one to be baptized.

Non-Catholic Christian Witnesses

Baptized non-Catholic Christians may not be "official" godparents for the record book, but they may be "Christian Witnesses" of faith for your child and on the day of baptism. As long as one eligible Catholic godparent is chosen, one non-Catholic Christian Witness may also be chosen. Christian Witnesses should be exemplary models of faith and active members of their faith communities. A Catholic person who does not meet the criteria for godparents cannot be a Christian Witness.

Godparents by Proxy

If the godparent cannot be present in person on the day of the baptism, they may appoint another person to represent them on the day of baptism. Requirements for the proxy are the same as those listed above for a godparent.

Godparent Eligibility Form

Once you have selected godparents that meet the criteria listed above, please give the **Godparent Eligibility Form** to the proposed godparents for them to complete with their pastor, if not members of Ss. Peter & Paul Parish. If your proposed godparents are members of Ss. Peter & Paul Parish, our staff will verify with the pastor that they are active members in good standing with the Church and will confirm with you that they may proceed as godparents. Once it is confirmed that your chosen godparents are fit for this role, please complete the **Godparent Information Form**.



GODPARENT ELIGIBILITY FORM

The Code of Canon Law (Can. 892-893) lists the following as criteria for one to assume the role of baptismal godparent:

- 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;
- 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;
- 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;
- not be bound by any canonical penalty legitimately imposed or declared; (i.e. in need of marital annulment etc.)
- not be the father or mother of the one to be baptized.

_____ has been asked by the parents/guardians of
(Godparent's Name, printed)

_____ to serve as their godparent.
(Child's Name, printed)

This form, signed and sealed, will affirm that the above-proposed godparent meets the necessary canonical requirements to serve as baptismal godparent.

Pastor's Signature (or delegate of pastor)

Date

CHURCH SEAL

Parish (Name, City, State)

Please complete this form and return to the proposed godparent or mail to the address below:

Ss. Peter & Paul Parish

Attn: Baptism Coordinator

207 Vandalia Street

Collinsville, Illinois 62234