

How do I Choose a Baptism Sponsor?

Have you ever wondered why some people have very involved sponsors while others don't even know theirs? Perhaps part of the problem is that many sponsors were chosen for the wrong reasons, or because those same people don't really know what they're supposed to do!

Too often parents want to honour a special friend, repay a favour, or encourage a nonrelative to have a closer relationship with their child. While all of these motives are well intentioned, they are not ideal. If you want to be happy about your decision, consider the following.

The Role of Sponsors

The sponsors play a special role not just in the celebration of Baptism, but especially in the faith-life of the child. It is an honour to be chosen as sponsor, but there is much more to the role than just being honoured. The sponsor is someone who acts as mentor, a "spiritual" parent, a "companion on the journey" of becoming a more committed and responsible Catholic Christian.

Requirement in order to Fulfill Role of Sponsor

To be this mentor for your child in the best possible way, the sponsor needs to be:

1. at least sixteen (16) years of age
2. a confirmed Catholic
3. a practicing Catholic:
 - Registered in a Parish
 - Weekly participation in the Sunday Eucharist
 - Regular celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation
 - **MARITAL STATUS** in accordance with the Catholic Church
4. Ready to commit to accept the privileges and responsibilities of a sponsor
5. It is most preferable that there be TWO sponsors: one man and one woman and that they both be practicing ROMAN CATHOLICS. (Canon 873)
6. The sponsor must not be the father or mother of the one to be baptized since the parents already have a privileged role in raising the child in the faith.
7. Though possible, grandparents ought not be a sponsor, for they already have a role in the child's faith upbringing as a grandparent.

The role is an important one to be taken seriously. Take your time to make this choice in a meaningful way.

Christian Witness

1. The Christian Witness is a provision for non-Catholics.
2. One Christian Witness is allowed only if there is one baptized sponsor (Canon 874).
3. A Christian Witness is a baptized Christian and a member of a non-Catholic ecclesial community (e.g. Anglican, Presbyterian, etc.).
4. A Christian Witness is a witness to the Baptism, **not a sponsor**.
5. It is not necessary to have a Christian witness
6. A Roman Catholic **cannot** be a Christian Witness.
7. If there is only one sponsor, that person must be a **CONFIRMED ROMAN CATHOLIC**.
8. No child may be baptized without a sponsor.

The task of choosing a sponsor for your child should be done with care, and with right intentions. It takes a community of faithful Christians to raise and pass on our faith to the next generation.