

Godparents' Sponsor Certificates Requirements:

Celebrating Baptism

Catholic Godparents must obtain a Sponsor Certificate from the Catholic Church they belong to and attend.



Role of the Godparents:

The godparents, together with the parents, must be willing to help the baptized grow in love for Christ and neighbor. By word and example, the godparents will encourage the candidate to live the Christian life and fulfill faithfully the obligations connected with it (cf. Code of Canon Law, c. 872).

Church law permits two godparents for Baptism. Only one is necessary. If one godparent is chosen who has been baptized but belongs to a non-Catholic Christian community, they may act as a *Christian* witness at a baptism, provided there is also one Catholic sponsor. If two are chosen, there must be one of each sex (cf. Code of Canon Law, c. 873). If both godparents are Catholic, sponsor certificates must be submitted to Our Lady of the Assumption Parish, one week prior to the actual Baptism. **No exceptions.** If you choose to have more than one Godfather or Godmother, only ONE name will appear in the Baptism Register Record of this parish and on the Baptism Certificate. They will be able to participate during the Baptism, but will not be recognized by the Catholic Church in the documentation of the baptism.

Please keep in mind the following requirements for Baptismal sponsors when choosing Godparents:

- A sponsor must be fully initiated into the Catholic Church. That is, they have received the three Sacraments of Initiation: Baptism, Holy Eucharist, and Confirmation.
- A Sponsor must be at least 16 years of age.
- Since the sponsor is seen as a faith role model, a person who has been asked to be a sponsor should be living according to the codes, canons, laws and teachings of the Church. For example, if the person is married, it should be in a marriage that is recognized as valid by the Catholic Church.
- A sponsor should be a participant in the community life of the Church. This means he or she must be registered in a parish, receive the Eucharist regularly, and lead a life in harmony with the faith and role to be undertaken.
- A sponsor for Baptism cannot be the mother or father of the one to be baptized.
- The minister of Baptism shall require a testimonial letter (sponsor certificate) from the pastor of the sponsor.

Registration is required in order to obtain a Sponsor Certificate.

In the course of the year, many people who have been asked to serve as sponsor for the Sacraments of Baptism or Confirmation call or come to the rectory to request a sponsor certificate. Most of the time there is no problem. However, there are some times when we are not able to issue a certificate to someone.

In order to obtain a sponsor certificate from our parish, the person requesting a sponsor certificate must be only **registered** at Holy Family parish. (A family cannot be registered at multiple parishes.) Even if he/she has received all of their sacraments here at Holy Family years ago but now live elsewhere, he/she is **not** considered a member of this parish. Rather, he/she is a member of the parish in whose territory he/she **resides**. This is the parish where the sponsor certificate must be obtained.

*Please note: If the Godparent(s) are a registered member of Holy Family Parish, they must still obtain a sponsor certificate by contacting the rectory office. Please share this with relatives and friends. This is Church Law, not the whim of the parish clergy.

It is so unfortunate when someone comes to us seeking a sponsor certificate and we are unable to give one because one (or more) of the above requirements are not being adhered to by the individual.

Register in a parish, practice your faith on a regular basis, follow the Church teaching, and there will be no problem obtaining a "certificate."