

Frequently Asked Questions

about

THE QUALIFICATION REQUIRED TO BE A GODPARENT

Q. 1. To qualify as Godparent, does the person have to meet certain requirements?

A. 1. Yes! Not everyone qualifies to be a Godparent. The Catholic Church provides a detailed guideline that must be obeyed. "To be admitted to undertake the office of Sponsor, a person must:" [Canon Law # 874.1] a. "be appointed by the candidate for baptism, or by the parents or whoever stands in their place, or failing these, by the parish priest or the minister; to be appointed the person must be suitable for this role and have the intention of fulfilling it;" [Canon Law # 874.1.1]

b. "be not less than 16 years of age, unless a different age has been stipulated by the diocesan Bishop, or unless the parish priest or the minister considers that there is a just reason for an exception to be made;" [Canon Law # 874.1.2]

c. "be a catholic who has been confirmed and has received the blessed Eucharist, and who lives a life of faith which befits the role to be undertaken;" [Canon Law # 874.1.3]

d. "not labour under a canonical penalty, whether imposed or declared;" [Canon Law # 874.1.4]

e. "not be either the father or the mother of the person to be baptised." [Canon Law # 874.1.5]

f. "A baptised person who belongs to a non-catholic ecclesial community may be admitted only in company with a catholic Sponsor, and then simply as a witness to the baptism." [Canon Law # 874.2]

Q. 2. Is there any regulations that disqualifies a person as a Godparent?

A. 2. Yes, what follows is a list of personal characteristics that disqualify a person as a Godparent:

a. the person has no intention of fulfilling his obligations as a Godparent.

b. the person is younger than the age that has been stipulated by the diocesan Bishop, usually age 16.

c. the person is not a Catholic.

- d. the person has not received the Sacrament of Baptism in the Catholic faith.**
- e. the person has not received the Sacrament of Confirmation in the Catholic faith.**
- f. the person has not received the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist in the Catholic faith.**
- g. the person is not living his faith in accordance with the teachings of the Catholic Church. (Example: The person has not been at Mass for 2, 5 or 10 years. The person employs birth control methods.)**
- h. the person belongs to a religious Order (preventing him/her from making this commitment).**
- i. the person is the spouse of the one seeking Baptism.**
- j. the person is a biological or adoptive father or mother of the child.**
- k. the person has incurred an official excommunication or "latae sententiae," by the very commission of the offense. (Example: involved in one or more abortions.)**
- l. the person is a member of a condemned society.**
- m. the person is a public sinner. (Example: Prostitution, living common-law.)**
- n. the person is a heretic. "Heresy is the obstinate post- baptismal denial of some truth which must be believed with divine and catholic faith, or it is likewise an obstinate doubt concerning the same." [Canon Law # 2089]**
- o. the person belongs to a schism. "Schism is the refusal of submission to the Roman Pontiff or of communion with the members of the Church subject to him." [Canon Law # 2089]**
- p. the person is involved in a mix-marriage and believes his/her children should choose their own religion when they grow up.**
- q. the person believes that all religions are equal or that other religions are equal to the Catholic Church.**
- r. the person is involved in an invalid marriage. (Example: Justice of the Peace, marriage outside the Church.)**
- s. the person is not registered with a parish, not belonging to any specific faith community.**