

The following document outlines the requirements that need to be met in order to be considered valid godparent(s) permitted for a Catholic Baptism. The document serves two purposes. First, it describes the requirements the godparents must meet in order to be listed as such for a Catholic Baptism. Second, it can be used in-lieu of requesting a letter of good standing from the Parish in whose boundary the godparent(s) live.

Please read, sign and date. By signing this document, you, the parents, are taking the responsibility for verifying the individuals chosen to act as godparents are eligible to carry out that role per the Code of Canon Law summarized in the document.

Father Tom Schliessmann, Pastor, St. Joan of Arc Parish

About Godparents

Requirements to be a Catholic Godparent:

- There is to be only one male sponsor or one female sponsor or one of each. (Cf. CIC, can. 873).
- The godparent must be a fully initiated Catholic (Baptized, Confirmed, received Eucharist), at least 16 years old, and must be leading a sacramental life in harmony with the church. (Cf. CIC, can. 874) The godparent should be willing to accept the responsibility of assisting the parents in developing the faith life of the child.
- The godparent may not be the father or the mother of the one to be baptized. (Cf. CIC, can. 874)
- A baptized person who belongs to a non-Catholic ecclesial community may not be admitted except as a witness to baptism and together with a Catholic sponsor. (Cf. CIC, can. 874.)

Choosing a Godparent:

The day of Baptism is a very special day. Baptism is the first of the seven sacraments of the Catholic Church and the gateway into the Christian life. This sacrament is celebrated only once in a person's life, making it a day to be remembered.

How to choose:

- 1) Prayerfully consider a few things: 1) Does the person truly exemplify the faith, by living according to the teachings of the Catholic Church? 2) Does the person live a life in harmony with the Church? 3) Does the person regularly practice their faith by participation in the sacramental life of the Church?
- 2) Godparents should not be chosen because of family expectations or pressure. The role of the godparent(s) is to be a presence, specifically a spiritual presence, in a child's life.
- 3) If one cannot be found, St. Joan of Arc is happy to provide one.

The Role of a Godparent in the Child's Spiritual Life

Godparents are a very special part of the sacrament, as they support and bolster the mission of the parents to bring up their child in the faith and to know God. The Godparents have two primary responsibilities:

- 1) To accept the responsibility to help the parents to raise the child in faith.
- 2) To represent the entire Church

Expectations of a Godparent:

- 1) To be part of the child's lifelong journey of faith.
- 2) To be a model of faith through the lived example of life in harmony with the Catholic Church.
- 3) To be a good example to the child

Father: _____

Date: _____

Mother: _____