

How to Choose Godparents according to the Guidelines of the Catholic Church

An ancient tradition in the Church is that the individual who is to be baptized have a Godparent or Sponsor.

The Godparent serves three important functions:

1. The child being baptized is welcomed into the Church community. The Godparent represents the Church community, the family of God.
2. The Godparent is to be a model of the committed Catholic Christian. Thus, the role of godparent is not a one day, ceremonial role during the rite of Baptism. Throughout the child's life, the Godparent should offer an enriching spiritual relationship – guiding, advising, and nurturing the child in his/her faith development.
3. The Godparent acts as a loving support to the parents/guardians who are the primary religious educators of their child.

Who may be a Godparent?

- There may be one or two Godparents. When there are two Godparents, one is to be male and the other female.
- One Godparent must be a baptized Roman Catholic:
 - Who has received the sacraments of Eucharist and Confirmation (fully initiated Catholic)
 - Has completed their sixteenth (16th) year
 - Registered in a Catholic parish
 - Actively practicing their Catholic faith – weekly Mass attendance and reception of the sacraments
 - Living an upright life (not cohabitating or married outside the Catholic Church)
 - Has not formally left the Catholic Church and joined another faith community
 - Is not the child's parent/guardian.
- If your circumstances are such that you only have one Catholic Godparent available, a Christian witness may be named.
 - A baptized Christian
 - Actively participates in their church community
 - Is not the child's parent/guardian
- Anyone who was baptized a Roman Catholic but has joined another Christian Church may not serve as a Christian Witness.
- Godparent(s) who are not registered at St. Hilary Parish need to provide a Sponsor Certificate from the parish where they are a registered parishioner.

The Sponsor Certificate must be received by St. Hilary's prior to scheduling a date for baptism.