



THE PARISHES OF SACRED HEART AND DIVINE MERCY

Dear Friends,

Greetings in the Lord! Congratulations on being asked to be a godparent or sponsor!

In the Catholic Church, godparents and sponsors witness the celebration of the Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation.¹ More importantly, they help the newly baptized or newly confirmed to live the Christian life well by: (1) worshiping God at Mass every Sunday and on holy days of obligation and through prayer, (2) living and sharing the Good News of his love and salvation in Christ by growing in knowledge of the faith and following the teachings of Christ and his Church, and (3) caring for those in need.

Given this great privilege and responsibility, being a godparent or sponsor in the Catholic Church means taking on an official ecclesiastical office; in other words, a special function within the Church. In order to take on this office, there are certain requirements that one must fulfill. Neither the father nor mother of the one to be baptized may serve as a godparent or sponsor. For Baptism, only one godparent is required. Nevertheless, there may be two godparents: one male and one female.

The following are other qualifications to be a godparent for Baptism or a sponsor for Confirmation:

- (1) the requisite maturity to fulfill this responsibility (i.e., sixteen years old and older)
- (2) reception of the three Sacraments of Initiation: Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist
- (3) a life consistent with faith and the responsibility of a godparent (e.g., attendance at and participation in the Eucharist on Sundays and holy days of obligation, if married, in a marriage recognized by the Church, etc.),
- (4) not prohibited by the law of the Church.

A baptized person who belongs to a non-Catholic ecclesial community (e.g., Anglican, Lutheran, etc.) may act as a witness of Baptism provided that there is a Catholic godparent. A Catholic who is not qualified to be a godparent may not act as a Christian witness.

It is the responsibility of the pastor to determine whether one is qualified to be a godparent or sponsor. Please fill out the attached form and submit it with your sacramental certificates for approval. The pastor of the parish where you go to Mass is to sign it. If you do not currently meet all the requirements to be a godparent or sponsor, it may be possible to fulfill them in time for the celebration of Baptism or Confirmation. Please do not hesitate to ask for assistance in doing so. This is a great opportunity to return to the practice of the Catholic faith!

In Christ,
Reverend Christopher R. Seibt
Pastor

¹ Note: godparents are not *de facto* the legal guardians of a child should something happen to the child's parents. Legal guardians need to be appointed by parents using the required process and paperwork for doing so. Parents may ask godparents to be legal guardians. However, this is not automatically part of their role as godparents.

GODPARENT / SPONSOR VERIFICATION FORM

Date: _____

Name: _____

Godparent / Sponsor Certificate of Verification for _____
Candidate

As a registered and participating member of _____ Parish,

I affirm that (*check all that apply*):

_____ I am at least sixteen years old and I am not the parent of the candidate.

_____ I am a Catholic and have received all three sacraments of initiation: Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist (*see attached Baptismal certificate with notations*).

_____ I am not married.

_____ I am married and have done so in accord with Church law, that is, married in the Roman Catholic Church (i.e., exchanged vows according to the *Order of Celebrating Matrimony* before a priest or deacon and two witnesses; *see attached marriage certificate*).

_____ I am married and have not done so in accord with Church law.

_____ I am practicing my faith: I know, believe, and live the Church's teachings. I go to confession. I attend Mass every Sunday and on Holydays of Obligation and I receive the Eucharist at least once a year during the Easter season. I strive to live a life of faith and discipleship through works of charity and mercy.

_____ I am not practicing my faith but, for the spiritual welfare of the candidate, I hereby promise to begin again (i.e., learning the faith, celebrating the sacraments, etc.).

_____ I will support the candidate with my prayers and the example of my life and will do all possible to encourage and ensure his/her formation in the Roman Catholic faith, particularly if circumstances prevent his/her parents from doing so.

Signature: _____
Proposed Godparent / Sponsor

Attested by: _____
Pastor

- ☐ *Note: the proposed godparent/ sponsor is not ready at present to assume this ecclesiastical office but has solemnly promised to return to active participation in the life of the Church, particularly through the Sacraments of Penance and Eucharist. Upon fulfillment of this promise, the proposed godparent/ sponsor may be selected.*

Parish Seal