

Who can be Godparents or Sponsors?

Only a baptized Catholic, Latin or Eastern sui iuris, can be a Sponsor.

The Sponsor is chosen by the parents requesting the Sacrament of Baptism for their infant or child.

The Sponsor must be willing to accept the responsibility of presenting the infant or child for Baptism, assisting the parents, and witnessing the public event of the Sacrament of Baptism.

The Sponsor must be ready to commit time and personal care to nurture and support the baptized in the Faith.

Requirements to be a Sponsor

The Sponsor is to be:

- sixteen years of age
- a practicing Catholic who has received the Sacraments of Initiation
 - The reception of the Sacraments of Initiation of the sponsor will be verified (c. 874 § 1, 2°- 4°) not bound by any canonical penalty legitimately imposed or declared.

The Sponsor cannot be:

- The parent(s) (c. 874, 5°). This restriction also applies to stepparents, permanent legal guardians, or permanent foster parents.
- The priest or deacon conferring the Sacrament of Baptism.

Although one sponsor is sufficient, when there are two sponsors, one must be male and one female (c. 873).

The Sponsor at the Baptism cannot be changed after the celebration and/or after it has been recorded in the Baptism Register as this is a recorded factual event.

The Sponsor is encouraged, whenever possible, to be the Sponsor at the sacrament of Confirmation.

A Proxy may stand in for a Sponsor (or two) who cannot be present at the Baptism ceremony.

A Proxy may not stand as a Witness. The Proxy is not listed on the Baptism Certificate.

Exception: Because of the close relationship between the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Churches, an Orthodox faithful may be chosen as the second Sponsor along with a Catholic Sponsor. An Orthodox faithful cannot stand as Sponsor for Confirmation.

Who is a Proxy?

A Proxy is a Catholic faithful who stands in at the celebration of the Baptism for another Catholic, selected as Sponsor, who is unable to be present at the celebration.

Who can be a Christian Witness?

Along with an initiated Catholic Sponsor, a validly baptized non-Catholic person can be a Witness to the Baptism.

- a) A person baptized in the Catholic Church who has not completed the Sacraments of Initiation (Confirmation & Eucharist) may be a Witness, not a Sponsor. It is not recommended to designate a baptized Catholic as a Witness. Baptized Catholics should be encouraged to complete their Sacraments of Initiation.
- b) The Christian Baptism of the non-Catholic person selected to be a Witness will be verified for the Validity of Baptism in the Catholic Church.
- c) The Witness must be of opposite gender to the Sponsor.
- d) The name of the Witness does not appear on the Baptism Certificate