



## Church of the Holy Spirit Infant Baptism Ministry



### Selecting Godparent Guidelines

Choosing the Godmother and Godfather is a very exciting part of the preparation for Baptism. The title of Godparents is not just an honorary title but carries with it many responsibilities to the child, family, and church.

**The responsibility of choosing Godparents is a serious one that should be thought about, discussed and prayed about...**

The Catechism says this about Godparents: **"So too is the role of the Godfather and Godmother, who must be firm believers, able and ready to help the newly baptised - child or adult - on the road of Christian life. Their task is a truly ecclesiastical function." (CCC 1255)**

The Godparent is seen as the official representative of the Catholic community, the Mother Church, into which the child is being baptised. The Church asks that the Godparents offer their support and help to the parents in the faith formation of the child. **The Godparents are also called on to be role models of Christian living offering guidance and inspiration to the child (CCC 1255).**

**The qualifications for the Godparent (Canon 872-874) are as follows:**

- ✧ That he/she be, ordinarily, at least sixteen years of age
- ✧ That he/she be Catholic, confirmed, already have received first Eucharist, and lead a life of faith in harmony with the duty he/she is undertaking
- ✧ That he/she not be one of the parents of the child being baptised, or a family member (i.e. siblings)
- ✧ That he/she is not under a canonical penalty
- ✧ Only one godparent is required for Baptism
- ✧ The person must fulfil all of the canonical requirements for this role
- ✧ There can be no more than two godparents
- ✧ When pastoral circumstances warrant it, one of these Godparents may be a baptised non-Catholic Christian who acts as a witness of the Baptism.
  - ⇒ This person's name will not be entered into the baptism certificate nor the baptism register

**Ask yourself these questions:**

- What are the qualities I value in a godparent?
- How did my godparents help me grow in my faith?
- Who has helped me grow in my faith and response to God? What did they share with me?

## Choosing Baptism Name Guide

**Q. Why does a child receive the name of a saint during the Sacrament of Baptism?** *(see #1 below)*

A. The name of a saint is given to the child during the Sacrament of Baptism so the child may imitate the virtues of that particular saint and have him/her as a protector.

The Names of the saints can be found in books of the Saints, the Catholic Liturgical Calendar, Catholic Calendars and Patron saints lists.

Choose an appropriate name:

*(see #2 below)*

**Canon 855: Parents, Godparents, and the pastors are to take care that a name foreign to Christian sensibility is not given.**

### Choosing a Name for your Child *(see #3 below)*

Consider these reasons why you may wish to consider naming your child after a saint:

- ✧ A saint's name will help to foster your child's Christian identity
- ✧ They will receive the special aid of their Patron Saint (like a second guardian angel)
- ✧ It will give your child a special Feast Day to celebrate (the Feast Day of their saint)
- ✧ Their own name will remind them of God and his love for them, through the help of this saint
- ✧ It will help your child to personalise their faith
- ✧ It will give them a role model to follow
- ✧ It will remind them to seek heaven above all else (to become like their saint)
- ✧ It will help to establish a Catholic Christian culture in your home

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#### **References & Extra reading:**

#1 <http://www.catholicdoors.com/faq/qu617.htm>

#2 [http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG1104/\\_P2V.HTM](http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG1104/_P2V.HTM)

#3 <http://dmsbcatholic.com/sacraments/baptism-and-becoming-catholic/>

#4 <http://canonlawmadeeasy.com/2011/10/25/do-catholic-children-have-to-be-given-saints-names/>

#5 <http://catholicsaints.info/baptismal-and-confirmation-names/>

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