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# *Holy Family Catholic Church*

## *Godparents, Christian Witness, & Proxy*

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*Please read this before you invite someone to be a godparent for your child.*

### Godparents

1. Catholic Church Requirements to be a Godparent

It is the law of the Church that a godparent must fulfill the following requirements:

- ✓ At least 16 years of age;
- ✓ Received the sacraments of baptism, confirmation and eucharist;
- ✓ If married, must be a recognized Catholic sacramental marriage;
- ✓ Must be a practicing Catholic.

2. Number of Godparents

Traditionally there are two godparents for baptism. One must be female and the other male.

Only one godparent is required.

3. Parish Requirements for Godparents: Godparents Registered at Holy Family Catholic Church

- ✓ Godparents must attend a Baptismal Preparation Class.
- ✓ Must fulfill the requirements to be a Godparent required by the Catholic Church.

If the Godparent is NOT from Holy Family Catholic Church they must:

- ✓ Provide a letter from their parish confirming that they are practicing Catholics.
- ✓ Must provide a certificate [or letter] of attendance from a parish indicating they have attended a baptismal preparation class.

Godparents do not have to attend the baptismal preparation class if they have already done so within the past two years. If the godparent is NOT registered at Holy Family Catholic Church, they still must provide a letter showing they attended a baptismal preparation class within the past two years.

## Christian Witness

A baptized non-Catholic may serve as a Christian Witness along with a Catholic godparent.

A Christian Witness at baptism does not take the place of a godparent. A Christian witness is exactly that: a witness that the baptized person did receive the sacrament of baptism.

Requirements for a Christian Witness. A Christian Witness must be:

- ✓ At least 16 years old;
- ✓ Validly Baptized Christian;
- ✓ Someone other than a parent;
- ✓ Living an upright Christian life.

A person baptized Catholic cannot be a Christian Witness.

A baptized Catholic who does not meet the requirements for godparent may NOT be a Christian Witness. This includes baptized Catholics who have not been confirmed; not married in the Catholic Church; or who have left the Catholic Church.

Non-Baptized Person

A person who has never been baptized may NOT be Christian witness.

Parish Requirement for Baptism

A Christian Witness must provide a letter from their Church attesting that the person is at least 16 years old; validly baptized [with water and “In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit”]; and living an upright Christian life.

## What is a proxy for baptism?

When a godparent cannot be physically present on the day of baptism, a proxy may be named.

The proxy must fulfill the same requirements of the Catholic Church for godparent, i.e., must be:

- ✓ At least 16 years of age;
- ✓ Received the sacraments of baptism, confirmation, and eucharist;
- ✓ If married, must be married in the Catholic Church.
- ✓ An actively practicing Catholic.

The proxy must also be the same gender as the official godparent. A parent or stepparent may not fulfill the role of proxy. Only the godparent[s] name[s] will appear on the Baptismal Certificate.

The name of the proxy will be recorded in the baptism register under the name of the godparent whom he/she represents with the title “proxy written after their name.

The proxy must provide a letter from the parish attesting that they are a Catholic in good standing and fulfill the requirements listed above.