

The Requirements of Sponsor

The role of sponsor is an important one for the sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation. The Church sees the sponsor as a fully-initiated Catholic who supports the one receiving the sacrament with example and instruction. Because of the seriousness of this ministry, the Church has the following requirements:

- o The sponsor must be a fully-initiated member of the Catholic Church through Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist.

- o The sponsor must be at least sixteen (16) years of age.
- o In this case, the Catholic who is younger than 16 must be fully initiated.

- o The sponsor must have an active life of faith in the Church and provide good example.
- o Someone married outside the Church is not able to receive Communion and is not able to be a sponsor.
- o Also, a Catholic who has left the Church is not able to be a sponsor of a new member into the Church.
- o Therefore, a Catholic who has left the Catholic Church cannot be a sponsor, and cannot be a "Christian witness" if they join another Christian communion.

- o The sponsor cannot be either parent.
- o When there are two sponsors, they are "spiritual parents" and are to be a godfather and godmother.

Christian Witness — (A baptized non-Catholic Christian)

Provided there is one Catholic sponsor, a baptized non-Catholic Christian may serve as a Christian witness for Baptism only. This person is a Christian witness and not a sponsor.

Requirements to be a Christian Witness:

- o Be at least sixteen years old and a validly baptized Christian who is living an upright life and cannot be either parent and cannot be a Catholic who has left the Church.
- o A Christian witness may never be a non-baptized person. For example, Jewish or Muslim godparents are not permitted by universal church law.
- o The notation "Christian witness" is placed under the name of the non-Catholic Christian witness in the baptismal register.
- o A Christian witness is asked to present a letter from his/her church stating that he/she has been baptized with water in the name of the father, son, and holy spirit.

Sponsor Certificates and/or Christian Witness Letters are due in the office two weeks prior to the date of the baptism.