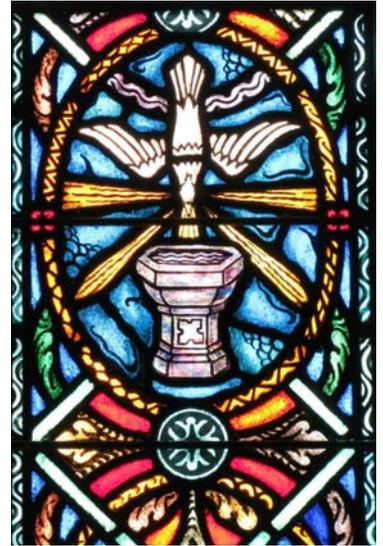


THE CATHEDRAL OF ST. PATRICK BAPTISM GUIDELINES

For children and infants age six and under, baptisms at the Cathedral take place after parents have attended a Baptism preparation class. Children age seven and above need to prepare for full initiation into the church at the Easter Vigil and need to take part in the Rite of Christian Initiation for Children. Families of these children will be asked to participate in a program of preparation.

To have a child baptized at the Cathedral of Saint Patrick:

1. The parents of the child must be registered members of the Cathedral of Saint Patrick or registered members of a Catholic church with the written permission of the pastor of that church for the baptism to take place at the Cathedral. If the parents are not yet registered but wish to have their child baptized, the parents must meet with the Pastor before registering.
2. The parents of the child must attend a baptism preparation class. For parishioners of the Cathedral, the baptism preparation classes are held the third Sunday of every month at 10:00 am. Attendance at the baptism preparation class is not required for Cathedral parishioners if the parents have attended a class within the past two years.



SCHEDULING A BAPTISM

Baptisms are celebrated on the first, second and fourth Sunday after the 12:30 PM Mass. Saturday baptisms are possible if there are no weddings. To schedule a baptism, call St. Patrick's parish office at (704) 334-2283. When scheduling a baptism, the following information may be needed:

- A completed **Baptism Registration Form**. If the parents have attended the Cathedral's baptism preparation class, they will complete the form at the class and the form will be handed into the parish office. If the parent wasn't required to attend the baptism preparation class, they can download the Baptism Registration Form from the parish website (go to the Worship tab and click Baptism).
- If the parents are not registered members of the Cathedral, they will need a **letter of permission** from their pastor before scheduling a baptism date.
- It is customary to provide a momentary gift for the clergy member (priest or deacon) who performs the baptism. The donation can be given directly to the clergy member. The gift amount is up to the discretion of the family.

Baptism is the gate to the other sacraments. It ushers us into the divine life, cleanses us from sin, and initiates us as members of the Christian community. Baptism has six primary effects. In addition to the removal of guilt for both Original Sin and personal sin, Baptism also removes the remission of all punishment that we owe because of sin, both temporal (in this world and in Purgatory) and eternal (the punishment that we would suffer in hell). Baptism also provides an infusion of grace in the form of sanctifying grace (the life of God within us) and provides the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit and the three theological virtues. Additionally, Baptism allows us to become a part of the Church which is the Mystical Body of Christ on earth and enables participation in the sacraments, the priesthood of all believers, and the growth in grace. Baptism seals the Christian with an indelible spiritual mark (the "character of Baptism") which sin cannot erase.

BAPTISM REGISTRATION RECORD

Fax to (704) 377-6403 or mail to St. Patrick Cathedral / 1621 Dilworth Rd East / Charlotte, NC 28203

FAMILY INFORMATION

NAME OF CHILD TO BE BAPTIZED: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Place of Birth: _____

Address: _____

Home Telephone: _____ E-mail: _____

FATHER'S NAME: _____
(First) (Middle) (Last)

Religion of Father: _____

MOTHER'S NAME: _____
(First) (Middle) (Last) (Maiden)

Religion of Mother: _____

PARENT'S WEDDING DATE: _____

CATHOLIC PARISH WHERE YOU ARE REGISTERED: _____
City: _____ State: _____

WAS YOUR CHILD BAPTIZED PRIVATELY? _____ WAS YOUR CHILD ADOPTED? _____

SPONSOR INFORMATION

GODPARENT: _____
(First) (Middle) (Last)

PARISH WHERE REGISTERED: _____

GODPARENT: _____
(First) (Middle) (Last)

PARISH WHERE REGISTERED: _____

CHRISTIAN WITNESS: _____
(First) (Middle) (Last)

PARISH WHERE MEMBER: _____

PROXY: _____
(First) (Middle) (Last)

PARISH WHERE REGISTERED: _____

It is sufficient to have just one Catholic Godparent but there may be two, one male and one female. The Godparent must be a Catholic in good standing who has been confirmed & is 16 or older. A Catholic who is not in good standing cannot be a Godparent or a Christian Witness. The Catholic parish where the person is registered will need to provide a statement that the sponsor is eligible.

A baptized person who belongs to a non-Catholic ecclesial community can be a witness of the baptism but only together with a Catholic Godparent.

If the Catholic Godparent is unable to attend the Baptism, a Catholic proxy can stand in at the ceremony. The Catholic proxy must meet all the same requirements as the Catholic Godparent.

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TO BE COMPLETED BY PARISH OFFICE

CLASS DATE: _____ INSTRUCTOR: _____ BAPTISM DATE: _____

THE CATHEDRAL OF ST. PATRICK BAPTISM GUIDELINES

THE ROLE OF THE GODPARENT

The principal responsibility of a godparent is to give witness to the Catholic faith by his/her words and actions. The role is, together with the parents, to present the child for baptism, and to help it to live a Christian life befitting the baptized and faithfully to fulfill the duties inherent in baptism. When called upon to profess the Catholic faith on behalf of the infant, the godparent must believe in what he/she is professing. Is the godparent expected to be someone who attends church every Sunday? It makes sense if they do. After all, you are asking this person to assist you in bringing up your child in the Catholic faith. The church reasonably expects parents and godparents to help the child “lead a Christian life in harmony with baptism.” Baptism depends on the faith of the Church, expressed by parents and godparents. Therefore, it is absolutely necessary that they live what they say they believe. After the baptism, the godparent's role really begins, and not just in the sense of sending presents at birthdays and Christmas! Ideally, a godparent will continue to pray for their godchild; keep in touch with them and their family; give a present or a card at the baptism anniversary and each sacramental milestone in the life of the godchild; lead the child by their example towards a Christian way of life; be supportive of the godchild's parents in their role as Christian parents and primary educators of their child.

THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE GODPARENT

1. One Catholic godparent, male or female, is sufficient but there may be two, one of each gender. No one can have more than two godparents for one child, nor can anyone have two godparents of the same gender.
2. Godparents must be appointed by the parents of the child being Baptized and must be one who is willing to provide spiritual guidance to the child. They may not be the mother or father of the person to be baptized.
3. Godparents must be age 16 or older unless the parish priest considers that there is a just reason for an exception to be made.
4. Godparents must be fully initiated Catholics (one who has celebrated Baptism, Eucharistic, Confirmation and practices their faith) and not labored under a canonical penalty, whether imposed or declared. If the person you are considering as a Catholic sponsor/Godparent is not married according to the laws and practices of the Catholic Church, or is cohabitating [living together without marriage], you will need to consider someone else. Catholics who are divorced and remarried, and whose previous marriage has not been annulled by a Decree of Invalidity are considered members of the Church living in an irregular (or invalid) marriage and as such, are not eligible to be a Godparent.
5. Godparents who are not members of St. Patrick's Cathedral must obtain a “sponsor certificate” from his/her parish indicating he/she is a Catholic in good standing. The certificate should be mailed to the Cathedral office two weeks prior to the Baptism.
6. While it is ideal that the parents select two Catholic Godparents, the Church only requires that there be one Godparent. A baptized non-Catholic may serve as a “witness” to the ceremony, as long as a Catholic Godparent is present. The non-Catholic should be an active and participating member of his/her Christian community. A non-baptized person (i.e. a Jewish or Muslim person), cannot serve as a witness because the duties of a godparent to assist the parents of the child in passing on the Christian faith.
7. In a situation where an appointed Catholic Godparent is unable to attend the Baptism ceremony, a Catholic proxy can be appointed to stand in at the ceremony. The Catholic proxy must meet all the same requirements as the Catholic Godparent.

GODPARENT ELIGIBILITY FORM

MEMBERS OF SAINT PATRICK CATHEDRAL

One of the many benefits of being a Catholic is the opportunity to be a Sacramental sponsor. The function of the sponsor is: a) together with the celebrant who baptizes or confirms, to represent the Church in receiving the person into the communion of the Church; and b) to assist the person in Christian initiation. Given the functions and role a sponsor exercises, a non-Catholic Christian cannot be admitted as a sponsor; however, he or she can be a witness. A non-Christian cannot serve in this latter capacity, but is welcome to be present at the ceremony. In accord with Canon 874 of the Code of Canon Law, the Church can admit a person to the role of sponsor if,

- He or she is not less than sixteen years of age.
- He or she is a Catholic who has been confirmed and has already received the blessed Eucharist and lives a life of faith which befits the role to be undertaken.
- He or she is not either the father or the mother of the person.

Note that the Catholic seeking to be admitted as a sponsor “lives a life of faith which befits the role to be undertaken.” This phraseology means that the candidate for sponsor sincerely believes and strives to put into practice the Word of God as taught by the Catholic Church; regularly takes part in the Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation; and if married, was married in accordance with the requirements of the Catholic Church. Consequently those Catholics who are not actively affiliated with a worshipping community, who are invalidly married, as for example, before a Justice of the Peace, or without proper dispensation, before a minister of a Protestant church or before a rabbi, who are divorced and invalidly remarried, and who have not received confirmation and the blessed Eucharist; do not qualify to be admitted as a sponsor.

CERTIFICATE OF ELIGIBILITY FOR ST. PATRICK CATHEDRAL MEMBERS

The Cathedral of Saint Patrick is happy to provide active, participating members of the parish with certificates of eligibility if the following conditions are met:

- Individuals must be registered at the Cathedral for at least three months prior to seeking a certificate. If the individual is newly registered at the Cathedral, a letter from the individual’s former pastor stating they are a Catholic in good standing may be required in order to provide a certificate.
- The individual should be involved in the life of the parish via participation in a parish ministry.
- Individuals must attend weekly Mass at the Cathedral on either Saturday evening or Sunday morning. Since the Cathedral’s weekly Mass attendance envelopes is the primary way the parish determines if parishioners are regularly attending Mass, parishioners should always place a Mass attendance envelope in the collection basket when they attend a weekend Mass – regardless of whether one makes a contribution at that Mass or if one contributes electronically. To ensure your Mass attendance is counted, please make certain to check the “I attended Mass” box on the attendance envelope.

CERTIFICATE OF ELIGIBILITY PROCEDURE FOR ST. PATRICK MEMBERS

1. Complete the Certificate of Eligibility form and take to parish office for review and priest signature.
2. Upon review, the Cathedral will mail the certificate to the parish listed on the eligibility form. If the sponsor does not meet the above criteria, a letter will be sent to the sponsor regarding the reason(s) for ineligibility.

*** If the Godparent is a member at another Catholic Church, they must contact their parish to receive a certificate of eligibility ***

GODPARENT ELIGIBILITY FORM

NON-MEMBERS OF SAINT PATRICK CATHEDRAL

One of the many benefits of being a Catholic is the opportunity to be a Sacramental sponsor. The function of the sponsor is: a) together with the celebrant who baptizes or confirms, to represent the Church in receiving the person into the communion of the Church; and b) to assist the person in Christian initiation. Given the functions and role a sponsor exercises, a non-Catholic Christian cannot be admitted as a sponsor; however, he or she can be a witness. A non-Christian cannot serve in this latter capacity, but is welcome to be present at the ceremony. In accord with Canon 874 of the Code of Canon Law, the Church can admit a person to the role of sponsor if,

- He or she is not less than sixteen years of age.
- He or she is a Catholic who has been confirmed and has already received the blessed Eucharist and lives a life of faith which befits the role to be undertaken.
- He or she is not either the father or the mother of the person.

Note that the Catholic seeking to be admitted as a sponsor “lives a life of faith which befits the role to be undertaken.” This phraseology means that the candidate for sponsor sincerely believes and strives to put into practice the Word of God as taught by the Catholic Church; regularly takes part in the Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation; and if married, was married in accordance with the requirements of the Catholic Church. Consequently those Catholics who are not actively affiliated with a worshiping community, who are invalidly married, as for example, before a Justice of the Peace, or without proper dispensation, before a minister of a Protestant church or before a rabbi, who are divorced and invalidly remarried, and who have not received confirmation and the blessed Eucharist; do not qualify to be admitted as a sponsor.

CERTIFICATE OF ELIGIBILITY

Catholic Godparent’s will need to provide a certificate of eligibility from the pastor of the Catholic parish where the Godparent is a registered, active member. The certificate of eligibility needs to confirm that the Godparent is a Catholic in good standing and eligible to be a Godparent.

The certificate of eligibility should state the date of the baptism. The certificate should be mailed to:

The Cathedral of Saint Patrick
Attn: Baptism Coordinator
1621 Dilworth Road East
Charlotte, NC 28203





DIOCESE of CHARLOTTE

1123 SOUTH CHURCH STREET • CHARLOTTE, NC 28203-4003 • (704) 370-6299

Godparent/Sponsor Affirmation of Faith and Morals

I. Some Basic Church Norms Concerning Godparents/Sponsors

It is the very ancient custom of the Church that at the celebration of the **sacrament of Baptism or Confirmation**, a godparent/sponsor is present. The function of the godparent/sponsor is: a) together with the celebrant who baptizes or confirms, to represent the Church in receiving the person into the communion of the Church; and b) to support the person in living the Catholic Christian life.

In accord with **Canon 874 of the Code of Canon Law**, the Church can admit a person to the role of godparent/sponsor if: a) he or she is more than sixteen years of age; b) is a baptized Catholic who has been Confirmed, has already received the Blessed Eucharist, and lives a life of faith which befits the role to be undertaken; and c) is neither the father or the mother of the person.

Given the functions and role a godparent/sponsor exercises, a non-Catholic Christian cannot be admitted as a godparent/sponsor; however, he or she can serve as a Christian witness at baptism, provided that there is a Catholic godparent (c. 874 2). A baptized Catholic who is sacramentally or canonically ineligible to serve as a godparent may not serve as a Christian witness. These include those who subsequently renounced the faith in favor of another church community or entity. Those unbaptized and those whose Baptism is not recognized by the Catholic Church may not serve in the role of Christian witness but are welcome to be present at the ceremony.

Note that the Catholic seeking to be admitted as a godparent/sponsor “lives a life of faith which befits the role to be undertaken.” This means that the candidate for godparent/sponsor: a) sincerely believes and strives to put into practice the Word of God as taught by the Catholic Church; b) prayerfully assists at Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation; and c) if married, was married in accordance with the requirements of the Catholic Church. One godparent/sponsor is required. Two godparents/sponsors may be appointed provided one is male and the other female.

II. Individual Criteria for Admittance as a Godparent/Sponsor

A sponsor must be fully initiated into the Catholic faith. When and where did you receive the three Sacraments of Initiation? (Fill in below.) If unsure, a Certificate of Baptism can be requested from your church of baptism and will list the sacraments listed below.

Church of Baptism

City, State

Date of Baptism

Church of First Communion

City, State

Date of First Communion

Church of Confirmation

City, State

Date of Confirmation

Remember, a godparent/sponsor must be 16 or older — [] Check here if you are at least 16 years old.

A sponsor must be canonically free to carry out this office of godparent/sponsor. This means that Catholics in an invalid marriage (not married according to the laws of the Church) and those cohabitating (living together without marriage) cannot serve as a godparent/sponsor. If you are married, please complete the following questions.

Place of Marriage (church/other): _____

City, State: _____ Date of Marriage: _____

Marriage performed by:

Priest Deacon Minister Judge Justice of the Peace Not married

A sponsor must know the fundamental truths of the Faith and be a practicing Catholic who attends Mass on Sundays and receives the sacraments of Holy Communion and Reconciliation regularly. Based on these guidelines, are you in good standing with the Catholic Church? YES NO

Sponsor's Church Attendance:

Weekly Monthly Religion: _____
 Occasionally Seldom Never

If you do not attend Mass weekly, please attach a separate letter explaining the situation.

Name of church you presently attend: _____

City, State: _____ Pastor's Name: _____

A sponsor must NOT be the father, mother, step-parent, or custodial guardian of the one to be baptized/confirmed. What is your relationship to the candidate? _____

III. Affirmation of the Prospective Godparent/Sponsor

If therefore, you seek to be admitted as a godparent/sponsor, and are convinced that you qualify in accordance with the conditions listed above, kindly make the following **solemn affirmation** before God:

I, (print) _____, a practicing Catholic seeking to be admitted as a godparent/sponsor, solemnly affirm that I fulfill the requirements of the Catholic Church for this role as presented above. I **intend**, with the grace of God, to continue the practice of my Catholic faith, and I will, to the best of my ability, carry out the obligations of my role as godparent/sponsor.

Date of Ceremony

Name of Baptism/Confirmation Candidate (circle one)

Parish, City, and State

Signature of Godparent/Sponsor

Today's Date

Godparent's/Sponsor's email address

Godparent/Sponsor's phone number

This section is to be filled in by the godparent's/sponsor's parish church where they participate.

I hereby certify that _____ is a registered member or lives within the boundaries of this parish; is a practicing Catholic in good standing; and is eligible to serve as

godparent for Baptism.
 sponsor for Confirmation.

Name of Parish: _____ Pastor's signature: _____

Date: _____

Church Seal