

Who should be godparents?

Only two people can be chosen as godparents; one male and one female. One does not have to choose two but if two are chosen they are to be one male and one female.

Each godparent must be Catholic in good standing with the Church and qualified to be a good role model for the child. A non-practicing Catholic or a non-Catholic cannot fill that requirement.

The Code of Canon Law (Church Law) states:

Canon Law 774 §2, “before all others, parents are bound to form their children, by word and example, in faith and in Christian living. The same obligation binds godparents and those who take the place of parents.”

Canon Law 872, “in so far as possible, a person being baptized is to be assigned a sponsor. In the case of an adult baptism, the sponsor’s role is to assist the person in Christian initiation. In the care of an infant baptism, 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.”

Canon Law 873, “one sponsor, male or female, is sufficient; but there may be two, one of each sex.”

Canon Law 874 §1, “to be admitted to undertake the office of sponsor, a person must:

1. “be appointed by the candidate for baptism, or by the parents or whoever stands in their place, or failing these, by the parish priest or minister; to be appointed the person must be suitable for this role and have the intention of fulfilling it;”
2. “be not less than 16 years of age, unless a different age has been stipulated by the diocesan Bishop, or unless the parish priest or the minister considers that there is a just reason for an exception to be made;”
3. “be a Catholic who has been confirmed and has received the blessed Eucharist, and who lives a life of faith which befits the role to be undertaken;”
4. “not labor under a canonical penalty, whether imposed or declared;”
5. “not be either the father or mother of the person to be baptized.”