

## CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF RICHMOND

### USE OF THE GODPARENT ATTESTATION FORM FOR INFANT BAPTISM

Dear Parent(s),

Godparents join you in presenting your child for Baptism, and in helping your son or daughter to lead a Christian life in harmony with the sacrament. The *Rite of Baptism for Children* asks the godparents: “Are you ready to help the parents of this child in their duty as Christian parents?”<sup>1</sup>

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* explains that godparents “must be firm believers, able and ready to help the newly baptized child... on the road of Christian life.”<sup>2</sup> In selecting a godparent, you should consider carefully a person’s capacity to provide this help. (One godparent is required for Baptism, although two may be chosen. In the case of two godparents, they must be male and female.)<sup>3</sup>

The specific qualifications of a godparent, according to Church law,<sup>4</sup> are as follows:

1. At least 16 years old

*A pastor may grant an exception to the age requirement for a just cause.*<sup>5</sup>

2. Have received the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist in the Catholic Church

*A member of the Eastern Orthodox Church may serve as a godparent as long as a Catholic godparent has also been chosen.*<sup>6</sup>

3. Not bound by a canonical penalty

4. Leading a life of faith befitting the role to be undertaken (e.g., regularly attending Sunday Mass; if married, be in a marriage recognized by the Catholic Church)

5. Not a parent of the child

The above criteria reflect the Church’s view that living the faith is taught best by example. Your chosen godparent is asked to testify that he or she meets these qualifications by completing the **Godparent Attestation Form for Infant Baptism**. Please provide the godparent with this document in a timely manner so that it can be returned to the parish before the celebration of the sacrament.

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<sup>1</sup> *Rite of Baptism for Children*, no. 40, etc.

<sup>2</sup> *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 1255.

<sup>3</sup> *Code of Canon Law*, canon 873.

<sup>4</sup> *Code of Canon Law*, canons 874 §1, 893 §1; *Rite of Baptism for Children*, Christian Initiation: General Introduction, no. 10.

<sup>5</sup> *Code of Canon Law*, canon 874 §1, 2°.

<sup>6</sup> Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, *Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism* (1993), no. 98b.



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### GODPARENT ATTESTATION FORM FOR INFANT BAPTISM

FOR USE IN THE DIOCESE OF RICHMOND ONLY

Congratulations! The witness of your Catholic faith now calls you to a sacred role in the life of a child or confirmand as a godparent or sponsor. You will publicly affirm your intention to support and nurture the faith of this child during the celebration of the sacrament. Please complete this form to attest to your readiness to accept this role. May God bless you abundantly!

I (print full name) \_\_\_\_\_,

a member of (name of parish) \_\_\_\_\_

in (location of parish) \_\_\_\_\_,

having been chosen as the godparent for (print name) \_\_\_\_\_,

who will be baptized,

affirm that I possess the qualifications listed below, and that I willingly undertake this role.

#### Qualifications of a godparent:<sup>7</sup>

1. At least 16 years old (unless the pastor has granted an exemption)
2. Have received the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and the Eucharist in the Catholic Church
3. Not bound by a canonical penalty
4. Leading a life of faith befitting the role to be undertaken (e.g., regularly attending Sunday Mass; if married, be in a marriage recognized by the Catholic Church)
5. Not a parent of the child

I have read and understand the above requirements. Should I have questions about the qualifications, I will seek clarification from the pastor or his delegate. And with my signature below I swear before God that I am eligible to serve in the role of godparent, and I assume this responsibility willingly.

Godparent's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Pastor may request signature be witnessed by the godparent's pastor/delegate affirming that the person signing the form is the same individual as the person who will undertake the duty of godparent.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ (no seal necessary)

*This form should be destroyed once the godparent's information has been inscribed in the baptismal register of the parish where Baptism was conferred.*

<sup>7</sup> Code of Canon Law, canons 874 §1, 893 §1; Rite of Baptism for Children, Christian Initiation: General Introduction, no. 10.