



St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church

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The RCIA Process How Do I Choose My Sponsor?

Choosing a sponsor or godparent is among your most important decisions since he or she is called to act as a guide during your faith journey in the Christian life.

If you are not baptized you will select a godparent, and if you have already been baptized in another Christian faith, you will choose a sponsor as your guide in the Church. Some candidates, although baptized as Catholics, have not practiced the Catholic faith as adults. They, therefore, need much the same instruction as someone coming to the faith from another tradition. For the catechumen (non-baptized person) the same person usually acts as godparent and confirmation sponsor at the Easter Vigil Mass. Choosing this person should be done with much thought and prayerful consideration.

When will my sponsor first meet with me and start coming to the weekly meetings?

You should meet with your sponsor a week or two before the Rite of Acceptance; and from that point the sponsor should take on an active role. This initial meeting enables the sponsor to get to know you better. Your sponsor will also introduce you to our parish community, so they can accept you into their midst and recognize you as a new member of the Church. If you do not know anyone from the parish who can take on the important role of sponsor, the pastor or RCIA team will assist you in finding a suitable person.

What should I look for in a sponsor or godparent?

A godparent or sponsor must be at least 16 years old and a **practicing Catholic**. He or she should be someone you admire because they **possess and live** their Catholic faith. According to the Catholic Catechism of the Church (#1255) "this person must also be able and ready to help the newly baptized adult on the road to Christian life." You may *not* choose a parent to be a sponsor or godparent.

Can I choose a sponsor or godparent who lives far away?

Ideally a sponsor or godparent should be someone who lives nearby and is a member of your parish. Your sponsor represents the worshipping community in your parish, speaking on behalf of those assembled at each rite we celebrate. More importantly, however, the relationship between you and your sponsor should continue to develop into a mutual long-term commitment. This is a person with whom you can share your faith, and other aspects of your life.

Can your intended sponsor or godparent take an active role in the RCIA process every week? Can he or she be there for you when needed? Will this person celebrate your new life in Christ with you during the years to come? Is this a person of prayer, who can help to guide you in the Catholic tradition? If you can answer 'Yes' to these questions, then you have probably selected the right sponsor for your continuing journey in faith.