



Church of St Gregory the Great

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"Each of us is the result of a thought of God. Each of us is willed, each of us is loved, each of us is necessary."
Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI • April 24, 2005

Dear Parents,

Congratulations on the birth of your child and on your child's upcoming baptism!

Enclosed you will find a Sacristy Record of Baptism which needs to be completed. If you choose sponsors who are not parishioners of St. Gregory the Great, they must obtain a Certificate of Eligibility from their parish. If you choose sponsors who are parishioners of St. Gregory the Great, please indicate this on the Sacristy Record so that we may verify their eligibility. If we do not receive a certificate of eligibility, the names of the sponsors cannot be recorded in the sacramental record and the baptismal certificate. Church law requires at least one sponsor for baptism. The enclosed materials outline the requirements which must be met by individuals in order to qualify as sponsors.

It is mandatory that both parents baptizing their first child attend a Pre-Baptism Class. Sponsors are asked to attend as well if they are able. These classes are held once a month on Thursdays at 6:30 PM in O'Connor Hall in the Parish Center and run approximately one hour. A schedule of classes can be found at the parish office as well in the 'Calendar' page of our parish website.

Please visit the rectory to receive a book about Baptism. Please read it prior to your baptismal preparation class and bring it with you to the class.

The role of godparent is different and more active than most people think. Indeed, godparents serve a special role in the baptism of a child, but also in the life of that child going forward. Godparents are the representatives of the Catholic Christian community, the Church. Godparents are responsible for assisting you, parents, in raising your child in the faith. Godparents must exhibit in their lives a dedication to Jesus Christ, to the Church, and to the faith. They are to assist you in raising your child in the faith so that your child may profess that same faith as an adult.

Rather than choosing someone as a godparent to give them honor or to thank them for some service or gift, you should look for those in your life to truly live the faith. Those who do not live the faith can hardly assist you in passing faith and belief on to your child. Those who do not exhibit a dedication to the Church and to Christ in their lives really cannot be examples to your child of what it means to be a disciple of the Lord. There are, doubtless, many good people in your life who you may wish to honor or thank, but the role of godparent is a serious one which can only be filled by men and women of faith who are dedicated to walking with you and your child for years to come. If you wanted to learn how to play the piano you would hardly turn to someone who hadn't touched the instrument in twenty years. If you wanted to learn how to paint you wouldn't turn to someone who had never touched a paintbrush.

If, after long thought, you cannot come up with anyone who would be a suitable godparent for your child, feel free to contact the parish office. The priests, deacons, and other staff of St. Gregory the Great have occasionally served as godparents for the children of the parish. They would consider this a great honor and responsibility.

To summarize, here are the basic guidelines to selecting godparents for your child. A godparent must be:

1. At least 16 years of age
2. Have been fully initiated into the Church themselves (specifically, they must have been baptized, have received their first communion, and have been confirmed.)
3. Be someone other than the parents or legal guardians of the child to be baptized.
4. Be living the Catholic faith (for example, attendance at Mass on Sundays and Holy Days, fidelity to the teachings of the Church, be in a marriage recognized by the Church)
5. If you choose two godparents, one must be a man, the other a woman as they are to be true 'parents' to your child in the ways of faith.
6. You may have one non-Catholic assist at the Baptism as a witness in place of one of the godparents.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Rev. Michael T. McClane
Pastor
Enclosures