



ST. MARY CATHOLIC CHURCH

10307 Dundee Road, Huntley, Illinois 60142
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Website: www.stmaryhuntley.org

Congratulations on the upcoming Baptism of your child!

We are excited that you are presenting your child for the sacrament of Baptism! Here is some important information about the Sacrament and how to schedule your child's Baptism.

What is my responsibility as a parent when I present my child for Baptism?

When you bring your child to be baptized you are making a commitment to raise them within the Catholic Church. This is an awesome responsibility! Your child is a gift from God. Your child belongs to God and is only yours "on loan." It is the role of Christian parents to do all that they can, with the help of God's grace, to teach their baptized children the way of prayer, the life of Christian virtue, and how to live the life of a disciple of Jesus. In Baptism, a child is made holy, consecrated to God. It is the role of the parent(s) to help their child answer this call to holiness and live out the grace of Baptism.

This responsibility involves, among other things, attending Mass on Sundays and Holy Days. If you are not currently very consistent in the practice of your faith, please know that the Lord loves you and invites you to turn back to Him today. Start to come back to regular attendance at Mass. Get involved in the life of the parish. God loves us where we are and wants to meet us where we are, but He also wants to take us deeper in our relationship with Him and with His Church!

Requirements for godparents/sponsors

Because of the great responsibilities of a godparent or sponsor, the Catholic Church has some minimum requirements it asks all godparents/sponsors to fulfill in order to serve in this role. These requirements are set forth in the Code of Canon Law:

Canon 872: *Insofar as possible, a person to be baptized is to be given a sponsor who assists an adult in Christian initiation or together with the parents presents an infant for baptism. A sponsor also helps the baptized person to lead a Christian life in keeping with baptism and to fulfill faithfully the obligations inherent in it.*

Canon 873: *There is to be only one male sponsor or one female sponsor or one of each.*

Canon 874: §1. *To be permitted to take on the function of a sponsor a person must:*

- be designated by the one to be baptized, by the parents or the person who takes their place, or in their absence by the pastor or minister and have the aptitude and intention of fulfilling this function;*
- have completed the sixteenth year of age, unless the diocesan bishop has established another age, or the pastor or minister has granted an exception for a just cause;*
- be a Catholic who has been confirmed and has already received the most holy sacrament of the Eucharist and who leads a life of faith in keeping with the function to be taken on;*
- not be bound by any canonical penalty legitimately imposed or declared;*
- not be the father or mother of the one to be baptized.*

§2. *A baptized person who belongs to a non-Catholic ecclesial community is not to participate except together with a Catholic sponsor and then only as a witness of the baptism.*

Explanations

At least one sponsor/godparent is required for baptism. If there are two sponsors, one must be a man and one must be a woman.

A sponsor/godparent must have received the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Communion. A sponsor/godparent must be at least 16 years of age (although the pastor may make an exception) and may be male or female, regardless of the sex of the person being confirmed or baptized.

A sponsor/godparent must be leading a life in harmony with the faith and the role to be undertaken. Therefore, if married, the person must be married in the Church and if single, the person must be striving to live a chaste life.

A sponsor/godparent must be a practicing Catholic, registered in a parish, who regularly attends Mass on Sundays and Holy Days and receives Holy Communion.

A non-Catholic baptized Christian cannot be a sponsor/godparent, but they can stand with a godparent as a Christian witness to the Baptism.

Ineligible Persons

Catholics who are not actively affiliated with a worshipping community,

Catholics who are invalidly married, as for example, before a Justice of the Peace or a minister of a Protestant church,

Catholics who are divorced and invalidly remarried,

Catholics who have not received Confirmation or Holy Communion,

Catholics who are single who are cohabitating with someone (living together as if married).

What if I have already asked someone to be a godparent and they do not meet the requirements?

Sometimes parents ask friends or family to serve as godparents before they truly realize the meaning of this role. While it is understandable to want to honor a relationship with someone that you love, and while such persons can have many virtues that would make them a good mentor for your child, the role of the sponsor (godparent) for baptism has a very specific purpose: *to help the child live out the grace of their Baptism as a disciple of Jesus within the Catholic Church.* If you have already asked someone to serve as a godparent and they do not meet the requirements, ask one or two other persons to serve as the official sponsors. Your other friends and family can still participate in the Baptism ceremony but will not be listed in the official record of the Baptism.

What if I do not know anyone who meets the requirements to be a godparent?

Begin to call to mind the people you know who actively practice their Catholic faith and receive the Sacraments. You might want to consider your child's grandparents, aunts, uncles, close friends of your relatives, or your own close friends. If you are not currently attending Mass, please start coming! Perhaps there is someone that you know at the parish who can be a support to help you attend Mass and get more involved in the parish community.

If you still cannot think of anyone who can meet the requirements of a baptismal sponsor, ask the parish priest to help you identify a potential sponsor.

How to schedule the Baptism:

If this is your first child, or if you and your spouse have never attended a Baptismal Preparation Class in the past, call the Parish Office to schedule the one hour, one time class. If you have already attended a class in the past, you do not have to attend again.

Give the attached Godparent/Sponsor Eligibility Form to your chosen godparent(s) and have them fill them out and return them to St. Mary Parish. Once this has been completed, you can call us to actually schedule the date. We do baptisms almost every Sunday at 1:30 PM.



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Godparent/Sponsor Eligibility Form

Please complete the form and take it to your parish for signature and seal and return it to St. Mary Church personally, email to baptism@stmaryhuntley.org, or mail to the above address.

I, _____, phone #, _____,
(Please print name of proposed godparent/sponsor)

have been asked to be godparent/sponsor for _____, child of
(name of person to be baptized or confirmed)

_____ who will be baptized/confirmed at St. Mary.
(parents' names) (circle one)

A godparent/sponsor is an important person in the life of the person to be baptized or confirmed. They are a spiritual role model, an example of the Christian life, and the official representative of the Body of Christ, the Church, into which the person is being baptized or confirmed. They are to be a source of guidance, support and inspiration to this person on his or her faith journey and, when appropriate, help the parents in the Christian formation of this person.

I swear to Almighty God that the following statements are true: (please initial each true statement)

- _____ I am at least 16 years old
- _____ I am a baptized member of the Catholic Church.
- _____ I am a registered member of _____ Catholic Church.
- _____ I have received the Sacraments of Holy Communion and Confirmation in the Catholic Church.
- _____ I attend Mass regularly on Sundays/Holy Days and receive the Sacraments of Holy Communion and Confession on a regular basis.
- _____ I affirm my faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and my fidelity to the Catholic Church.
- _____ I understand and accept the responsibilities which I undertake as a sponsor for this person.

Mark only the one that applies:

- _____ I am married and I am in a recognized Catholic marriage.
- _____ I am single and I am not living with another person in a romantic relationship or as a couple.

Signature of Godparent/Sponsor

Parish Seal

Signature of Pastor

Name and address of Parish