

St. John Vianney Catholic Church
Diocese of Austin
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Children and Infant Baptisms

(those under 7 years of age)

Frequently Asked Questions

Can a member of my family who is not Catholic but a Christian be a godparent?

A godparent or sponsor is required by Canon Law to be a fully initiated Catholic in good standing (*This means that have received Baptism, Holy Communion and Confirmation. If they are married, they must have a marriage recognized by the Catholic Church.*) A non-Catholic, then cannot serve as a godparent in a Catholic baptism. A Christian may serve as a Christian witness. A godparent is asked to promise to help the parents of the child to raise the child in the Catholic faith.

Can a family member who is not Christian be a witness?

No, the Church requires for Baptism that a witness be Christian. Non-Christians are welcome to attend a celebration of the Sacrament; however, the Church makes no demands on their conscience to participate in a Rite which may be contrary to their beliefs.

Can a married family member who is Catholic but did not marry in the Church be a godparent?

Unless the marriage is otherwise recognized as valid by the Church, this person cannot serve as a godparent. This person may very well be a good person in many ways, but the marital situation needs to be reconciled before they fulfill the role of godparent. To answer specific questions about a particular situation please call the Parish Office and speak to one of our clergy.

Can a family member who was married in the Church but now is separated or divorced be a godparent or sponsor?

Possibly. Separation or divorce does not necessarily inhibit a person from being a godparent, but please contact the Parish Office and speak to one of our clergy for clarification.

Can I have my child baptized if my spouse or parent is not Catholic?

Yes, only one parent needs to have received the Sacrament of Baptism. The other parent must agree to have the child baptized. Please note, however, that if one or both of the parents have expressed an intent to become Catholic, the child may be baptized. As long as there is an earnest desire for the child to be reared in the Catholic faith, the Church will work with the parents on baptizing the child and addressing any specific concerns.

Do I have to be married in the Church to have my child baptized?

No, however; we would invite those who have not received this sacrament to talk to one of the parish clergy for more information on how to celebrate this sacrament.

Do I have to be confirmed to have my child baptized?

No, however, we would invite anyone who is an adult and has not been confirmed to enroll in our Adult Confirmation course.

Can I have more than two godparents or sponsors?

No, however, we would invite your entire family to be involved in the upbringing of your child in the Catholic faith. Different family and cultural traditions are important to raising your children in the faith and are encouraged by the Church.

What is the procedure for children over the age of 7 years?

For those children 7 and older, please call our parish office and speak with our Elementary Director of Religious Education.

If you have any other questions concerning the celebration of baptism, please contact the Parish Office.