



# DIOCESE OF ROCKVILLE CENTRE

Revised 1/1/2016.

## The Requirements of Sponsor

The role of sponsor is an important one for the sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation. *The Church sees the sponsor as a fully initiated Catholic who supports the one receiving the sacrament with example and instruction.* Because of the seriousness of this ministry, the Church has the following requirements:

- The sponsor must be a fully initiated member of the Catholic Church through Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist.
- The sponsor must be at least sixteen (16) years of age.
- In this case, the Catholic who is younger than 16 must be fully initiated.
- The sponsor must have an active life of faith in the Church and provide a good example.
- Someone married outside the Church is not able to receive Communion and is not able to be a sponsor.
- Also, a Catholic who has left the Church is not able to be a sponsor of a new member into the Church.
- Therefore, a Catholic who has left the Catholic Church cannot be a sponsor and cannot be a "Christian witness" if they join another Christian communion.
- **The sponsor cannot be either parent.**
- When there are two sponsors, they are "spiritual parents" and are to be a godfather and godmother.

## Christian Witness — (A baptized non-Catholic Christian)

Provided there is one Catholic sponsor, a baptized non-Catholic Christian may serve as a Christian witness for Baptism only. This person is a Christian witness and not a sponsor.

- Requirements to be a Christian Witness:
  - at least sixteen years old
  - a validly baptized Christian
  - living an upright life
  - **cannot be either parent**
  - cannot be a Catholic who has left the Church
- A Christian witness may never be a non-baptized person. For example, Jewish or Muslim godparents are not permitted by universal church law.
- The notation "Christian witness" is placed under the name of the non-Catholic Christian witness in the baptismal register.