

1. MINISTER

Proper Minister and Territory

Pastors are especially entrusted to administer the sacrament of Baptism. Except in the case of necessity, it is illicit for anyone without due permission to baptize outside his own territory, not even his subjects. A priest or deacon with general faculties from the Archdiocese of Toronto may confer Baptism after consultation with the pastor. In danger of death any person with the right intention who uses the prescribed *matter and form* baptizes validly and licitly.

2. PREPARATION

Determining Necessary Preparation

Parishes should meet with the parent/legal guardian to determine what sort of preparation is necessary, by enquiring about:

- the reason for the request for Baptism;
- how the parents/guardians have provided for the religious development of any other children in their family;
- how the family is presently involved in the parish or the life of the Church; and
- what their future plans are to enable their child to grow in the faith.

Preparation for Infant Baptism

For 'infant' Baptism (under the age of 7 or non sui compos): at least one parent/legal guardian has to consent and there must be a well-founded hope that the child will be brought up in the Catholic religion. The parent or guardian must provide proof of their own Catholic Baptism. The parent or guardian, as well as the Godparent(s) must be suitably instructed about the meaning of the sacrament and the obligations involved.

3. GODPARENTS

Role of Godparent

As far as possible, a person to be baptized should be given a Godparent, although it is not required for the validity or the liceity of the sacrament. In adult Baptism, the Godparent assists in Christian initiation. In infant Baptism, the Godparent with the parents present the child for Baptism. Godparents support the baptized to lead a Christian life to fulfill faithfully the obligations inherent to the sacrament.

Number of Godparents

There may be one Godfather, one Godmother, or one of each. Accordingly, if there are two Godparents, one must be male and the other female. Only a maximum of two names are inscribed in the baptismal register as the official Godparents, no matter the actual number of Godparents the family may have chosen.

Qualifications to Be a Godparent

To qualify for the function of Godparent, a person must be 16 years of age or older, be fully initiated (i.e. received the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Communion), and be in full communion with the Catholic Church leading a life of faith in keeping with the function to be taken on (i.e. receiving the sacraments regularly to the best of their ability, not under any ecclesiastical penalty, and not in an irregular union). Beyond these basic requirements, the candidate for Godparent must also have the aptitude and intention to discharge their responsibility to help their Godchild fulfill his or her baptismal promises faithfully.

Christian Witnesses

A validly baptized person belonging to a non-Catholic church or ecclesial community may be admitted as a witness to Baptism but only along with a Catholic Godparent. A Christian Witness can be male or female regardless of the sex of the Catholic Godparent. However, those who have been initiated into their faith tradition solely by virtue of a 'rite of dedication' cannot be a Christian Witness since they have not received Baptism. Catholics who otherwise do not qualify to be a Godparent, cannot be a Christian Witness.

Eastern Orthodox Godparents

A member of an Eastern Orthodox church may be permitted to act as a Godparent provided there is a primary Godparent who is Catholic.

Letter of Suitability for Godparent

It is not automatically required to ask for a letter of good standing for a Godparent. However, if serious doubt exists about his or her qualification for the function, a request may be made for a letter of suitability from his or her pastor, or for an updated baptismal certificate.

4. PLACE

The preferred place for the celebration of Baptism is a person's parish of territorial jurisdiction (domicile or quasi-domicile) or ethnic affiliation (personal parishes). Notwithstanding, Baptism may be administered at another parish church with a baptismal font, after consultation with one's proper pastor. At minimum, the location must be a sacred space (church, chapel or authorized oratory), and the minister must always acquire permission of the of the local territorial pastor when baptizing outside his own territory, unless it is a case of danger of death.