

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM - the official teachings from Canon Law (the law that governs the Church)

Canon 867

§1 Parents are obliged to see to it that infants are baptized with the first weeks after birth; as soon as possible after the birth, or even before, parents are to request the sacrament for their child and to be **properly prepared. This is accomplished through the baptismal preparation sessions which all parents (regardless of having had a previous child baptized) must attend.**

Canon 868

§ 1 For the baptism of an infant it is necessary that:

- parents or at least one of them or the person who lawfully takes their place gives consent;
- there be a founded hope that the infant will be brought up in the Catholic faith; **if such a hope is altogether lacking, the baptism is to be delayed according to the prescriptions of particular law and the parents are to be informed of the reason. “altogether lacking” is defined as someone who is not registered in the parish and has not been regularly attending Mass and participating in the life of the parish community. As stated in law, the baptism may be delayed until such time as what is lacking may be remedied.**

Canon 872

Insofar as possible, one to be baptized is to be given a sponsor who is to assist an adult in Christian initiation, or, together with the parents, to present an infant at the baptism, and who will help the baptized to lead a **Christian life in harmony with the baptism, and to fulfill faithfully the obligations connected with it. This sentence is a nice way of saying one is actively living out the obligations placed upon us at baptism, the minimal of which is to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days and live a life in keeping with the Sacraments of the Church, especially where marriage is concerned (a valid marriage within the Church).**

Canon 873

Only one male or one female sponsor or one of each sex is to be a godparent. **This should be self-explanatory. You cannot have two godfathers or two godmothers.**

Canon 874

§ 1 To be admitted to the role of sponsor, a person must: Letters of suitability must be provided by the sponsor's parish/ church.

- be designated by the one to be baptized, by the parents or the one who takes their place or, in their absence, by the pastor or minister and is to have the qualifications & intention of performing the role;
- have completed the 16th year; is 16 years old
- be a Catholic who has been confirmed and has already received the sacrament of the Most Holy Eucharist and leads a

life in harmony with the faith and the role to be undertaken; Refer to the note on Canon 872

- not be the mother or father of the one to be baptized.

§ 2 A baptized person of another Christian church may not serve as godparent or sponsor but may serve as a witness to baptism together with a Catholic sponsor. **This person must likewise demonstrate proof of active participation in their Church community. To make sure there is no confusion regarding the celebration of baptism, no date will be discussed until all requirements are met.**