



## DIOCESE OF ROCKVILLE CENTRE

### 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 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.