

# SAINTS SIMON & JUDE

Catholic Community • Huntington Beach



## The Requirements for Godparents

Selecting sponsors is an important decision and it causes undue problems to propose someone as a sponsor who does not meet the Church's requirements. You are not simply honoring friends or relatives with a title whose responsibility ends at the conclusion of the celebration of the baptismal rite. You are asking them to enter a privileged faith relationship with your son or daughter. Sponsors do not replace parents but support them in helping their child to grow in the Catholic faith. They are not only helpers during the Baptism itself, but throughout the child's life. Please consider this very carefully!

### Canon Law

In common usage, sponsors are typically referred to as Godparents, in Church Law however, they are called sponsors. In accordance with Canons 872, 874, 892 and 893, the Tradition of the Church requires that, together with parent(s), a sponsor or sponsors are present for the celebration of the Sacrament of Baptism. The role of the sponsor is to assist the parent(s) in witnessing to the integrity of the Catholic faith and to support the child living that faith. For this reason, all of the following are required of sponsors.

A minimum of **one Sponsor/Godparent** is **required** for baptism. The sponsor need not be the same sex as the child. When there are **two sponsors, one must be male** and the **other female**. Our Church has no provision for multiple sponsors beyond the maximum of two.

- The sponsor(s) must be an **active Catholic**, who **lives the faith**, participates in Mass faithfully every Sunday and Holy Days of Obligation, and is willing to share the faith with his/her godchild.
- Be at least sixteen years of age
- Have received **ALL** the Sacraments of Initiation: **Baptism, First Holy Communion and Confirmation**
- ***If married, it must be a marriage recognized by the Church.***
  - A person who is bound by any canonical penalty, legitimately imposed or declared, may not serve as a sponsor.
  - A person who is (1) cohabiting or (2) civilly married and has neither been joined in sacramental marriage in the Catholic Church or obtained a dispensation to be married outside the Church from the Bishop, may not serve as a sponsor.
- Sponsor(s) and parents **MUST** attend a baptism class within 3 years prior to the baptism. This can be done at Saints Simon & Jude or at another parish, (a letter of confirming attendance elsewhere will be required *before* the baptism).
- The sponsor(s) **cannot** be the mother or father of the child to be baptized.
- **Non-Catholics may not act as sponsors.** However, together with qualified sponsors and a sufficient reason, a baptized, non-Catholic may act as a "**Christian Witness**" to the baptism.