

To be a Baptism Godparent or a Confirmation Sponsor, one must be a ‘Catholic in Good Standing’. What does that mean?

The Catholic Church in its Catechism lays out precepts or norms of life (CCC 2041-2043) for all of its faithful. They are to:

- Honor the Lord Our God on Sundays by Mass attendance and rest from work;
- Participate in sacramental confession at least once a year;
- Participate in worthy reception of the Eucharist at least during the Easter season;
- Observe the Church’s Days of Holy Obligation,
- Observe the prescribed days of fasting and abstinence; and
- Support the Church in her needs (e.g., *Stewardship*: Time, Talents, and Treasures).

So what does this mean for us to live out our Catholic faith? Quite simply, we do not pick what we want or like to do and don’t like to do in practicing our faith – not if we want to be faithful Catholics. In other words, we are called not to be a “Cafeteria Style Catholic”. Therefore, to be in the good graces of God and His Church, one cannot:

- Support abortion;
- Support contraception;
- Support re-defining marriage;
- Support the erroneous belief that attendance at Christmas and Easter Masses alone are sufficient. (Honor the Sabbath means we need to be at Mass on every Sunday);
- Be just “living” with someone else or only civilly married; while engaging in intimate sexual relations (outside the Sacrament of Matrimony), and/or;
- Support the gravely erroneous belief that the Sacrament of Reconciliation is unimportant and therefore, need not be celebrated;

and then publicly or privately purport to ***be a Catholic in good standing***. Sadly, they’re not! A baptized Catholic, who is ***not*** currently in ***good standing*** with the Church (e.g., unable to receive Communion), may ***not*** exercise the ministry of Baptism godparent or Confirmation sponsor.

Being a faithful Catholic in good standing means we have a moral and spiritual obligation to follow and give our full assent to the teachings and norms of the Roman Catholic Church.

** For an individual to be a Baptism godparent or Confirmation sponsor, if they are not a registered and practicing member of the faithful of the parish where the sacrament is to be conferred, they are ***required*** by the Church’s Code of Canon Law to obtain a Letter of Good Standing (or suitability) from the Pastor of their registered parish to fulfilling this ministry (cf. Canon 872, 873, 874 and 892 (Baptism) and Canon 892, 893.1, and 874 (Confirmation)).

As Christian Catholics, we believe that our faith and works save us, because of the salvific work promised us by Jesus Christ. Founded in and intertwined with God’s Ten Commandments, this is why we go to the Mass on Sundays; celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation; take time to pray daily; and participate in the catechetical, sacramental, and communal life of our parish.

If we do not understand the faith – we need to take the time to read about it; participate in the religious education opportunities of our parish; and/or meet with a parish priest. Learn ***why*** it is we believe, ***what*** we believe and ***do***, what we ***do***. Pray for the courage and perseverance, not only to live out the faith – but to proclaim it to a world that so needs to hear the truth of God’s message – now more than ever! May God bless you in your faith journey and good works.