

## Godparents

CONGRATULATIONS... you've been asked to be a Godparent!

Godparents are very important people and no doubt you are delighted to have been asked to be one. It means your friends or relations have chosen you to help bring up their child in the Christian faith.

### The role of Godparents is to:

- Pray for their Godchild,
- Talk to them about God and encourage them in the Christian faith,
- Lead them, by their example and the quality of life they lead, towards a Christian way of life,
- Encourage them in their membership of the local church,
- Help them to keep the promises made on their behalf at the Baptism service until they can make these promises for themselves at Confirmation.

## The Baptism promises

During the service just before the baptism itself parents and Godparents are asked to answer these questions, to declare their desire to be a Godparent and their intention to do their best to fulfil their duties:

*Will you pray for them (the children), draw them by your example into the community of faith and walk with them in the way of Christ?*

*Will you care for them (the children) and help them take their place within the life and worship of Christ's Church?*

To each question the Godparents reply:

***With the help of God we will.***

They are then asked these questions which they all answer together:

*Do you turn to Christ?  
I turn to Christ.*

*Do you repent of your sins?  
I repent of my sins.*

*Do you renounce evil?  
I renounce evil.*

Later they are asked to join the congregation in declaring their faith in the words of the Creed.

## What should we give our Godchild?

Most importantly your support and your prayers, but you will probably also want to mark the occasion with a gift. It need not be lavish or expensive - simple, meaningful ones will be appreciated as much - and it could be something to be used now or kept for later. Here are a few ideas:

- Bibles - there are many editions, some for children, with pictures and simple language, others with a more adult layout. Buy something that will encourage day to day use.
- Books of Bible stories - there are some very attractive series of well-illustrated books available for children.
- Books of prayers.
- A small wooden cross or a gold or silver cross on a chain.
- A Nativity set - not all families have these and they are a very good reminder of the Christmas story that can be used year after year.

## Maintain regular contact

You may also wish to send a card on the anniversary of Baptism, to write to them regularly as they get older, to send them postcards, e-mails etc. to maintain regular contact. This means that when the child is older and wants to ask questions, s/he will feel able to write or talk to you. Teenagers in particular may have thoughts and feelings about their faith that they may not want to share with parents and this is where your relationship may be valuable.

## Some questions often asked by potential Godparents

*Q. Does being a Godparent involve being a legal guardian as well?*

A. No, although Godparents may also be guardians, if asked. The roles are quite separate.

*Q. Being a Godparent seems a big responsibility.*

A. That's true and you should consider carefully the declarations and promises you are going to make. But you are not alone - the Church will share the task with you.

*Q. I am not sure I can make these decisions. What should I do if I've not thought much about my faith or don't go to church regularly?*

A. The important thing is that you want to be a Godparent, are committed to a Christian way of life and will do your best to pass this faith onto your Godchild.

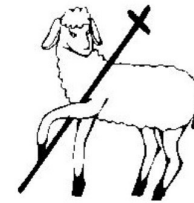
You do not have to be a perfect Christian to want to follow Christ and it would be surprising if you never had any doubts. The declarations you will be asked to make show that you intend to do your best. You and the parents will have the support of the whole church. Regular church attendance will help you access this support.

## A prayer for your Goddaughter

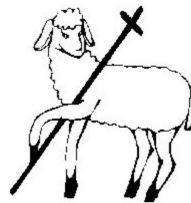
Heavenly Father,  
thank you for the gift of [name]  
and for all the joy she brings us.  
Be with her  
on her Christian journey,  
that she may come to know you  
as her Saviour and friend.  
Amen.

## A prayer for your Godson

Heavenly Father,  
thank you for the gift of [name]  
and for all the joy he brings us.  
Be with him  
on his Christian journey,  
that he may come to know you  
as his Saviour and friend.  
Amen.



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or about the Christian faith, or to contact us  
please visit our website

[www.stagneslongsight.org](http://www.stagneslongsight.org)

# Becoming a Godparent