

10 WAYS TO... BE A GREAT GODPARENT



1. Pray for the parents

Pray for the parents of your godchild. They are the ones who most directly influence the life and faith of their child.

Pray for their unity as a married couple. If separated or divorced, pray for any wounds in need of healing. If one parent has died, pray for the deceased parent and his/her continuing presence in this child's life through the communion of saints.

2. Spend time, keep in touch

Spend time with your godchild. Keep in touch with his/her journey through life – the ups and the downs. How's school going for him? What sport or hobby is she into? Who are his friends? What challenges does she face? Your interest is a sign of your love. If geography makes it difficult to spend time with the child, keep in touch through letters, phone-calls, email.

3. Celebrate the sacraments

Plan to be around when the child receives the sacraments of Confirmation and First Eucharist. Attend the ceremonies. If possible, be part of the preparations. Establish a simple tradition like: the godparents supply the cake (or make the toast) for the child's Confirmation, First Eucharist, etc.

4. ...and other key milestones

First day of school, graduations, birthdays, the feast day of their name saint... events like these are natural opportunities to show your love for and interest in your godchild's life.

5. Remember the baptism day

Relive the baptism day as the child grows up. Share with your godchild your memories and photos. Talk about what the day meant to you. On the anniversary visit, make a phone call, or send a card with a short prayer or blessing.

6. Give gifts that share faith

Give your godchild gifts that reflect faith (e.g. a child's bible, crucifix, prayer candle, Marian medal), not just at the baptism but at other times too, like birthdays or Christmas. Gifts don't have to be expensive, just thoughtful. Perhaps the best part of your gift is what you write in the card.

7. Wrap your godchild in prayer

Pray for your godchild often. As a prayerful reminder, display a photo of your godchild in your home or in your wallet.

8. Share your faith

Look for natural opportunities to talk about your faith and witness to your relationship with God. By the way you live your life, set an example of what it means to be a follower of Christ. Geography permitting, on some Sundays you may be able to share the Eucharist with your godchild.

9. Introduce the saints

Every child needs heroes and heroines to inspire them as they grow up. As a godparent you can tell them stories (with the help of books, videos, websites) of the great saints, martyrs and other inspiring characters from our Christian heritage.

10. Enjoy the journey

Like parenting, godparenting is for life. Even adults in their 50s or 60s can benefit from the prayers, support and wisdom of their godparents. We can also pray for a godchild who has died.

So, enjoy your developing relationship with your godchild as you both mature through life. And remember, if your godparenting role has been delayed or interrupted for whatever reason, it's never too late to start again. A prayer for your godchild each night would be a simple, yet powerful way to renew your promise as a godparent.

Godparents!

At the baptism of your godchild you made a public promise: To help the parents bring up this child in the Catholic faith, loving God and neighbour as Christ taught us.

How can you help the parents do this?

Here are ten practical ideas for godparents.

Helpful hint

If you read this page of suggestions and feel somewhat inadequate, welcome to godparenting!

No one does it perfectly, but rest assured: with the help of God's grace, you as a godparent can be a loving, faithfilled presence in this child's life. The parents have chosen you for your qualities and God is already working through you. Pray that God will lead you in your role as a godparent...one step at a time.

Also available:

- *Ten Ways to Prepare for your Baby's Baptism*
- *Ten Ways to Host a Party for your Baby's Baptism*



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