

## ***Being a Godparent***

### **Before the Baptism...**

People feel honoured to be asked to be a godparent and it certainly is a privilege to have that special relationship with a godchild.

*But what does it mean in practice?*

Certainly it means more than just standing up at the front of the church at the baptism. So, we want to encourage you to think about where God fits in to your being a Godparent, and about how you can fulfil your responsibilities.

### **At the Baptism...**

At the Baptism the Minister will ask you to reply to some questions. First, the Minister will explain that as children grow they need the help and encouragement of the whole church in order to learn to be faithful in worshipping at church, in praying privately by themselves and in coming to Confirmation in order to declare the Christian faith to be their own. Parents and godparents are told that the baptized child depends chiefly on them for this help and encouragement and you will be asked if you are willing to give it to them by your own prayers, by your example and by your teaching. You reply "I am willing." So you need to live this out - in praying for your godchild, in showing in your own life what it means to be a follower of Jesus, and in teaching your godchild about the Christian faith. It is a

big responsibility.

Second, the Minister will ask you three questions about the direction in which your life is going. You make the reply "I turn to Christ, I repent of my sins. I renounce evil" and you make this declaration for yourself as well as on behalf of your godchild. This means promising to follow Jesus Christ, as Lord of your life, intending to live, not in a self-centred way, but in a Christ-centred way.

Third, there are a set of questions about your faith, and you reply, "I believe and trust in God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit."

So the promises you make at your godchild's baptism are very important.

### **After the Baptism...**

Here are some suggestions for fulfilling your role as a godparent:

- Pray for your godchild every day. Use a prayer like this:

*Heavenly Father, I ask you to bless my godchild.*

*Please keep him/her safe from all harm this day.*

*I ask that he/she will grow up to love you, to trust you, and to live as a Christian.*

*Help me to encourage him/her in the Christian faith every way I can.*

*In the name of Christ. Amen.*

- On each anniversary of the baptism, send him/her a greetings card, like a birthday card, which can be a reminder of the promises made by you on his or her behalf.
- Take a real interest in his or her growing up as a Christian. Remember you said you were willing to encourage church attendance, private prayer and growth in faith – especially by your own example and teaching.
- Think carefully about gifts you give, for example at Christmas and birthdays, and at least sometimes choose something Christian, such as a good Christian book suitable for the appropriate age group (Christian bookshops can advise you.)
- Try to become clearer about your own Christian faith, and firmer in it; and when you see your godchild, take time to talk about what being a Christian means.



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A Guide for Godparents

