



St Paul's Peel Parish Church, Little Hulton

Being Godparents

Qualities, Duties and Responsibilities



Congratulations!
**You have been asked to be a
Godparent!**

Being a Godparent is a great honour.
What will you have to do? What's the catch?

A Godparent has a special responsibility to nurture a child's life. **You are being asked to be a person who will pray for your Godchild and take a special interest in how they grow up spiritually.**

In the Baptism service you will be asked questions about what you believe. It's important to answer truthfully as you make these promises before God and **you must have been baptized yourself.**

As well as praying, a Godparent should also show that to follow Jesus is the way to know God. Being with other Christians is the place where God strengthens that faith and immerses us in experiences of his love. **It is hoped that you too will be a member of a church, of whatever denomination, as you seek to be an example to your Godchild.**

The celebration of Baptism is always a social occasion. It is also a very special occasion for the Church. Many of the elements of the celebration the words and symbols, the questions and actions, have been passed down to us from the earliest days of the Church. **You may be wondering whether you have the personal faith and wherewithal to take on this important role.**

First of all, we want to assure you that God loves you and your Godchild. We remember the welcome given to children by Jesus in the Bible accounts of his life. The Church, in the name of Jesus, offers you and your Godchild that same warm welcome. The life that God gives us in his Church is always an invitation to grow and nurture the seed of faith that is planted within our lives. **We hope and pray that this seed of faith will grow and mature for both you and your Godchild.**

There are many obstacles for that growth of faith in our world today. God calls everyone to live life to the full with Him living lives modeled on his Son Jesus. We all mess up but He welcomes us back time and time again if we're sorry. Maybe, you are very aware

of your failings and weaknesses; the ways in which you have personally failed to respond to the gift of faith in your own life. **Please recognise that faith is a gift.** Perhaps the celebration of Baptism with your godchild will enable your own faith to be renewed. As you make the promises and commitment of faith in the Baptism of your godchild, **you can begin again your own journey of faith within the Church.**

Let's look now, at what you are undertaking as a Godparent.

In the Church, you stand next to the parents of your godchild. This shows that you are acting in solidarity with them in their desire that their child will be brought up as a Christian within the family of the Church. Godparents are always a friend in the faith who can be turned to in times of doubt, confusion or questioning. **Your purpose is to be there to help your Godchild in their walk of faith and to help them to live their lives as followers of Jesus.**

Before the celebration of Baptism at the font, you will join the parents of your Godchild in rejecting what is false and contrary to the Kingdom of God, and in professing **your** faith as a follower of Jesus. Listen to these questions you will be asked by the minister,

“Parents and godparents, the Church receives this child with joy. Today we are trusting God for their growth in faith. Will you pray for them, draw them by your example into the community of faith and walk with them in the way of Christ?

With the help of God, we will.

In baptism this child begins their journey in faith. You speak for them today. Will you care for them, and help them to take their place within the life and worship of Christ's Church?

With the help of God, we will.

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.

In all these answers you do not speak on behalf of your Godchild, but in your own right as a member of the Church. This may be an opportunity for you to renew your own baptismal commitment to faith and your life of faith within the Church.

Baptism is an invitation to belong and to respond to God's invitation to follow Jesus. The gift of faith given to your Godchild is fragile and vulnerable. It will need much assistance if it is to grow towards maturity. No doubt, you will want to play your part in the life of your Godchild. Perhaps you can find ways of 'being there' at times of crisis and sickness. A timely letter or card will always be remembered. The promise of prayer support will always be appreciated. The gift of a Bible or devotional book, at times of Birthday and Christmas celebration, may be a timely reminder of your role.

There is a lovely account in the Bible of two of Jesus' disciples walking to Emmaus from Jerusalem. Their faces are downcast because, although they've heard stories of Jesus' dying and rising to life, somehow this story has not yet come alive for them. And yet, Jesus is with them through all this journey, a stranger who walks with them. His gentle words of encouragement and explanation of God's plans, later make sense when they recognise him as they eat together and he breaks the bread. Perhaps this is a good model of being a Godparent - to walk alongside, to accompany your Godchild; to be there as a faith friend. **We hope and pray that your own faith will be strengthened in this wonderful work you are doing for your godchild.**

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