



When we are baptized, a special pair of adults are chosen in addition to our parents to be our spiritual guides. Personally, my godparents go above and beyond the call in their commitment to this vital role in a child's life. I've watched how they love unconditionally, treat others with respect, and talk openly with me about faith. They are hysterical, always genuine, and I will never be able to thank them for all they do for myself and others.

But, then, I talk to some of my oldest friends, and they can't even name their godparents. They aren't sure who they are or the last time they've talked to them. Aren't godparents important to everyone as mine are to me? The idea that some would answer "no" shocked me at first, but then I realized that **maybe people just don't know how to be a godparent.** Is the commitment supposed to end after the sacrament? What does it mean to be a good godparent throughout a person's life?

While parents are the primary teachers of children, godparents are a special spiritual addition. In *Casti Connubii*, Pope Pius XI writes, *"The blessing of offspring, however, is not completed by the mere begetting of them, but something else must be added, namely the proper education of the offspring."* **The parents are there for the "education of the offspring" – mind, body, and soul – and the godparents are there to assist, too.** Together parents and godparents help children grow spiritually closer to God. That doesn't end after the baptismal ceremony. If you are blessed enough to become a godparent, what should you do to assure that you are *the best godparent ever?*

Here are 7 tips on how you can fulfill the call of godparent:

1. Pray for your Godchild

Ceaselessly keep them in your prayers, and ask God's guidance on how you can best offer guidance and support. Prayer will allow you to let out that spiritual motherhood and fatherhood you are called to as a godparent. Though it's an intelligent assumption that their parents are already praying for them, godchildren need all the prayers they can get – just like the rest of us. **Don't be shy about praying for them just as often as you would if they were your own child.**

2. Don't be a stranger

Stepping out of their life after you leave their baptism means you are missing out not only on their life, but your role as godparents. Maybe you're the sassy godmother who says it like it is, or the ol e godfather who never forgets to send a card. Whichever style of godparent you end up becoming, you're an influence in your godchild's life. No two godparents are alike, so if you are blessed with a godchild, remember to just be yourself and be there for them. If nothing else, be an ear for them. You never know if you're the only one they think they can talk to at that ol et. If you're invited to a birthday party, a graduation, or a wedding, make your best effort to be there. **Don't miss the opportunity to truly be a godparent in someone's whole life, not just their baptism.**

3. Be an example

Do your best to show them that no matter what happens in your life or the struggles you might be facing, you don't give up on God's plan for you. Show them that they should never give up on themselves either. Sing praise and worship music or chant a hymn or invite them to pray a rosary or take them out to dinner and ask them to lead the blessing or go to Mass with them. **There is always an opportunity to be an witness of a Godly life to your Godchild.**

4. Little things count

Godparents aren't around just to give material gifts – even though they are known for their generosity. You might not be as wealthy as the man in Mario Puzo's: "The Godfather" – and hopefully not as prone to violence- but you can always give something ol et (a prayer card, a note ol et you thought of them, anything to remind them of God and that you are there to support them.) **Godparents exist to spiritually give, which will manifest itself in whatever gifts they have to give – ol calls, hugs, a walk, a dinner, a baseball game.** Even ol et occasional ol ol et Sunday is helpful. Conversation doesn't always have to be theological. If they like baseball, ask them about it or tell them about when you played in school. The ol et things will add up.

5. Compliment them on the things that matter most

When the world is concentrating on their appearance and their grades, tell them they have a beautiful smile or are very kind. **Point to their virtues. Talk about the thing that interests them most, and compliment them on their enthusiasm for it.** If your godchild is a trouble child, be the one who points out the good in them when they are “grounded for life.” Remember, they are unique. Let them know it. God gives everyone of us special gifts and talents that only we possess. Help them to let and develop these gifts.

6. Let them know you are happy to be their godparent

When you are happy to be a godparent, it lets them know that you’re not doing it out of duty or expectation; you really do care about them and are even honored to call them your godchild. With a smile, recall what you said in their place at their baptism when the priest asked: **“Are you ready to help the parents of this child in their duty as Christian parents?”** Godparents respond, **“We do.”** Continue to respond with that same answer.

7. Always point to God

That’s not to let that every other word out of your mouth needs to be about Jesus, but live with the charity that reveals the Heavenly Father that you share with your godchild. No matter how old they are, remind them that they are your *godchild* and can be childlike and innocent. Remind them of the light of the Lord when they are lost and let them know that there is a plan for their life. **You are their GODparent.** Remember that your first object is to lead them to God through whatever means you can offer – calls, visits, cards, stories, support, and especially prayer. Godchildren are gifts and shouldn’t be forgotten, so don’t disappear.

It’s a great blessing, and if you do your best, you will be the best godparent ever for your godchild. **Whether you’re about to be or have been a godparent for years, it’s never too late to let a godchild know you love them and wish them to be led to Heaven.**