



WHAT SHOULD WE CONSIDER WHEN BEING A GOOD GODPARENT?

1. Remember your godchild's sacramental anniversaries. Send him a card or a gift or make a phone call to honor his baptism date and later his confirmation and first Communion anniversaries. Humans are sensory animals. As we see in the liturgy, how we act toward certain things communicates their importance—e.g., standing for the Gospel reading or kneeling before the holy Eucharist. It is the same with birthdays or wedding anniversaries. Gifts, dinners, feasts, and gatherings communicate that this event is important. Godparents should do what they can to communicate that sacramental anniversaries are worthy of remembrance and celebration.

2. Help him cultivate a devotion to his patron saint. Encourage the parents to name the child after a saint and entrust the child to that blessed namesake. Then you can help the child cultivate a devotion by remembering the patronal feast day alongside the sacramental anniversaries and providing gifts that foster a relationship between the child and his patron.

3. Build him a spiritual library. Each year, especially when the child is young, purchase a spiritual classic for your godchild on his baptismal anniversary or patronal feast, and inscribe it. For example, on the child's first baptism anniversary, you could purchase for him the *Confessions* by St. Augustine or the *Fundamentals of Catholic Dogma* by Ludwig Ott. Repeat this practice each year. By the time the child comes of age and can read such works with interest, he will have a whole library. Imagine a child going to college with a robust collection of spiritual works—each one inscribed as a memento of what is truly important in life.

4. Be a spiritual mentor. The godchild will need someone in his life who is not afraid to discuss and take seriously the things of God. If possible, be present at family functions, and when the child is older, be intentional about asking him about his spiritual life. Cultivate a relationship in which taking him to coffee to discuss his interior life and the challenges of youth would not be odd or misplaced. Maybe, at times, he will not be open to such a relationship, but be sure that he knows that you are open to that conversation. You never know how the Holy Spirit may work and what phone call you may receive one day.

As with all things, prudence must take in the circumstances, and godparents must discern how best to live out their calling. They should always keep in mind, however, that like Lutetia, the godchild to whom God has entrusted them is destined to become a saint.

So, for all godparents and godparents-to-be out there: be intentional. Take seriously the things of God. And may the child, the parents, and you all work together to be holy and attain heaven.

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