

Parish Church of
St Robert of Knaresborough
Pannal

Congratulations
You're a
Godparent!



Congratulations on being asked to be a Godparent; they are very important people!

It means that your friends or relations think you'll be a good example to their child. They trust you to pray for them and encourage them in their Christian faith. As a Godparent, you have a special role. It's about helping a child and encouraging them in their spiritual life and supporting them as they grow up and share in the life of the Church. You will be expected to attend the child's baptism, where you will make promises to help to bring them up in the Christian faith. By the way Christening & Baptism is the same thing!

Christening and Godparents

Christian parents have always wanted their children to follow in the Christian faith themselves and they can be welcomed into membership of the Church as babies. When a baby is Christened they are obviously not able to confess their own Christian faith. Instead Godparents answer the questions for them and take on a duty to be there to support the child as they grow. Since Godparents are taking on the responsibility of encouraging the child in the Christian faith they should be Christians themselves. Being a Godparent does not mean that you are taking on the role of legal guardian as well. This is something which every parent has a duty to decide and you may be asked to be a guardian too, but it is not automatically your role as a Godparent. Your responsibility is a spiritual one – to encourage and pray for your Godchild. Eventually a child who has been Christened will have an opportunity to be confirmed and make a public commitment about their own faith. An ideal Godparent is somebody who will provide a great example to the child of Christian living. The Godparent will pray for the child and encourage them to follow the teachings of Jesus.

What happens in the Christening service?

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. These questions will be asked by the minister;

Parents and Godparents, the Church receives (NAME(S)) 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, (NAME(S)) continues their journey in faith. Will you help them to take their place within the life and worship of Christ's Church?

With the help of God, we will.

Parents and Godparents will be asked to stand up and declare their own Christian faith. It is important to make sure that you can make these promises and only you can truthfully know that. Parents and Godparents are invited to gather around the font, one family at a time and make the following declarations:-

Making Promises

There are then three questions about the way you intend to live your life. Parents and Godparents make the promises for themselves and also for the child. Here are the questions with a short explanation;

Do you turn away from sin? I do.

I'm sorry about the past and I know that I am accountable to God for my actions and thoughts. I can never be perfect but as I admit what is wrong he forgives and accepts me.

Do you reject evil? I do.

I know that I sometimes have to make choices between good and evil. I want to set the evil behind me and from now on I will always try to choose the good. All of this is a big responsibility. Take some time to think through the commitments you make when you answer them. But don't forget that the Church will support you in encouraging and praying for your Godchild.

Do you turn to Christ as Saviour? I do.

I want to change direction. I accept that my life is not totally my own.

Do you trust in him as Lord? I do.

I acknowledge that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and I will try to follow his teaching and his guidance for my life day by day.

You may not have thought much about your own faith and don't go to Church regularly. Most people have doubts at some stage, and no one's asking you to be perfect. However, being asked to be a Godparent is a good opportunity to think about your own faith. If you have any questions at all, why not speak to your minister or another Christian you know.

You're a Godparent. Now what?

Both you and your Godchild will get far more out of this relationship if you can keep it alive. Children love to get letters, postcards and emails. Why not send a card or small gift on the anniversary of the baptism, to show you care about them and to remind you both of what's special about this relationship. Keep in touch regularly as they grow up. Perhaps when they're older, they'll want to ask questions about faith or Christian life. If you've kept in touch, they might be able to ask you – and that's something special. Parents should not feel pressure to choose certain friends, but try to find people who can make the promises and mean them.

The names of Godparents will be included in the Church register.

Prayers for Godparents

Give me your wisdom and your love.
Help me to be a good example of Christian living
and keep me mindful of my precious Godchild Amen.

Heavenly Father,
thank you for the gift of my Godchild
and for all the joy which they brings us.
Be with them on their Christian journey
so that they may come to know
our Lord Jesus Christ
as Saviour and friend.
Amen.

If you have any questions then please do not hesitate to contact us

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