

Dear Padre,

Why must I choose practicing Catholics as my baby's godparents?

The Church is clear about the qualifications of godparents: at least sixteen years old; one woman and one man leading lives of faith; confirmed and having already received Communion (see Canons 872–874). *Godparent* isn't simply an honorary title we bestow on someone. It's an important role of trust in the child's faith life.

We grow in trust for someone via a gradual process of getting to know that person: being introduced, spending time together, talking to one another, learning about each other, and being generous with one another.

That's how trust in Jesus develops. Parents and godparents introduce us to him, teach us to pray. We talk to Jesus on our own and learn more about him through Scripture. Our parents take us to church. We watch their example and that of our godparents. We learn from the parish, the Catholic school, and our *Catechism*. It's a gradual process of getting to know Jesus that leads us to trust him and have faith in him.

At baptism, the priest or deacon lights a candle from the large Easter candle. In many parishes, the candle is passed first to the godfather. "Receive the light of Christ," says the priest. The godfather passes it to the godmother, who passes it to the mother, who hands it to the father to hold for the child. That is how faith comes to us: a gift from God, but through other people. Parents and godparents must have the bright flame of faith in their own hearts if they hope to pass it to their child.

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A WORD FROM Pope Francis

It is the duty of the parents, together with the godfathers and godmothers, to take care to nurture the flame of baptismal grace in their little ones, helping them persevere in the faith. Children have the right to Christian formation, which "seeks to lead them gradually to learn God's plan in Christ."

GENERAL AUDIENCE, MAY 16, 2018



Our Parish Community

July 10, 2022

Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time (C)

Dt 30:10–14

Col 1:15–20

Lk 10:25–37

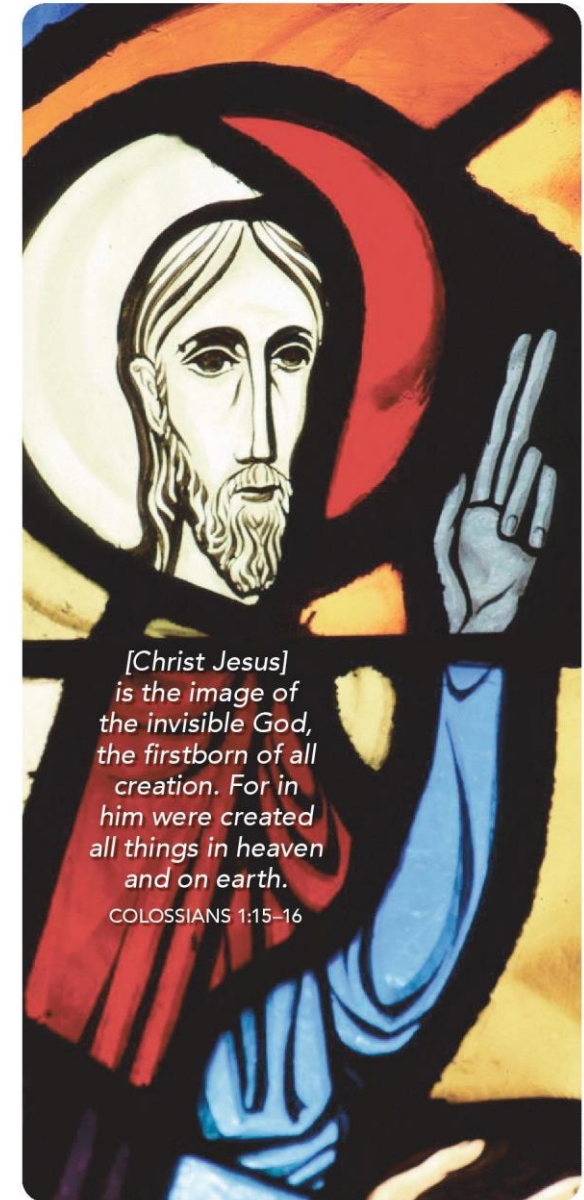
Love of the Law

Years ago, I saw a chart in a catechism that identified the faith of the Old Testament as a religion of law and that of the New Testament as a religion of love. This is not only seriously wrong, it is also dangerously biased. The two commandments to love as recorded in today's Gospel originate in Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18, respectively. Several of the prophets describe God's love of Israel in tender, even passionate, terms (Isaiah 43:1, Jeremiah 31:3). To think otherwise is to tread alarmingly close to a form of anti-Judaism. We must remember that the religion Jesus loved deeply, and which he sought to bring to fulfillment, was the religion of ancient Israel.

Part of the error of that chart might have been a misunderstanding of the meaning of law. We might think of *law* as "proscription" or "restriction" (you must...or you must not...). The Hebrew meaning is more flexible. Some translate the Hebrew word *torah* as "instruction" or "directive." The psalmist delights in the law because it refreshes the soul and rejoices the heart. Today's first reading tells us that the law is already in our hearts. The law of love was certainly in the heart of the Samaritan who cared for the stranger on the side of the road.

If we can see that laws are meant to help us care for ourselves, others, and the world, we will soon realize that living as the laws direct us might bring us to a deep love for the law.

Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA



[Christ Jesus]
is the image of
the invisible God,
the firstborn of all
creation. For in
him were created
all things in heaven
and on earth.

COLOSSIANS 1:15–16

FOR Reflection

- ★ What is the relationship between the rules or customs in your family and the love you have for its members?
- ★ Reflect on today's responsorial Psalm 19:8–11.