

Fr. Alexandros ([00:01](#)):

On the spiritual side as the moment you're going to be a godparent, your work begins.

Pres. Stephanie ([00:14](#)):

The godparent is basically like a spiritual parent and ideally their working alongside the work that is being done in the home.

Fr. Vjekoslav ([00:23](#)):

Godparents is one, giving answers on behalf of the baby,

Fr. Christopher ([00:28](#)):

The role of a godparent that somebody who is there to guide us along the way.

Kh. Sophia ([00:33](#)):

Picking someone, inviting someone into your family, into your child's life that you know is actively participating, is actively working on their faith. So I think it's a big responsibility.

Fr. Vjekoslav ([01:10](#)):

Thank you.

Pres. Stephanie ([01:12](#)):

Alright father, how many children have you baptized?

Fr. Alexandros ([01:18](#)):

Wow, how many children have I baptized? How many children have you baptized?

Fr. Vjekoslav ([01:24](#)):

How many children have I baptized? That's

Fr. Christopher ([01:35](#)):

I'm laughing because I really have not been blessed to baptize a lot of children.

Fr. Alexandros ([01:39](#)):

Well, been a priest for 12 years. I do probably 15, 20 baptisms a year

Fr. Vjekoslav ([01:44](#)):

Since posco. This year we had 22 baptism in Holy Trinity Church. Of course not all of them were children.

Fr. Alexandros ([01:54](#)):

Six

Pres. Stephanie ([01:55](#)):

And technically Luke.

Fr. Alexandros ([01:57](#)):

Okay, and then 20 times 10 is 200, so we're just going to say over 200

Fr. Vjekoslav ([02:02](#)):

Total in the eight years of my ministry, I'm not sure, probably few dozens of baptisms.

Fr. Christopher ([02:11](#)):

I would guess I've maybe done 10 baptisms or been part of 10 to 15 baptisms.

Kh. Sophia ([02:17](#)):

We've been a part of the baptisms of our God children as well, right?

Fr. Alexandros ([02:28](#)):

When we walk together in parenting, we're living out the Christian life in the marriage service. It even says may you have the crowns that parents earn. And so parenting is a part of our salvation as we live out our Christian life.

Kh. Sophia ([02:43](#)):

If someone was nervous about raising children today, I would encourage them that children are the greatest blessing from God.

Fr. Vjekoslav ([02:51](#)):

It's actually the first blessing that God gives to Adam and Eve when they are created, be fruitful and multiply.

Fr. Christopher ([02:59](#)):

I've heard some people express concern about not wanting to raise children in the world today because the world is so fallen and they're right. The world is very fallen at the same time. Christ defeated death with his resurrection and we have an opportunity as Christians to be light in a world of darkness.

Pres. Stephanie ([03:21](#)):

Our job as parents is to raise our children by the example that we set. And so if they see us connected to Christ and to the church, the things they encounter around them are fodder for conversation as to why did someone do something that we know is not right? Why are people doing things this way? And as long as we're making the home and environment where we're talking about things, we're praying with our children and we're teaching them the way to Christ, then all of the challenges that they will face, they will be prepared for and we will be communicating with them.

Dragana Jovičić ([03:59](#)):

We glory to God, have more Christian Orthodox schools and co-ops and we're able to raise them in this beautiful way and through wonderful Christian communities

Kh. Sophia ([04:12](#)):

To instill that in them so that they can continue that and God willing one day pass that on to their children. So yeah, it's scary but it's the greatest blessing.

Fr. Vjekoslav ([04:21](#)):

We can definitely see in the spiritual tradition of the Orthodox Church that there are no spiritual fruits unless we are willing to work for them. If we choose not to have children because this is going to be a struggle, this is going to be a challenge. This is going to make our life in some worldly sense externally harder than we are depriving really ourselves from that blessing to spiritually grow through struggle to become stronger, to become more spiritually advanced.

Fr. Christopher ([04:49](#)):

Christ says that it's so important for us to be like little children, to help raise little children and to guide them. Yeah, it is scary with the world today and the fallenness of the world, but at the same time, God is bigger than all of that.

Kh. Sophia ([05:13](#)):

Our role as parents is we have so much to do for our kids, physically, emotionally, but spiritually as a part of that too. So we all know the physical milestones of what you want to see your child doing at a certain age and we help encourage that. We need to be just as worried about their spiritual development and their spiritual growth and that's how we can at least start it off right from the beginning is with baptism.

Fr. Vjekoslav ([05:36](#)):

There is a beautiful tradition in the church, in the Orthodox church to pick a patron saint for our children and name them after that saint.

Fr. Alexandros ([05:45](#)):

Remember, a patron saint is someone that we are hoping our child will exemplify, someone that will walk in their footsteps. When choosing a name or a patron saint for your child, obviously there's a lot of different context that goes into that choice. There's the cultural context, but more importantly is do we have a connection with that saint?

Fr. Christopher ([06:02](#)):

And this could be even if somebody is converting and they're looking for a patron saint or really you can't go wrong, right? A saint is a saint, they're in heaven, they're holy.

Fr. Alexandros ([06:12](#)):

A lot of people also wonder, does my baptism name need to be my legal name? And of course that is two separate things. One is in the world and one is in the spiritual life and God sees us in both of those ways, but when we come for holy communion, we'll have a special name, a name that we associate with our spiritual life.

Fr. Vjekoslav ([06:30](#)):

Whatever kind of challenge or difficulty or problem we face, there is somebody there with us. We are not alone. Christ is with us. Mother of God is with us. Guardian angel is with us and then also our patron saint is there with us.

Kh. Sophia ([06:46](#)):

It's a big responsibility. It's also just such a special experience. You're giving your child a name that they're going to then carry with them for the rest of their life and it holds a lot of meaning.

Fr. Vjekoslav ([06:55](#)):

We could definitely include prayers to that saint in our daily routine, maybe have an icon of that saint. Then on the names they bring out that icon venerated and tell our children that today we celebrate saying so and so and you're named after him and perhaps this is why we chose to name you after him. This is what he or she did in their life. This is how they glorify Christ in their lives.

Pres. Stephanie ([07:26](#)):

So what's a name day? A name day is the day that your saint is remembered in the church. I like to explain to our kids that it's kind of like your spiritual birthday in the same way that we celebrate your birth on your birthday. This is the day that we're celebrating your saint's life and

Kh. Sophia ([07:43](#)):

Usually it's an opportunity to celebrate that child a little bit too. Teach that child more about their saint. That child can grow up knowing I have a birthday but I also have the day named after my saint. I have my name day. We'd usually invite our godparents over for that day to celebrate with them as a representation of they are our godparents leading us in the faith. This is the day that we were named after the name that we were given at our baptism. Also,

Fr. Alexandros ([08:07](#)):

I think it's worth noting that a name day is not the birthday of the saints, but usually the day that the saint passed into eternal life,

Fr. Christopher ([08:15](#)):

What we're really celebrating is the saint's birthday to when they were born into heaven.

Fr. Alexandros ([08:21](#)):

It's another example of what we're celebrating the start of something, and in this case it's the start of our own Christian journey into the next life. And so when we have a name day, we're celebrating that saint's story that led them to that point.

Fr. Vjekoslav ([08:35](#)):

If we name them after saints, but we never really explained to them why we did that, that's not going to benefit them much. Right? Use those opportunities to remind our children how meaningful, how powerful and how great thing this is that they are named after a saint.

Pres. Stephanie ([08:53](#)):

Do you want to say something about giving them their name too?

Fr. Alexandros ([08:57](#)):

Oh yeah, you should say that.

Pres. Stephanie ([09:00](#)):

One thing to add is that actually before any of the other parts of the service, the first thing that godparent does is actually give the child their name. The parents have selected it, but the godparent is the one that actually states the name in the baptismal service.

Fr. Alexandros ([09:24](#)):

The moment you're going to be a godparent, your work begins half of being a godparent is praying for your godchild and being the model, the role model that they need in their own spiritual life.

Pres. Stephanie ([09:35](#)):

I think building a relationship with the family, the parents as well, especially if it's maybe someone you don't know as well and starting to understand their family and their life and therefore being able to pray together to talk about things together and sort of be on this journey together.

Fr. Alexandros ([09:55](#)):

You're preparing to be a support parent to the parent. You're preparing to be a spiritual addition to the child's life. So integrating into that family, getting to know that family is a really wonderful way to start. The

Fr. Christopher ([10:06](#)):

Role of a godparent in the service and especially in the orthodox worship services and just in life in general, is to guide the children and guide that Christian, guide that person. I mean even adults when they get baptized, they have godparents. A godparent is a sponsor, right? It's a witness. It's somebody who is there to guide us along the way.

Fr. Alexandros ([10:28](#)):

Well, when we were looking for godparents for our children, what things were important to us?

Pres. Stephanie ([10:33](#)):

I think the first one is that we really wanted to make sure that our children would have godparents that were very closely connected to the church, not necessarily our closest friends, but the people that we knew would pray for them daily would be actively involved and talking about their spiritual life with them and just very closely connected to the church.

Fr. Alexandros ([10:51](#)):

Yeah, a great place to start is do I see these people in church every Sunday

Dragana Jovičić ([10:56](#)):

When we're choosing godparents is to make sure that they're active as orthodox Christians. First and foremost, picking

Kh. Sophia ([11:03](#)):

Someone, inviting someone into your family, into your child's life that you know is actively participating, is actively working on their faith because they have to work on their faith while they're also helping your child work on their faith. So I think it's a big responsibility.

Fr. Alexandros ([11:17](#)):

Picking your child's godparent is one of the most important decisions you're going to make and my recommendation to you is to think into the future. What person is going to be there in the future for your godchild in the moment? We may have friendships, we may have relatives that are fully involved, but let's think about where are we going to be in 10, 15, 20 years and how is this person going to be involved in this child's life?

Pres. Stephanie ([11:41](#)):

As much as it might be a difficult decision not to select a best friend or a sibling, it isn't a social decision. It really truly is a spiritual decision and this choice is going to impact your child for the rest of your life and we're responsible for our own children's salvation and this person is going to be on that journey with us responsible for our child's salvation. And like he said, it's one of the most important decisions you can make and really shouldn't be taken lightly or made out of pressure or obligation to someone.

Fr. Christopher ([12:13](#)):

A godparent is a way to extend and grow our families. When we choose godparents for our kids, we now enter an even more special relationship with those people because they now have that title with our children and for the rest of our kids' lives, that's their godparents.

Pres. Stephanie ([12:30](#)):

When choosing our children's godparents, we have so many siblings and wonderful people in our family that would make excellent godparents, but we really wanted to expand our spiritual family, so we chose friends outside of our family to be our children's godparents.

Fr. Christopher ([12:47](#)):

Pray to God about it, ask him for his guidance, for his blessing, and if you are asked to really pray about that and make sure you're ready. Now, quite frankly, none of us are truly worthy of that kind of a calling just as I'm not really worthy to be a priest.

Dragana Jovičić ([13:05](#)):

I believe we all at some point feel unworthy. The only perfect one is God.

Pres. Stephanie ([13:11](#)):

So sometimes people feel like maybe I'm unworthy to be a godparent and the reality is none of us are worthy.

Fr. Vjekoslav ([13:19](#)):

I think it would be very dangerous if somebody feels worthy to be a godparent. If somebody feels like, oh, this belongs to me.

Pres. Stephanie ([13:27](#)):

We're all striving, we're all working on ourselves, we're all going to confession working on our spiritual life,

Fr. Christopher ([13:33](#)):

Yet God in his mercy and compassion towards us and through the grace of the Holy Spirit makes us worthy. But by entering into that relationship, by saying yes to that calling, we have to be prepared for that. We have to be ready to grow in that

Fr. Vjekoslav ([13:52](#)):

Because again, when we receive a calling from God, somebody asked me to be a God parent, it's perhaps Holy Spirit in widening me to pursue this ministry. If we choose to be God parents or whatever other kind of ministry, this should be an encouragement for us to live our faith even better, to get engaged even deeper.

Pres. Stephanie ([14:15](#)):

As long as you are striving and you want that, that is absolutely the kind of model that you can be for that child because they're not going to be perfect either.

Fr. Alexandros ([14:26](#)):

Amen.

Fr. Vjekoslav ([14:45](#)):

The center of the service is the one who has been baptized, right? Whether a baby or an adult godparent is right there, either besides them or holding a baby that is to be baptized. In the case of babies, especially godparents is one, giving answers on behalf of the baby even just by virtue of that, by stating the creed on behalf of baby, I believe among God, the Father Almighty, et cetera, God's parent is putting himself or herself in position of being responsible, how that child will be living his or her life in the future.

Kh. Sophia ([15:21](#)):

They're speaking for that baby with the promise that they're going to help also raise, continue to bring that child up in the church.

Fr. Vjekoslav ([15:27](#)):

Depending on various churches and maybe some local traditions, customs, godparents can be providing baptismal garments, a cross for the baby, a candle, an icon of the patron saint or perhaps something else. The

Fr. Christopher ([15:42](#)):

Priest will take care of most of the things, making sure there's oil and scissors and the gospel of course, but things for the godparents and the parents to work out to make sure that they bring is a white towel, of course, to make sure that we can wrap the child. And of course the color white is because it's a huge symbol of purity and the resurrection, generally speaking, a white outfit to put the child into after they're baptized, after they come out of the water.

Fr. Vjekoslav ([16:07](#)):

And there is even a reference in the revelation that those who are in the kingdom of God, they have white garments or transfiguration and Christ is transfigure before his apostles,

Fr. Christopher ([16:17](#)):

Making sure that we have the candles for the godparents to hold. Usually they're decorative candles, but they can be any candles and it's often the practice that I've seen where the godparents will take that newly baptized person to communion the first few times holding that candle they'll bring across that the person being baptized gets to wear throughout their life. And there's one more. Oh, oftentimes godparents or parents might bring an icon, especially the patron saint for the priest to bless or the patron feast of that person being baptized so that they can have that to put in their homes. There are other items

Kh. Sophia ([16:59](#)):

Trying to think about, that's all.

Fr. Christopher ([17:01](#)):

She's always in charge of the items. Sawyer,

Kh. Sophia ([17:03](#)):

No, that's all.

Fr. Alexandros ([17:13](#)):

As a godparent, you may be wondering, well, I'm going to show up. I have collected all these items that are needed for the service, but what am I going to be doing in the participation? And this is a very important thing because the sacramental part of being a godparent is your participation. Collecting all the items is really not the focal point of what happens. So after the priest starts the service, the first prayers for the naming of the child, the God parent provides that name, and this is the spiritual name that that child will then take on. We're going to start in the back of the church and first we are going to renounce Satan. We are going to push him out of the back of the church. It's culminated with the godparents even blowing and spitting on the devil three times. Now this action is oriented towards the back of the church and immediately after this we turn and we come in right into the back of the nave.

([18:00](#)):

Second, we are going to accept Christ. Now you're doing this so that as you sponsor this child into the church, you have prepared with holy confession. You're in communion with the church and you are going to lead them into the church and we accept Christ, the godparents profess the creed, the symbol of our faith, and then together we process to the front of the church where the baptism sation, holy communion and other events will take place once we are in the front of the church because it's a sacrament of the church. This will start with blessed. It is the kingdom of the Father, son and Holy Spirit. We're entering into the mystery of God's kingdom on earth. After a few sets of petitions, the child will be taken and stripped down completely naked and brought back in a towel. And it's very important that we enter into the font without clothes because this is a birth and as we come out of the font, we're being reborn in a very symbolic way that is secondary to our initial physical birth.

([19:02](#)):

Now while the child is being prepared for holy baptism, the font itself is being blessed, culminating in the blessing of the oil of gladness. Now we have the godparent hold this oil in their hands while the priest blesses it and then the priest will start and anoint the baby with this oil, which is different than holy chrism, which will happen later. The godparent takes what we call the oil of gladness and rubs it all over the child, and this symbolizes going into the spiritual life ready for battle in the same way that ancient wrestlers used to cover themselves in oil to be slippery, that we want the child to be slippery from evil as well. If

Fr. Christopher ([19:40](#)):

From what I've seen in the Antiochian tradition, we obviously use oil but not a ton of oil.

Fr. Vjekoslav ([19:47](#)):

Prophets and kings in the Old Testament, were anointed with oil as a sign of their ministry, as a sign that they are touched by God, the grace of God abides in them, right? The title of Jesus Christ. Messiah means the Anointed one. So it's Jesus the anointed one, and when person comes to be baptized, to die and to live this new life, to have Christ living in us, we come to become little Christ little images of Jesus. So we are also anointed with oil as a symbol that this child now is a little Christ our whole life. We try to live following the Christ. Then

Fr. Alexandros ([20:32](#)):

After the baby is covered in oil, the priest baptizes the baby in the way that Christ has given us a model of which is three full immersions in the name of the Father, the Son, and in the Holy Spirit. And immediately the baby comes right up out of the water and into the arms of the God. And this is something that is unique to the Orthodox church in the modern world, that not many other churches still have a full immersion, but this is what we see in holy scripture, and this is what we are asked to do.

Fr. Vjekoslav ([20:58](#)):

We are put into water three times, immersed in the water. Christ was in the tomb for three days and that he arose from the tomb of the third day. In a spiritual sense, when we come to be baptized, when we bring our children to be baptized through water, we die for this sinful world and we are born again. My life is ended so that Christ may live in me.

Fr. Alexandros ([21:22](#)):

And then of course, collecting the child afterwards and processing three times around the font is symbolic. As we walk through their life with them, we take those steps together with the light of Christ, that candle in front of us. After the child comes out of the font, we will tan the child. So this means we take a pair of beautiful little scissors and we cut three portions of the child's hair, put it in the font as his or her first offering of beauty back to God. Now what happens next will vary based on cultural tradition, but in the Greek Orthodox tradition, we immediately go onto the sacrament of anointing. Holy anointing is how the Orthodox Church gives the gift of the Holy Spirit to its participants. We read in one Peter that we are welcomed into a holy nation, a royal priesthood, a chosen people. And what this means is that we participate in Christ's three different ministries, the priestly ministry, the prophetic ministry, and the kingly ministry. As we enter into baptism, we become a part of his salvific plan, his journey for us. So we're going to be receiving holy communion, we're going to be mated as kings, were of old, and we're going to enter into this future worship that lays in front of us.

Fr. Vjekoslav ([22:40](#)):

In the ex of the apostles, we can see that when their disciples or deacons went around and baptized, apostles would still go after them and lay their hands on the newly baptized people so that they may receive the Holy Spirit, the grace of the Holy Spirit. The bishops took this ministry after them. Till this day, this is done through the holy Christ. This CSM is prepared in one place and then distributed to all parishes, the newly baptized people as a sign of them receiving the grace of the Holy Spirit. They are anointed with that Christ. This would be same as in the ex of the apostles, apostles laying their heads on them or bishops the seal of the gift of the Holy Spirit because in this mystery, the newly baptized receives the grace of the spirit. And then everything that we do in the church, we recognize that it can only be done if we have grace with us. It's done through grace, not of ourselves.

Fr. Christopher ([23:58](#)):

A baptized baby is as much a part of the church is a hundred year old person who's been ([24:05](#)):

Orthodox their entire life. Baptism is about being born into Christ. We sing as many as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ, hallelujah. Baptism is about dying to the sinfulness, to the desires, to the fallenness of the world and being born again in Christ and we're being raised new into Christ. That's why we clothe ourselves with white as a symbol of purity. Of course, we darken that with our sinfulness over time, but the goal is especially through confession and through forgiveness, through repentance, that we can make that robe white again. And so yeah, that's really what baptism is about. I mean, of course we're becoming full members in the church through the sacrament of sation, but baptism, the actual baptizing and going into the water and coming out of that water is about dying to that sinfulness, to that fallenness of the world and raising in the life of Christ, the resurrection of Christ.

Fr. Alexandros ([25:13](#)):

We were created with an incredible amount of ability to connect with God. And when we were separated from God in the Garden of Eden, Christ gave us through baptism, this reconnection. It's like getting back online with our initial purpose, right? We're being connected to a spiritual network, and so when we are reborn, we are both following his commandment that we should go out to all nations and baptized in the name of the Father, son and Holy Spirit. And at the same time, we are connecting in a different level, in a different playing field than we were able to before. So from a parent's perspective, the child's been baptized, the celebration has been had, what comes next.

Fr. Vjekoslav ([26:03](#)):

People could be tempted to think like, okay, now we finish the service. We had the nice meal after and now we are done. Actually, we just begin.

Kh. Sophia ([26:12](#)):

When you're asked to be a godparent, you make a big deal about the day of the baptism. You get all the things, the towels and the candles and the outfits and you take all the pictures, but that's just the start. When you're asked to be a godparent, you're not just asked to participate in a special day and then be done. You're asked to take a very active role in that child's life or that adult's life for the rest of their life hopefully only gets better from there, that relationship grows. The joy of watching your own children grow up in the faith and then the joy of watching your godchildren grow up in the faith and being able to play a role in that is really special. So the service of the baptism, the sacrament is beautiful, but it's so

much more than that. There's so much more to come. You've taken on this wonderful responsibility. Now the work starts. Now we have to put in the work for the rest of that child's life, and

Fr. Alexandros ([26:59](#)):

This is something very important for all parents to hear, is that even though the role of the godparent is to lead the Christian life, 90% of that happens at the home with the biological parents. This journey is just starting to begin with the help of the godparent. We will together lead that child towards Christ.

Fr. Christopher ([27:23](#)):

Remember that all of us, no matter who we are, have ups and downs. There can be spiritual ups and downs. There's times where I'm on fire for the faith and I'm just excited. There's other times where maybe I'm struggling in my faith a little bit, and it's those times when we're struggling that we need to have a support system around us. We need solid people whom we can lean into and lean on. I mean, it's great. We need godparents, we need sponsors, but the more spiritually mature people we can surround ourselves with in our lives, the better.

Fr. Vjekoslav ([27:59](#)):

The

Fr. Christopher ([27:59](#)):

More people we can lean into, the more people we can rely upon when we're struggling and even when we're not, who can just be an encouragement to us.

Pres. Stephanie ([28:08](#)):

The godparent is basically like a spiritual parent and ideally they're working alongside the work that is being done in the home, but regardless of what is being done in the home, if you've taken on the role of being a godparent, your responsibility is still to guide that child spiritually to be, especially as they get older, to be a resource for them. Sometimes as children get older, they don't necessarily want to talk to a parent about some of their questions and things like that. So to have that relationship with a godparent that they can ask some of the tough questions to as they grow up.

Dragana Jovičić ([28:43](#)):

Most important of course, is that they continue to practice the orthodox faith. So continuing to being active as orthodox Christians so that they can be examples to their godchildren and be as a close friend in a spiritual way as well.

Fr. Alexandros ([28:59](#)):

The most important part is that as the child is growing up, they're going to be looking to this person as the image of what a Christian is. And as parents, with all of our flaws and failures, there are moments when we are not going to live up to that. Whereas the godparent can be someone that that child always sees in the light of their faith. And so as a godparent, it's very important that my relationship with my godchild be one of modeling behavior, modeling the orthodox Christian life in both faith and in practice. If

Fr. Vjekoslav ([29:27](#)):

We want our children to be good and healthy Christians, we have to be good and healthy Christians. Saint Seraphim of Sarov, he says, save yourself and thousand people around you will be saved. So he is with parents, save yourselves and your children will be saved. So is for godparents. Save yourselves, your godchildren will be saved. If we fail to do that, then perhaps everything else that we read or see or try to say will in vain

Fr. Alexandros ([29:58](#)):

St. John Chrysostom says, let everything take second place to care of. Our children are bringing them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord about baptism, saying, St. Gregory of Nazianz says, let us then be buried with Christ by baptism, that we may also rise with him. Let us descend with him that we may also be exalted with him. Let us ascend with him that we may also be glorified together. What I love about this last quote is it shows the progression of pre baptism, the baptism itself, but then also the spiritual life that needs to be lived after the baptism so that we may enter into God's glory with him.

Fr. Christopher ([30:36](#)):

Relationships take work, they take time, right? If we don't put any work or time into a relationship with ties, and so it's important for both the parents and the godparents to call attention to that relationship. I think the ideal is that the godparents live close to the child or the newly baptized so that they can more regularly see each other, but whether they live close or not, I think it's important that the parents and the godparents both call attention to that relationship. Hey, this is your godmother. This is your godfather. I'm your godfather. I'm your godmother reminding the child, reminding the baptized of that relationship and putting that time and effort into that relationship so that it can grow. Yeah.

Fr. Alexandros ([31:27](#)):

One of the practical and primary responsibilities, so the godparents will take on is bringing their child, their godchild, the holy communion every Sunday, every Sunday, and in some traditions we even have this, the first three weeks, the godparent brings them to holy communion. But I always point out that that's just to start a habit and to get them there every Sunday. If

Kh. Sophia ([31:46](#)):

You're physically go to church with that child every single week, then you get to be that witness in that person for them every week and take them to communion and maybe stand with them in church and show them the icons and the candles and all of that.

Pres. Stephanie ([31:57](#)):

The most important thing is bringing them to church. Bring them to communion. But I know for many people, the godparents don't live near the child that there's so many ways you can still be involved in your God child's life. None

Kh. Sophia ([32:08](#)):

Of our children's godparents see them on a every Sunday basis, but they all remain active in our children's lives by calling, by sending gifts for namesakes, for Christmas, for birthdays,

Pres. Stephanie ([32:20](#)):

One of the major ones, especially in the Greek tradition, is to give your child a pascha candle to bring to the pascha service either one that you've made or one that you've purchased for them. For our godchildren, I make them advent calendars and calendars to count down during lent with little things to open little tasks to do each day of the fast, sending them something for their name day.

Kh. Sophia ([32:42](#)):

It is a big role of the godparents when the child is so young to make sure that they're cultivating that relationship because a young child can't necessarily cultivate it back. And so that's why it's important when you're picking a godparent that you pick someone that you trust and you respect so that the parents and the godparents, they're then working hand in hand together going forward,

Pres. Stephanie ([33:01](#)):

Learning the hymn of their saint so that it can be prayed in the home and you can help them learn to pray it as well.

Fr. Alexandros ([33:07](#)):

When we learn our Saint's Troparion and the hymn of our saint, it gives us such a beautiful direct connection to that saint. Even before the child is born, we can be singing that song prayer to them. And so in our home, every evening and every morning, we sing those song prayers, and that's a really beautiful way a godparent can connect with a child is teaching them how to sing the hymn of their saint.

Pres. Stephanie ([33:26](#)):

We're incredibly grateful for the people that are our children's godparents. It was definitely not an easy decision that we made. We took a lot of time and prayerful consideration, but these people have truly met all of the kind of expectations. They pray for our children. They're involved in our children's lives, even though they live far away, they reach out to them birthdays, name days, all of the kind of major spiritual holidays. And so we're just very grateful that these people have taken this role so seriously for our children. It's a true blessing. Being a godparent is truly a blessing both to the entire family and to the child that you're the godparent for

Fr. Vjekoslav ([34:07](#)):

Come.

Fr. Christopher ([34:22](#)):

One thing I want to say is especially to those being baptized, especially those who are baptized as adults, is coming into the church is the most important thing we can do, and being one with the church, being one with Christ, it's important for us to be prepared for the ups and the downs because oftentimes we come in and we're excited, then we time, it's like we're sprinting and then we get tired, or we start to realize there's imperfections in the church. The fact is the church is the body of Christ is perfect. We as humans that make up the body of Christ are far from perfect. I remember hearing once years ago that the church is like a hospital for the sick, not a museum for good people. And so it's important for us to realize that all of us, whether we are newly baptized, whether we are Christian, a long time, that we're all struggling in this life, and life is really about repenting and coming back to Christ. And to remember that when things get hard, that's okay. To continue to come to Christ, to come to the church and to realize God is awesome, God is perfect. He will always love us, and that we, despite our fallen nature,

God is still merciful and he still accepts us. And that it's important for us to remember that as maybe that excitement might start to wear off from time to time.

[\(35:59\)](#):

To just find joy for godparents and for newly baptized is stay the course. However many days God gives us to live is a blessing, and it's a day to continue to repent and come back to Christ. And we just need to stay the course and continue to come to him and struggle through whatever life throws at us. And thank God that he gave us baptism. I mean, without his death and resurrection, what is there? I mean, we're so blessed to have a God who loves us so much and we look at Christ. I mean, he got baptized himself, right? His cousin John the Baptist, right? He did it himself. He showed us how to live. He loves us. He's merciful. He died for us. He resurrected for us. He defeated death for us. Without him, it just doesn't matter. So we're just so blessed to have a God, to have our God.