



MEMBER IN GOOD STANDING

What is a Member in Good Standing?

A member in good standing is every Orthodox Christian, regardless of culture or heritage, who has not only been Baptized and Chrismated into the Orthodox Church, but continues to live and practice the Orthodox faith. Practically this means participating in the life of the Church. As a guide, a *koubaro/koubara* (*Nouno/Nouna, Godparent, Sponsor*) must be in good standing with the Church and be able to receive Holy Communion in order to participate in any sacrament of the Church. A sponsor must be an example for the newly baptized or newly married and guide and instruct them in the Orthodox faith.

- If they are single, they are living a life befitting of an Orthodox Christian. Those co-habiting out of wedlock cannot receive Holy Communion or any of the Sacraments of the Church
- If married, their marriage has been blessed in a Canonical Orthodox Christian Church. Couples who are not married in the Orthodox Church cannot participate in the sacraments until they are married in the Orthodox Church.
- The Church does not permit divorce, but because of love and compassion, the Church may issue an ecclesiastical divorce upon submitting an application to the Archdiocese of Canada. Those, however, who have obtained a civil divorce but have not been released from the Church through Spiritual Court, cannot receive Holy Communion, nor be a Sponsor at a Baptism or a Wedding.
- An Orthodox Christian who has been absent from the Church for many months and years cannot receive the Sacraments until he is reinstated in the life of the Church through the Sacrament of Repentance and Holy Confession.

How do I get back into good standing?

The Orthodox Christian who sincerely wants to become an Orthodox Christian in good standing needs to meet with his/her priest who will then explain the necessary steps that he/she needs to take in order to accomplish this.

We cannot take it for granted that, because we were Baptized and Chrismated in the Orthodox Church, we are automatically entitled to receive the Sacraments. An Orthodox Christian who does not practice and live according to the teachings, holy canons, and laws of the Church loses all his/her privileges and rights.