



## **One ninong, one ninang only – bishop**

By LESLIE ANN G. AQUINO

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Baptismal sponsors should be limited to two individuals, according to an official of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP).

Fr. Melvin Castro, executive secretary of the CBCP's Episcopal Commission on Family and Life (ECFL), said the Code of Canon Law states that only two individuals, a male and female should be baptismal sponsors.

"The Code of Canon Law mentions only two individuals, a male and female should be baptismal sponsors and whenever a confirmation would take place, the same sponsors are even encouraged to stand witnesses," he said in an article posted on the CBCP website.

Unfortunately, Castro said, the opposite is happening as parents tend to get more sponsors.

"This phenomenon in the country seems difficult to correct because politicians and other influential persons get to be part of the parents' network," he said.

"The downside of having too many baptismal sponsors is the possibility that friendship is being taken into consideration rather than the actual roles baptismal and confirmation sponsors play," said Castro.

He said parents should choose well people who will stand as godparents for their child's baptism and confirmation as they would have responsibility to teach the child the tenets of the Catholic faith.

The Catholic Church, Castro said, also encourages parents to look for baptismal and confirmation sponsors among practicing Catholics.

Baptismal and confirmation sponsors should see to it the child grows according to Catholic teachings.

"As godparents they should help the parents in guiding the child to grow morally upright," said Castro.

"That's why they (sponsors) should be ready for this responsibility — they should be a practicing Catholic for them to be mature in faith," he added.

Castro said non-Catholics are discouraged to act as godparents for baptism and confirmation because of the sponsors' duty to teach and guide the young spiritually