

# PREPARING FOR YOUR CHILD'S BAPTISM

**WELCOME! WE ARE SO HAPPY THAT YOU ARE SEEKING TO HAVE YOUR CHILD BAPTIZED.**

The sacrament of baptism was given to us by Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Through baptism, we become children of God, temples of the Holy Spirit, and a member of the Kingdom of God, which is the Catholic Church. Baptism is the beginning of a new life of grace for your child and the door to all the other sacraments.

Since baptism is such an important moment for your child, we believe it is important to prepare both for the ceremony and also for the commitments of raising your child as a son or daughter of our God.

## **Requirements for having your child baptized**

- ***The child must be 6 years old (not yet had their 7<sup>th</sup> birthday) or younger\*.***
- ***At least one parent (or legal guardian) must give consent for baptism.*** That parent (or legal guardian) must be a baptized Catholic.
- ***There needs to be a commitment to raise the child in the Catholic Church before a baptism can be scheduled.*** This includes going to Mass every Sunday.
- ***Parents need to meet with the St. John's baptismal preparation coordinator.*** Please call the parish office and the Baptism Preparation Coordinator will contact you to obtain your information and answer your questions regarding the baptism of your child.
- ***It is necessary to provide a copy of the birth certificate of the child.*** Please note, for unmarried mothers, the father's name will be on the certificate if his name is on a public document as being the father or he otherwise proves it to be the case.
- ***You and the Godparents must attend a baptismal class unless you have been to one in the past 2 years.*** Baptism preparation classes are bilingual and are generally held on the first Saturday of the month at 11:30 a.m. if people are registered. Please call the parish office to register. ***If you've attended a class elsewhere, we need a letter so indicating from the church where you attended class. If you are a godparent needing the class, please register by calling the parish office.***

## **Requirements for Godparents**

- ***You may have 1 or 2 Godparents.*** If there are two, they must 1 male and 1 female. No more than two Godparents are allowed and they may not be the father or mother of the child to be baptized.
- ***Godparents must:***
  - ✓ have received the three Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Eucharist, and Confirmation).
  - ✓ be at least 16 years of age.
  - ✓ participate regularly in weekly Mass and give witness to their faith in Christ Jesus by receiving Him in Holy Communion.
  - ✓ believe all that the Catholic Church professes and teaches, living these teachings in daily life.
  - ✓ assume responsibility to be a good role model for the person being baptized by my life of prayer and by my Catholic example.

- ✓ **If married:** validly married according to the laws of the Catholic Church; married by a priest or deacon; married by a minister with proper dispensation; or had my marriage validated by the Catholic Church.
- ✓ **If single:** I am living a chaste Christian life and not living with someone without the benefit of a valid marriage in the Catholic Church.
- ✓ not be the mother or father of the one to be baptized.
- ***If Godparents want to take classes at another Catholic parish, they must provide a letter stating they took the class and are eligible to act as a godparent/Christian Witness for Baptism.***
- ***If there is only one Catholic Godparent, there may be 1 non-Catholic Christian witness.*** Non-Catholics are a witness to the baptism. Christian Witnesses must also be baptized. You must have one Catholic Godparent.

**Scheduling the Baptism:** Baptisms may be scheduled on available Saturdays/Sundays of the month or during Masses. Dates and times for baptism will be scheduled at the prep class. Please wait for confirmation of date and time before other plans are considered.

**Clothing and Candle:** A white Christening gown is customary but not required. Whatever clothing is worn should be loose enough at the neck to allow anointing of the child's breast. If a hat is worn, it should be removed for the baptism. The parish will provide a white Baptismal bib/stole and a decorated candle. After the ceremony they will be yours to keep as a reminder of this joyous milestone.

**Donation:** There is a \$50 donation to the church for each child to be baptized. Families should place their donation in the envelope provided at the baptism prep class and give it to the Baptism Prep class coordinator.

**Baptismal Record and Certificate:** Each child will receive an official baptismal certificate. The baptism will be recorded in the permanent records of the parish from the information you provide. Therefore please be sure of the accuracy of information and the spelling of names.

\*Please note: If a child is 7 years or older, they are no longer an "infant" (Canon Law 97.2). Please contact the Religious Education Office for an appointment to discuss sacramental preparation for your child.

**WE LOOK FORWARD TO MEETING WITH YOU AND DISCUSSING THIS AMAZING SACRAMENT.**

**MAY GOD BLESS YOU!**