



BAPTISM INFORMATION

St. Mary's Church
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Dear Parents,

Congratulations on the birth of your baby! We're happy that you'll soon be bringing your baby to the Sacrament of Baptism. This information sheet will answer most of your questions about planning for your child's upcoming Baptism here in St. Mary's Church.

Baptism begins a life-long journey in the faith of Christ and His Church. By bringing your child to this Sacrament, you are deciding to raise your child as a Catholic Christian and to know, love and serve our Lord, Jesus Christ. You are committing yourselves to educating your child in the Catholic faith, eventually enrolling them in formal religious instruction, either in our Faith Formation Program or in a parochial school. Your example of faith and the Catholic way of life is critical to your child, especially in his/her formative years. We anticipate that you will formally register in our parish, attend weekend Mass and live a Christ-centered life and become a vital part in our vibrant and supportive parish community.

1. PARENTS WHO HAVE HAD OTHER CHILDREN BAPTIZED PREVIOUSLY IN OUR PARISH

Please call Cathy DeSantis, our Baptism Coordinator, to schedule a date for the baptism at 518-792-0989 Extension 125. If you have never attended a parent preparation class for Baptism, you may be asked to do so now.

2. PARENTS OF FIRST-BORNS: PREPARATION REQUIRED

Please call Cathy DeSantis, our Baptism Coordinator at 518-792-0989 Extension 125. (Only parents should call, not other family members.) Cathy will take down pertinent information about you and your child over the phone. You should then call the pastor, Fr. Tom Morrette, to schedule an appointment which will take place in the Rectory for about one hour. It's better if the baby does not attend, however, if you cannot find a sitter, we can adjust. You'll also have to attend a Baptismal Preparation Class conducted by Deacon Dave Powers. Father will tell you the date and time of the class: it is scheduled monthly.

3. PARENTS WHO ARE UNMARRIED and THOSE WHO ARE MARRIED OUTSIDE THE CHURCH

We want to help you achieve your goal of baptizing your infant in our church. This is best done by meeting with the pastor. Please contact Father Tom to begin the process. We're here to help you.



4. CHOOSING GODPARENTS

The godparents you choose should be role models of faith for your child. This should be your primary reason regarding choice of a godparent. A godparent should be a person who takes the Catholic faith seriously and practices it consistently. They must be baptized themselves and have received the Sacraments of Reconciliation (Confession), Holy Eucharist and Confirmation. They must be at least 16 years of age. If they are married, their own marriage must have taken place in the Catholic Church.

Our tradition has been to choose two godparents, one male and one female. You may not choose two males or two females. While two godparents are usual, one Catholic godparent will suffice if you cannot find another who can meet the above requirements.

After the Vatican Council, the Catholic Church changed its requirements that both godparents be Catholic. Current policy calls for at least one of the godparents to be Catholic and a second may be a baptized member of a Protestant denomination. Technically, this second godparent is referred to as a "Christian witness". (Because they are not baptized, a Jewish, Buddhist or atheist friend may not stand as a "Christian witness".) A Protestant Christian witness may not be a former Catholic who has joined a Protestant church and no longer affiliated with the Catholic Church.

Finally, the Catholic godparents must each get a form signed by the Catholic pastor of the church to which they belong. (We've attached a copy of the form they need.) This attests to the fact that they are practicing Catholics and belong to a Catholic faith community. If your prospective godparents have difficulty with this, they should call to speak to the pastor.

5. TIME AND PLACE

Baptisms are scheduled at 1:00 PM on the first Sunday of the month in St. Mary's Church. Often, several baptisms are scheduled for the same time. Each family and each child is treated individually no matter the number baptized. This type of grouping is a good way to begin your child's journey in a faith community. During pandemic times, modifications have been made to this schedule.

Occasionally, an infant baptism can take place at one of the weekend Masses. This more public way of baptism inspires parishioners in attendance and allows them to participate in your special day. If you want to choose this option, please speak to the pastor.

There is no fee for any of the Sacraments or services of the Catholic Church. However, it is traditional to offer a small offering for the parish at the time of Baptism.

6. OLDER CHILDREN

If your child is not an infant, we are happy to baptize them too! Children who are 7 years or older, however, must attend preparation classes before their Baptism takes place. This is called the "Rite of Christian Initiation of Children" which requires attendance at classes where they learn fundamental



prayers and basic doctrines of our faith. This length of this formation depends on the learning speed of the individual child.

God bless you and thank you for bringing your child to the waters of Baptism. We welcome you and your family. St. Mary's is a happy home for young families and little ones. – *Fr. Tom Morrette*

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