



## Pre-Baptism Information Package

### Congratulations on the arrival of your new baby!

Our Catholic Community joins you in thanking God for the gift of new life. As you are seeking the baptism of your child in the Roman Catholic Church, the following guidelines are presented to help you embark upon this journey of faith with Christ and his Church.

### The Sacrament of Baptism

Holy Baptism is the basis of the whole Christian life, the gateway to life in the Spirit, and the door which gives access to the other sacraments. Through Baptism we are freed from sin and reborn as sons of God; we become members of Christ, are incorporated into the Church and made sharers in her mission: Baptism is the sacrament of regeneration through water in the word. [Catechism of the Catholic Church 1213](#)

So, what does Baptism say to us about the God we believe in: Three things jump readily to mind. Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist, as a group of three Sacraments, are called the “Sacraments of Initiation.” A Sacrament is a visible sign of God’s presence, God’s activity in our lives, in the Church and in our world. But it goes beyond that! Sacraments not only show us what God is like and what God dreams for us; Sacraments also make that happen!

- Baptism (together with Confirmation and Eucharist) tells us that God wants each and every one of us to belong – first of all, to God! Second of all, God wants us to belong to one another, to care for each other and to form a community of faith with other believers. God is a family – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – and God gives us the grace, in these Sacraments of Initiation, to form human families that continue to reveal God’s love to the world.
- Baptism also tells us that our purpose in life is to know, love and serve God in all kinds of ways, but especially through one another.
- The prayers of Baptism tell us something really important about how God looks at us. One of the prayers of Baptism tells us clearly that the love of a mother and father for their child is the clearest picture we have of God’s love for us. The prayer goes like this:

God is the giver of all life, human and divine. You are the first teachers of your child in the ways of the faith. May you also be the best of teachers, bearing witness to that faith in all you say and do.

## Basic Guidelines and Information for Infant Baptism

Parents are responsible for bringing their child to the Sacrament of Baptism as soon after birth as possible. Except in case of necessity, the church is the usual place of baptism.

In order that a child be baptized, it is necessary that...

- the parents consent, or at least one of them, or someone legally standing in their place,
- and that there is reasonable hope that the child will be brought up in the Catholic Faith.

**GODPARENTS:** A person may only have one or two godparents (also called sponsors); if two are chosen, they must be male and female.

In order for someone to be eligible as a godparent, these are the requirements...

- they be chosen by the parents,
- have the ability and the intention to fulfill the role,
- be at least 16 years of age, and...
- be a confirmed Roman Catholic, who has already received the Most Holy Eucharist, is leading a life in harmony with the Catholic Faith (including Marriage) and will be a good role model for the one being baptized,
- and be neither the father nor the mother of the child.
- A baptized person who belongs to another Christian community may be admitted only as a “Christian witness” (not a godparent) provided that there is at least one Roman Catholic godparent who fulfills the above criteria. A non-baptized person cannot be a witness.

## Baptismal Preparation in your Parish

In order to respect your request for the baptism of your child, you are invited to follow closely the stages of preparation offered below...

- Contact your parish office and express your desire to have your child baptized.
- Introduce yourself to the parish priest if you do not already know him personally.
- Open yourself to the invitation to actively join the faith community of your parish. If you are not registered parishioners, please consider becoming involved in the prayer and celebration of the Sunday Eucharistic community.
- While baptismal preparation varies from parish to parish, you will be invited to participate in some manner of faith formation prior to the baptism of your child. This may take the form of a meeting(s) with the pastor, pastoral assistant, or participation in a baptismal preparation session for parents.

It is extremely important to take your faith-life seriously because, before God, you have taken on an awesome responsibility for the salvation of another—your own child! Your commitment and openness to baptismal preparation will help develop the faith-life of your child as he/she matures.

## **Other Information**

Are you living in a parish other than the one in which you wish to have your child baptized?

You are required to take your Baptismal Preparation in the parish in which you reside and then receive a testimonial letter from your Parish Priest to have your child baptized in another parish. This requirement respects the reality that pastors normally have sacramental jurisdiction only over their own parishioners. Therefore, when one seeks a sacrament outside of one's parish, the proper pastor's permission is necessary. Furthermore, the invitation to connect with one's own proper parish first is founded on the hope that the faith-life of the family and of the one(s) to be baptized will be lived in community and not in isolation.

## **Marital Status**

Your marital status will be clarified during the baptismal preparation process. Baptism is not denied if the parents are unmarried or not married in the Roman Catholic Church.

*All of the above information applies to INFANT Baptism only. If you have a child to be baptized who has reached catechetical age/the age of reason (Grade 2 or 7 years), you and they will receive different preparation. Having sufficient understanding, the preparation will now be for the full complement of the Sacraments of Initiation, i.e. baptism, confirmation, and Eucharist.*

**May God richly bless and guide you in your journey of faith!**

# General Information

*This information helps us to better serve you and hopefully helps you in wanting to be part of this worshipping community.*

1) Briefly describe your religious upbringing?

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2) Our (my) present involvement in St. Joseph’s Parish and the larger church consists of?

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3) Please describe the amounts and types of religious studies you may have had the opportunity to take part in as a child and as an adult?

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4) I would like the opportunity to dialogue over the following issue(s) of faith or practice of the Church (something that you are not sure about)?

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**Please return this page ONLY with the Information Form**