

## **BAPTISM**

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.

### **A. The Sanctifying Role of the Church**

Through Baptism, God enables us to participate in his life in Jesus Christ and makes us his children. It is through this sacrament that we receive the Holy Spirit and become members of the People of God, of the Body of Christ, which is the Church. Baptism becomes our commitment to grow in this new life and to strive to acquire spiritual maturity. By baptism, God purifies us from sin.

Baptism is the sacrament of faith which has the Risen Christ as its source, and it is the offer of salvation for all people. Intimately linked to Confirmation and to Eucharist, Baptism is, with these two sacraments, Christian Initiation. The child is baptized in the faith of his/her parents, of his/her godparents and of the Church.

### **B. 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. 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.

**SPONSORS/GODPARENTS:** A person may only have one or two godparents (also called sponsors); if two are chosen, one must be male and the other female. In order for someone to be eligible as a sponsor/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 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 sponsor) provided that there is at least one Roman Catholic godparent who fulfills the above criteria. A non-baptized person cannot be a witness.
- **Godparents not baptized at St. Edward's must submit a copy of their Baptism Certificate at Baptism Preparation Course.**

### **C. 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.

- Before your child can be baptized, the parish office **must** have a copy of your child's birth certificate
- 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.
- Parents and godparents must attend the Baptism Preparation Course. If there is a witness or proxy they should attend the preparation course as well. If you have completed a previous Baptismal preparation course, it should have been completed within two years of the current Baptism. Otherwise it should be completed again.
- Since a child is baptised into the faith community of the Church, all Baptisms are normally held within a Parish Mass.

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.

#### **D. Other Information**

Are you living in a parish other than the one in which you wish to have your child baptized? You are required if possible 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.

Stipends: Church 25.00

**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. Adults who wish to be baptised would participate in the RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) Program of the Parish. Having sufficient understanding, the preparation will now be for the full complement of the Sacraments of Initiation, ie. baptism, confirmation, and Eucharist.**

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