

**Our Lady of Fatima Parish  
St Joachim and St John Bosco Parishes**

96 East Main Street  
Wilmington VT, 05363  
802-464-7329

Preparing for Your Baby's Baptism :

*It has been the constant practice of the Roman Catholic Church from the earliest times to administer the sacrament of Baptism to infants. Parents very naturally want to pass along their own faith to their child and their values that flow from that faith. Baptism marks the beginning of this faith life.*

*Pope John Paul II calls the family the Domestic Church, the Christian home where the child begins to experience life as part of a collection of families called the Church. At Baptism, the parents and sponsors along with the whole Christian community take upon themselves the responsibility to make the Church and the World a place that will offer the newly baptized the love and support needed to grow to full Christian adulthood.*

- 1. Register in the Parish :** Parents of the child to be baptized must be registered members of one of the three parishes in our Tri Parish Catholic Community of Southern Vermont for at least two months prior to scheduling a baptism. If you are not already registered, you may do so by contacting the parish office at 802-464-7329 or by emailing [olfwil@gmail.com](mailto:olfwil@gmail.com).
- 2. Contact Parish :** Please call the parish for available dates for the baptism and set a meeting for both parents and sponsors with the pastor.
- 3. Selecting Godparents :** Godparents play a very important role in your child's spiritual life. They should serve as role models of the faith. The child should be able to look to their godparents as an example of how the church teaches us to live our Catholic Faith. They should support not only the child but you, the parents as well. Additionally, in their role as godparent, they represent the larger Church community. Therefore, being a godparent is not only an honor, it is a tremendous responsibility. Thus, godparents should be carefully chosen. In recognizing the importance of the godparent and their duties, the Church has provided guidelines to help parents choose the best possible godparents for their children. We strictly adhere to Canon Law in all aspects of Baptism. If potential godparents are not practicing members of the church or have converted from the Catholic Faith to any other Faith, they should NOT be considered and will NOT be accepted.
  - a. The Church Requirements for Roman Catholic godparents are:**
    - i.** A child must have one practicing Roman Catholic godparent in good standing with the Catholic Church.
    - ii.** The Catholic Godparent must be at least 16 years old and mature enough to understand, accept and carry out the duties of a godparent.
    - iii.** A godparent must have received the Sacraments of Initiation : Baptism, Eucharist and Confirmation.

- iv. A godparent must be living an exemplary life consistent with the Faith and morals as taught by the Roman Catholic Church.
  - v. A godparent must be actively practicing the Faith.
  - vi. A non-Catholic, baptized Christian may be chosen as a Christian Witness, as long as one godparent is Catholic.
  - vii. If two godparents are chosen, they may not be of the same gender.
  - viii. There may be no more than two godparents
  - ix. If both are Catholic, both must meet all the criteria above.
4. **Godparent Certificates:** All godparents, other than those from this Parish, and all Christian Witnesses must obtain a certificate/letter from their own parish/church stating that they are members in good standing and are eligible to act as a godparent/Christian Witness for Baptism. These certificates should be submitted to the Parish Office as soon as possible after the initial baptism registration. Without these certificates, there may be a postponement of your child's Baptism.
  5. **Baptism Preparation Class :** ALL parents are required to attend a Baptism Preparation Class. This 30 minute class is held at the Church office. All godparents are welcome and encouraged to attend the class if they are in the local area. Confession before baptism is mandatory for parents and godparents.
  6. **Scheduling the Baptism:** Call the parish office to set a Baptism Date. Arrangements should be made for Baptism before other plans are considered.
  7. **Naming your Child:** The name you select in addition to your family name will provide your child with a unique identity. The longstanding tradition of the Church has been to give at least one name of a saint or person from our Biblical tradition. A Christian name will provide your child with a model for Christ-centered living.
  8. **Pictures at the Baptism :** Photographs and videos are encouraged at the baptism ceremony, These are excellent means of sharing the memory of this joyous and special day with your child as he/she grows in age and faith. They will also turn out to be a good teaching tool. Please be sure to follow the instructions of the celebrant to insure that you will be getting the best pictures and not interfering with the ceremony. Father is always happy to stay for pictures with your family after the baptism.
  9. **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 decorated Baptismal candle and a white cloth. After the ceremony, these will be yours to keep as a reminder of this joyous milestone. The candle can be burned on Baptismal anniversaries and when the child receives other sacraments in the future.
  10. **Family Donation :** There is no fee. It is up to the family to make a donation to the church.
  11. **Baptismal Record and Certificate:** The baptism will be recorded in the permanent records of the parish from the information that you provide. Therefore, please be sure of the accuracy of information and the spelling of names. A baptismal Certificate will be given to you following the baptism. Later, whenever a certificate might be needed, it will be prepared from this parish record.