

INFANT BAPTISM

The occasion of the baptism of a baby can be a great teaching moment for a family and a marvelous opportunity to remind adults of their own baptismal commitments. Such an opportunity should not be ignored. For the baptism of an infant, it is necessary that there be a well-founded hope that the infant will be brought up in the Catholic religion.

A baptismal instruction is required for parents. Conscientious dialogue and instruction with parents at this significant moment in their lives is done with the hope of reaping a rich harvest of renewed commitment to the faith and to the parish.

BAPTISM AND THE COMMUNITY

Just as the birth of the child is so important to the entire family, so the baptism of the child is important to the parish family. For this reason, the Church suggests that baptism should be administered on Sunday and that members of the parish community should be present. At times there may be a good reason to offer the baptism more privately.

BAPTISMAL SPONSORS: CHOOSING A GODPARENT

The choice of a Godparent is very important and governed by church law. To be admitted to the role of sponsor, a person must have completed the sixteenth year. The sponsor must be a Catholic who has been Confirmed and has already received the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist. The sponsor must also be a Catholic who leads a life in harmony with the Faith and the role to be undertaken. A life in harmony with the Faith includes the sacrament of matrimony (if the sponsor is married), regular attendance at Sunday Mass and religious education of their own children.

BAPTISM OF ADULTS AND OLDER CHILDREN

Older children and adults benefit from a longer period of preparation in order to be baptized and become Catholic. The Rite of Christian Initiation is designed to provide for instruction and formation in the faith over a period of months or in some cases years. Initiation into the church in this way also includes Confirmation and Eucharist.