



St Mary of the Immaculate Conception Catholic Parish

Forming saints for Christ and the Church since 1857

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

Baptism, the gateway to the Sacraments and necessary for salvation by actual reception or at least by desire, is validly conferred only by a washing of true water with the proper form of words. Through baptism: men and women are freed from sin, are reborn as children of God, are configured to Christ by an indelible character, and are incorporated into the Church. (Canon 849)

GUIDELINES

The following guidelines apply to a child under seven (7) years old, under ordinary conditions. For children older than seven (7) years old, please call to make an appointment with the pastor. In the danger of death or grave illness, please call the pastor for immediate emergency Baptism. Every person not yet baptized, and only such a person, is capable of Baptism. Therefore, Baptism can only be received once in a person's life.

Baptism Celebrations:

Parents "are obliged to take care that infants are baptized in the first few weeks" following birth, i.e., as soon as reasonably possible (Canon #867). Parents may prepare for the impending Baptism even prior to the birth of their child by scheduling the date and attending the Baptism Preparation Class (see below).

The Sacrament of Baptism is typically celebrated during or after a weekend Mass (5:30p anticipation, 7:30a, or 10a Mass). Other times throughout the week or weekend may be possible by special arrangement. Parents must contact the parish office to schedule the Baptism at least two weeks before the Baptism date.

Baptism Preparation Class:

Parents are required to attend a Baptism Preparation Session prior to the Baptism of their *first* child. Sessions are led by the pastor on an as needed basis. Please call the parish office to schedule an appointment. In addition to meeting with the pastor, the parents are asked to view Reborn, available free on-line at Formed.org (Parish Code: BQGGCK). There are three 45-minute video sessions – Session 1: A New Creation; Session 2: Entering the Mystery; Session 3: Nurturing the Life of Grace. There are also optional sessions on Parenting and Godparents.

Baptism Requirements:

At least one of the parents (or guardians) of the child must be an active member in St Mary Catholic Parish. Active membership includes, but is not limited to, being registered in the parish, weekly and Holy Days attendance at Mass, and financial and volunteer support of the parish according to one's means. While the criteria for Godparents do not explicitly apply to the parents of the child, they do provide a basic guide for active membership. For a child to be baptized, the parents or guardian must provide: (1) consent for the baptism and (2) sufficient evidence and hope that the child will be brought up in the Catholic religion so as to live and practice the faith (Canon 868).



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Requirements for Godparents (i.e., Sponsors)

The choice of a sponsor for your child is an important one. It should be governed the Godparent's ability to provide the child a prayerful and faithful witness and assistance in living one's Catholic Christian faith. All Godparents must meet all the following criteria.

- 1) He/she is a baptized Catholic Christian having received the Sacraments of Baptism, First Holy Communion, and Confirmation.
- 2) He/she is 16 years of age or over.
- 3) If single, he/she is living a chaste life, that is, not "living together" with someone.
- 4) If married, he/she is married in the Catholic Church by an approved Catholic priest.
- 5) He/she attends Holy Mass every weekend and on Holy Days.

Only one Godparent or sponsor is required. A child may have up to two Godparents – one female and one male. They need not be related or married. Also permitted is the participation of one Catholic Godparent and one Christian Witness (a baptized non-Catholic Christian). A baptized Catholic Christian, who now practices in a non-Catholic Christian church, is not permitted to be a Godparent or sponsor, since their actions serve as a tacit renunciation of the Catholic Christian Faith.

If a chosen Godparent cannot be present at the Baptism (e.g., serves in the military and is currently deployed), the Godparent can be represented by a proxy. The proxy must meet the same criteria above for a Godparent. Please notify the parish of this situation.

It is the responsibility of the parents or guardian to verify that the selected Godparent(s) meet the above criteria. Selected Godparents, who are not members of St Mary Catholic Parish – Rushville, IN, are required to have a *letter of good standing* sent to St Mary from their home parish stating that they meet the above criteria. Parents must complete the next page to show they have checked on the status of their intended Godparent(s).

Parents or guardians of the child to be Baptized are not permitted to be Godparents of the same child, since they already have a unique and special relationship and role as the 'primary educator in the faith.'



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GODPARENT VERIFICATION FORM

Dear Parents,

Congratulations on the birth of your baby! This is a form that completes the Catholic Church's requirements for Baptism regarding the Godparents. Please sign this form and fill out the information for the child being baptized. If the selected Godparents are not members of St Mary Catholic Parish – Rushville, IN, then please have them obtain a letter of good standing from their home parish stating they meet the above criteria. This letter must be sent to St Mary prior to the date of baptism.

REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL GODPARENTS:

- 1) He/she is a baptized Catholic Christian having received the Sacraments of Baptism, First Holy Communion, and Confirmation.
- 2) He/she is 16 years of age or over.
- 3) If single, he/she is living a chaste life, that is, not “living together” with someone.
- 4) If married, he/she is married in the Catholic Church by an approved Catholic priest/deacon.
- 5) He/she attends Holy Mass every weekend and on Holy Days.

REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL BAPTISM ITSELF

Please note that the Church may only baptize children (or adults for that matter) who will be raised in the Catholic faith and not a different Christian faith. **A Letter of Good Standing is required for each Godparent, if the Godparent is not a member at St Mary Catholic Parish – Rushville, IN.**

SIGNED STATEMENT OF PARENTS

We hereby testify that the Godparents we have chosen in order to set a Sacramental example for our child does indeed meet all of the above requirements.

Father: _____ Mother: _____

Child's Name: _____ Phone Number: _____

Godmother: _____ Godfather: _____

After receiving the above signed statement from you, the parish office will contact you to finalize the arrangements for the baptism of your child.

In Christ,

Rev. Jeremy M. Gries
Pastor