

THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

Baptism Guidelines

St. Mary Catholic Church Diocese of
Victoria in Texas

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REVISED 5/17/17

PURPOSE OF A BAPTISMAL PREPARATION PROGRAM

-To further one's knowledge and understanding of the nature of Baptism, as well as fully appreciating the joy and responsibilities of being a member of the Church.

-To invite parents and godparents to evaluate and intensify their own connectedness to the Church and to our parish family.

-To emphasize the religious aspect of baptism over and above its social or cultural importance. **Each parent and godparent is encouraged to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession) before celebrating your child's baptism. The Sacrament is offered each Saturday from 4:00-4:45 p.m.**

THE ROLE OF GODPARENTS

To be chosen as a godparent is a special honor. You, above all others, have been entrusted with the responsibility to participate in this child's Christian life and education.

This privilege offers you the opportunity to develop a mutually enriching spiritual relationship – one that will last throughout this life and beyond.

There are ways you can nurture this spiritual relationship and become a special friend to your godchild. Among them are:

Celebrate the anniversary of this holy day of Baptism each year with a visit, a call or a card.

As your godchild grows, listen to and share in the struggles and triumphs of living a Christian life, and keep yourself informed on Christian doctrine and values, to be able to answer questions as they arise.

Encourage a consistent life of faith through special cards, letter or gifts that celebrate holy events; Christmas, Easter and personal growth events; graduation, first job, engagements. (Gift suggestions: religious jewelry, gift certificate for religious goods/books, retreat opportunity.)

2017-2018 Guidelines

Registration for classes will not be accepted without the child's birth certificate and are not accepted on the day of the session.

Parents and godparents who have already taken baptismal instruction within the last four years will not have to retake the class. A letter from the parish sponsoring the class is needed for exemption. For all other, class information is listed below. Please do not bring children to the baptismal instruction.

A Baptismal preparation program is held monthly from 2:00 – 5:00 pm in the AV Room of the Activity Center/Parish Hall. *The schedule is subject to change.*

<u>Registration deadline by 11:00am</u>		<u>Class</u>	<u>Date of Baptism</u>
June	6-23-17	6-25-17	7-02-17
July	7-14-17	7-16-17	8-06-17
August	8-18-17	8-20-17	9-03-17
September	9-15-17	9-17-17	10-01-17
October	10-13-17	10-15-17	11-05-17
November	11-17-17	11-19-17	12-03-17
December	No Class	No Class	
January	1-19-18	1-21-18	2-04-18
February	2-16-18	2-18-18	3-04-18
March	3-16-18	3-18-18	4-08-18
April	4-13-18	4-15-18	5-06-18
May	5-18-18	5-20-18	6-03-18

The celebration of Baptism will take place on the first Sunday of each month, after the 8:00 a.m. Sunday Mass. Registration does not automatically allow you to attend any other scheduled baptism without notifying the church office.

Parents and godparents who are Catholic, but not parishioners at our parish must present proof of the baptismal classes well before the Baptism.

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PARENTS

Parents wishing to baptize a child must be currently registered members of the parish. Those who are not members of the parish or who no longer live in Victoria must have proof of the Baptismal Class at the time of registration.

Parents should be practicing Catholics attending Mass each Sunday. If married, the couple should be married in the Catholic Church. If the marriage is not blessed by the Church, it is recommended that you contact the office about getting your marriage blessed.

Please remind your guests/parents/godparents that chewing gum is NEVER acceptable in church. Siblings attending the ceremony should be kept seated and should not be left without supervision. It is extremely distracting and disrespectful of the Sacrament.

You are to be at church at least 15 minutes before Mass begins and may sit anywhere. There will not be reserved seating for those coming for the baptism.

REQUIREMENTS OF GODPARENTS FOR BAPTISM

Godparents are to be at least 16 years of age and not a parent of the person to be baptized.

Godparents **MUST** be practicing Catholics who have received the Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Eucharist and Confirmation) (Canon 892) and whose lives give evidence of their religious commitment.

Godparents may be single; however, godparents **MAY NOT** be living together outside of the Sacrament of Marriage. If a godparent is married, he/she must be married in the church.

One Catholic godparent, male or female is sufficient; but there may be two, one male and one female.

A baptized person who is a non-Catholic may not serve as a godparent but may act as a Christian witness.

Parents and godparents **MUST** attend the session.

*“Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them;
for it is to such as these that the Kingdom of Heaven belongs.”*

-Matthew 19:14