

### **The Day of your Child's Baptism**

Please bring your child to church dressed in ordinary, easy to remove clothing that is not white. Since the white Baptismal garment is a sign of new life in Christ and the change that takes place at baptism, the meaning is lost if the child arrives wearing it. During the Rite of Baptism, the child is dressed in the white garment. The parish will provide you with a Baptism candle. In some cultures, the godparents purchase a baptismal set that includes a candle, shell, rosary, and child's prayer book. These sets are not necessary for the Baptism. However, if you bring your own candle, simply inform the deacon or priest just prior to the Baptismal Rite.

### **Photography**

A Baptism is a sacred rite of the Catholic Church. Since photographs are a treasured keepsake for remembering your child's baptism the celebrant will be happy to pose with you following the ceremony. Please ask family and friends to limit the number of photographs during the baptism since photographs can distract from the reverence of the occasion.

### **Customary Offering to the Church**

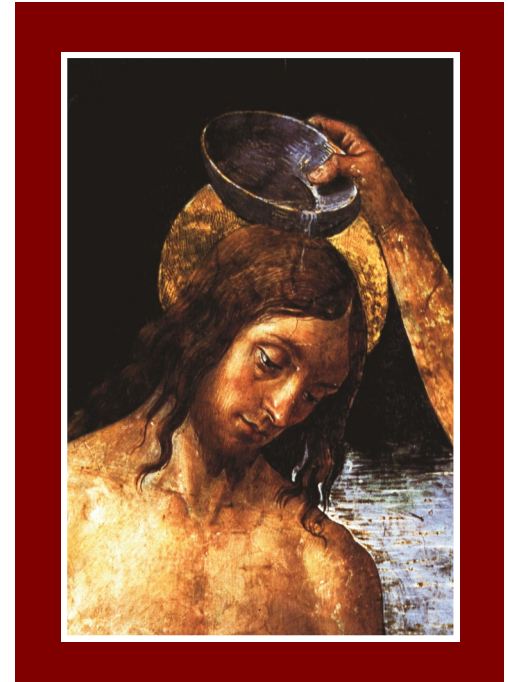
It is customary to make an offering to the church on the occasion of a baptism. During the time of Jesus baptism, Joseph and Mary offered a pair of turtle doves. The suggested and ordinary donation is \$50. This offering may be given at the time the Baptism is scheduled. It is important to note that there is no charge for the celebration of baptism or any sacrament in the Church. Parents or godparents are free to offer whatever donation they determine appropriate.

*Rev. 09/29/2014*



*“You have become a new creation, and have clothed yourself in Christ.”*

-From the Rite of Baptism



*Parish Policies for the*  
**Sacrament**  
*of*  
**Baptism**

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## **Congratulations!**

Congratulations on the birth or adoption of your infant. God has given you the gift of this child. Now, in baptism, you give the child back to God, and God becomes the adopted Father of your child.

## **Copy of Birth Certificate**

A copy of the child's birth certificate, or finalized adoption papers, are to be submitted in advance of the baptism along with the Godparent Affidavit which you will receive at the baptism preparation class.

## **Choosing a Name**

Parents are to choose a name for their child that is not contrary to Christian sensibilities (canon 855). The choice of a saint's name or a name from the Bible is encouraged.

## **Sacrament of Baptism**

Baptism is the first of the three sacraments of Christian Initiation, along with Confirmation and Eucharist. Through baptism, we are freed from sin, reborn as children of God, and incorporated into the Church, the body of Christ. Once received, Baptism is a definitive gift from God that never needs to be repeated. Through Baptism, we share in the death and resurrection of Christ and receive the promise of eternal life. (Romans 6:3-11)

## **Bringing Children Up Catholic**

Because of the importance of baptism, there must be a founded hope that an infant will be brought up in the Catholic faith (Code of Canon Law, canon 868, §1). Parents are obligated, after Baptism, to bring their children to Mass each week, to make sure that their children are educated in the faith, and to make sure that they receive the sacraments of Eucharist and Confirmation.

## **Parish Membership**

To give a reliable indication of their intention to bring their infant up Catholic, parents should be registered in a parish. They should be attending Mass and practicing the faith.

## **Marriage in the Church**

Since marriage is a sacrament that enables parents to represent Christ to their children, parents should be married in the Catholic Church (canon 835, §4). Parents married outside of the church should speak with a priest about the possibility of convalidating their marriage.

## **Baptism Preparation Class**

Parents are the primary educators of their children in the faith (canon 774, §2). Therefore, parents are required to be instructed on the meaning of the sacrament of Baptism and the obligations that come from it (canon 851, §3). Parents are asked to attend a Baptism preparation class held on the first Tuesday of the month at 7:00pm. There is no need to register for this class. Godparents are welcome to attend.

## **Subsequent Children**

Should parents have completed Baptism Preparation Classes at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church, and then within three years be blessed with another child, then the parents will not need to attend the program again. However, submission of the birth certificate and documents for the godparents are still required prior to scheduling the Baptismal Rite.

## **Sunday Celebrations of Baptism**

Sunday is the preferred day for Baptism, since it is the day that Jesus rose from the dead (canon 856). At St. Elizabeth, we celebrate Baptisms every Sunday of the month at 1:45pm (not including the fifth Sunday). Everyone should gather in the church by 1:30pm. ***Baptisms are not scheduled from the beginning of Lent until after the Third Sunday of Easter.***

## **Godparents**

Parents may choose godparents (sponsors) for their children from among family or friends qualified to serve in that capacity. Parents may choose a godfather and a godmother or just one godparent (canon 873). Godparents not only serve as witnesses at the ceremony of Baptism, but also assist the baptized in leading a Christian life (canon 872). Therefore, Church law requires that godparents be people who are living the Catholic faith and meet the following qualifications (canon 874, §1):

- They should be at least 16 years of age;
- They must be Catholics who have received Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist;
- They must lead a life in harmony with the Catholic faith, including attendance at weekly Mass; and,
- If they are married, they must be married in the Catholic church. They may not be divorced and remarried outside of the Catholic Church.
- Parents of the child to be baptized may not serve as godparents. If two godparents are chosen, proof that the requirements are met is required for both individuals.

## **Proxies for Godparents**

If godparents are not able to be present in person for the Baptism, proxies may be designated to stand in for them at the ceremony.

## **Non-Catholic Witness**

If only one godparent is chosen, parents may ask someone baptized in a non-Catholic community to serve as a witness to the ceremony, along with the Catholic godparent (canon 874, §2). The purpose of permitting a non-Catholic witness is to promote ecumenism. No documents are required for a non-Catholic witness.