

1. What is an Infant Baptism?

Infant Baptism is exclusively for the initiation of children under the age of reason (7 years of age). It is hoped that the participation of family with the parish in their child's Baptism will provide a foundation for subsequent participation in their local parish as a member of the Body of Christ. A request for Baptism is not ordinarily refused. However, a Baptism may be delayed until such time as the parents, or at least one of the parents, are ready and able to assume the responsibility entrusted to them in the rite.

2. Who is Responsible for requesting an Infant Baptism?

Parents are responsible for requesting the Sacrament of Baptism for their infant or child.

Parents are the birth mother and birth father or the adoptive mother and the adoptive father.

Adoptive parents must have received final papers from the Provincial Court of Judgment.

NB. A letter from the adoption agency granting legal rights, including Baptism is not sufficient, as these are not the final legal papers. A Court appointed guardian is an adult appointed by the Provincial Court who is responsible for the care of a child and has the right to make decisions concerning that child.

3. How to get my Child baptised?

- a) Parents are to formally request Baptism at their proper parish.
- b) Ideally this request should be made so that Baptism can take place as soon as possible after birth of the child.
- c) Complete the Baptism of a Child Form – Form 603A and submit to the parish office with a copy of the child's Birth Certificate.
- d) Select sponsor(s).
- e) Complete a Baptism Preparation program.

4. What are the Registration requirements for a Child Baptism?

Registration for Baptism requires:

- a) Baptism of a Child Form – Appendix 603A completed and signed
- b) a realistic hope that the child will be brought up in the Catholic faith
- c) a copy of the Birth Certificate of the child (with parentage).

5. How to complete a Baptism of a Child Form 603A?

Birth Parents

- a) Both birth parents sign the Form.
- b) If one parent is absent, every effort is to be made to obtain the other signature.

Adoptive Parents

- a) Both adoptive parents sign the Form.
- b) If one adoptive parent is absent, every effort is to be made to obtain the other signature.
- c) The Adoption Order from the Court of Judgment is presented to the parish. The Order number is to be recorded on the Form.
- d) A date for the Baptism will not be set until the final adoption papers are received from the Court of Judgement, unless the birth parents sign the Form.

Single Parent

- a) Ensure the parent indicates “Yes” to the question, “Do you have the legal right to have your child baptized without the other parent’s consent?”
- b) The single parent signs the Form.
- c) The name of the father and the name of the mother are entered on the Form as they appear on the Birth Certificate.
- d) If the name of only one parent is indicated on the Birth Certificate, then the one name only is indicated on the Form.

Guardian (Court Appointed)

- a) Ensure guardian indicates “Yes” to the question, “Do you have the sole legal right to have this child baptized?”
- b) The guardian signs the Form
- c) The Guardianship Order from the Court of Judgment is presented to the parish. The Order number is to be recorded on the Form.

Foster Parent(s)

- a) Ensure the foster parent(s) has (have) indicated “Yes” to the question, “Do you have the consent of the parent(s)/guardian(s) to have this child baptized?”

b) Legal documents are presented to the parish. Pertinent information is to be recorded on the Form.

6. What is Baptism Preparation?

Baptism preparation is instruction on the basic teachings of the Church to provide parents with a fundamental understanding of the faith into which they are committing to raise their child (Can. 851 §2).

Parents are to attend Baptism Preparation before the baptism of their Child.

Sponsors are also to receive instruction on the meaning of the Sacrament of Baptism and their obligations (Can. 851 §2).

This ministry to parents is for their spiritual guidance, formation, pastoral care, and catechesis. The preparation of parents for the Baptism of their child is characterized by a sincere love and concern for their family, a desire to deepen their relationship to God and the Church. It is to assist them in arriving at a deeper appreciation of Baptism and their own vocation as Christian parents. In the case where parents have not been fully initiated in the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and First Eucharist, this ministry to parents is an opportunity to think about and to complete their own initiation.

7. Who is exempted from Baptism Preparation?

Parents of subsequent children may be exempt of Baptism Preparation as determined and at the discretion of the pastor to prevent unnecessary repetition for parents and sponsors.

8. Can I baptize my child on any day?

The Sacrament of Baptism may be celebrated on any day depending on the availability of the priest. Baptism is normally celebrated on Sundays, or at the Easter Vigil (c. 856).

This is to reflect the importance of the meaning of the Sacrament of Baptism (as new life in Christ), Baptism celebrations are strongly discouraged during the penitential seasons of Lent and Advent.

Exception: In case of emergency (danger of death), a child or adult may be baptized without delay any day of the year.

9. Where the Baptism takes place?

The Sacrament of Baptism is celebrated in a Catholic parish church.

Adults in their own proper parish church

Infants in the parish church of the parents (c. 857)

The Baptism is recorded in the Baptism Register of the parish church where the Baptism is celebrated.

10. Can I Baptize my child other than my Parish Church?

Yes. Parents may request permission from their pastor for the Baptism celebration to take place in another parish church, eg., grandparents' parish. – Permission of the pastor is indicated via a letter or ✓ in the box on the Baptism of a Child Form – 603A.