
BAPTISM IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH



**"Children are a Gift from
the Lord"**

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INTRODUCTION & GENERAL INFORMATION

Congratulations on your desire to have your child received into the Catholic Church through the Sacrament of Baptism. St. Joseph Parish community rejoices at the prospect of celebrating new life in Baptism. It is our belief that God desires to reveal His beauty to the world through your child in a way that God has never before revealed.

The steps for Baptism are:

1. Read this booklet.
2. Fill out the Information Form and acquire the necessary documentation.
3. Return the completed Form and certificates in the provided envelope to the Parish office.
4. You will be given information about completing an online baptism preparation class for both parents and both godparents.
5. After the class, the Parish Office will contact you to book an appointment with the priest in order to discuss the Baptism and attain a date.
6. Attend the Baptism.
7. Help your child to stay in the grace of God by living the life of the Church.

Please read below to assist you in preparing for and understanding baptism.

What is Baptism?

Baptism is one of the seven Sacraments of the Church. It is the basis of the whole Christian life, the gateway to the life in the Spirit and the door which gives access to all the other sacraments. Baptism is not just about your child, it also involves you, the parents, and family, the Universal Church and the local parish.

You, as the parents, will make a profession of faith on behalf of your child at the beginning of the celebration of your child's Baptism: *"You have asked to have your child baptized. In doing so you are accepting the responsibility of training him/her in the practice of the faith. It will be your duty to bring him/her up to keep God's commandments as Christ taught us, by loving God and our neighbour. Do you clearly understand what you are undertaking?"*

By answering yes to this question you are making the commitment to practice your faith and to participate in the life of the parish through attending Mass. Through Baptism you, the parents, are making the decision to incorporate your child into the life of our faith community. Our parish rejoices and wants to celebrate and support the initiation of your child. We want to help you prepare for the Sacrament so that when you answer yes before the community and God, you will do so in good conscience.

Place and Time of Baptism

The normal place of Baptism is your parish community. Your parish community is defined by one of two ways:

1. by the geographic boundaries of the parish; or
2. by where you attend Sunday Mass.

Baptisms at St. Joseph Parish are celebrated once a month on Saturdays in the Church. The dates and times will vary each month. Generally they are held at 10:30 am or 11:00 am.

Baptismal Names

The *Handbook of Moral Theology*, by Dominic M. Prummer, O.P., says **the name given in Baptism should be a Christian name**. Noting: "If the parish priest cannot induce the parents to do so, he should add the name of some saint to that suggested by the parents and enter both in the Baptismal Register."

The Code of Canon Law, (#855), legislates **that parents, godparents and the pastor are to see to it that the name given to the child is not foreign to Christian sensibilities**. Our tradition is to give our children a name taken from the List of Saints. In so doing, we are giving our children a powerful intercessor and a role model.

Please keep in mind that while the law does not demand a saint's name, it forbids a name offensive to Christians.

Role of the Parents

It is expected that at least one of the parents is a practicing member of our parish community. The baptism of a child can be a powerful experience for a parent. It is our desire to help you as the parent of your child, to use this opportunity to grow closer to your spouse and to your child through this encounter with the Risen Christ in the Sacrament.

Preparation for Your Child's Baptism

We would encourage you to reflect on your own faith life. How have you lived out your baptismal promises which you now make on behalf of your child? This may be an opportunity to reaffirm your commitment to the faith community into which you are bringing your child. For example, if you have not been attending Sunday Mass, take this opportunity to renew your commitment to the practice of regular Sunday participation with your family.

There may be areas of your life that are not conducive to growing closer to God and as such are harmful to you, your spouse and to your child. This is a good time to look at your relationships and assess whether they are in right order. Do not be afraid to ask God to help you in your preparation to take on the responsibility of being the first teacher of your child in the ways of faith. Be assured that God never gives us more than we can handle, He will be with you as a Christian parent. God has entrusted to you one of His precious children and wants the very best for your child and for you.

Suggested Activities to Help You Prepare for Your Child's Baptism

1. Participate in Sunday Mass.
2. Look at pictures of your own Baptism to see the general procedure of the Service.
3. Talk to your godparents about what it was like to be your godparent.
4. Go to the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
5. Write a letter to your child to be read at their First Communion. In the letter include:
 - How you felt when your child was born.
 - Why you are excited about celebrating the sacrament of Baptism.
 - How you chose your godparents.
 - One message that you hope your child will always remember.
6. Make a gift for your child that represents God's love.

Role of the Godparents

Your child may have either a godmother or a godfather or both a godmother and a godfather (Max 2). Those designated as a godparent must have the capability and intention of carrying out the responsibility of assisting the child in the perseverance of living the Christian faith. The godparent also represents the expanded spiritual family of the one to be baptized and the role of the Church as parent.

Who Can Be a Godparent

Because of the importance of the role of the godparent, there are a number of requirements, namely:

1. Must be designated by the parents.
2. Should be 16 years of age or older
3. **Must be a practicing Roman Catholic who has received all the sacraments of initiation: Baptism, Confirmation and First Communion.**
4. Must provide a copy of his/her baptismal certificate.
5. At the request of the parents, a baptized and believing Christian not belonging to the Catholic Church may act as a Christian witness along with a Catholic godparent.
6. If two godparents are chosen, one must be female and the other male. If one godparent is chosen, she/he can be either male or female, and must be Catholic.

Donations

Our parish celebrates and rejoices in the Baptism of your child. Through this celebration we are able to recognize God's generous offer of grace in giving us the gift of new life. In this sacrament your child becomes a part of our Parish Family and as such a member of the Roman Catholic Church.

In this light, we do not charge for Baptism. However, any money donated at the time of Baptism will be used to support the various ministries of our parish. The suggested donation is \$50.00.



Baptism of School Age Children

When the time comes for school registration we sometimes discover that children have not yet been baptized or received into the Catholic Church.

When considering Baptism for your children, **please keep in mind the following points:**

- Children are baptized to bring them into a living relationship with Jesus and with the Roman Catholic Church.
- Children should never be baptized just to fulfill the entrance requirements of the Catholic school system.
- The Church will never rush baptismal preparations to meet school registration deadlines.
- Before Baptism can be celebrated the pastor must be assured that the child will be raised in a strong Catholic Christian environment where he or she will receive an authentic education in the Catholic faith and the Christian way of life.
- Our Catholic schools exist to support parents in their role as the PRIMARY RELIGIOUS EDUCATORS of their children, not to supplant or replace them.
- In order to have a child baptized at least one parent must be a practicing Roman Catholic in good standing with the Church.
- If you have not been attending Sunday Mass we encourage you to introduce yourself to the parish priests and to spend some time re-acquainting yourself with the parish community.
- Your child will never really feel at home in the Roman Catholic Church if he or she grows up in a place where Catholic Sunday Mass is not at the centre of family life.
- Older children may benefit from a special program of prayer and Catholic teaching offered at the Church by the parish community. One of the priests or other team members will discuss this option with you.

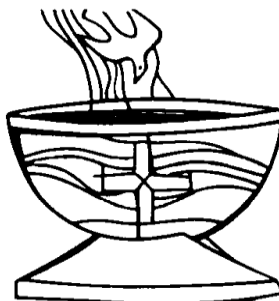
When you come for your family interview with the priest, the number one concern will be the practice of the Catholic faith. Will your child grow up in a family where Sunday Mass, prayer and Christian living are a normal part of every week? Will he or she be supported in their journey of faith?

We sometimes discover that parents have been married outside the Catholic Church. In light of these situations, given that the Sacrament of Marriage is the foundation or corner stone of the Christian family, such marriage cases are to be discussed with the Pastor as part of the preparation for Baptism.

If we determine with you that these important conditions have been met, we will sign you up for a baptismal preparation class. **A date for Baptism will be given following completion of all steps.**

Please honour these conditions. It cannot be stressed enough that **this is a serious faith commitment.**

Please be assured of our guidance and prayerful support every step of the way.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What Time Should We Arrive At The Church For The Actual Ceremony?

Please arrive at least 10 minutes prior to your child's Baptism. Parents and Godparents are asked to be seated in the pews (marked by family last name). Other family member and guests alike may sit in that same section.

Can We Take Pictures And Videos Of The Ceremony?

This practice is encouraged so long as it does not interfere with the ceremony itself. The reception of this beautiful Sacrament should be treated with importance. Try to be discreet with regards to pictures – we want you to participate fully in the celebration of the Baptism.

Do We Have To Attend A Baptismal Preparation Class?

Yes. Parents and godparents are required to attend a class and it is a sign of yours and their commitment. It will also help to prepare for the celebration. Classes are held on the first Thursday evening of each month at 7:00 PM in the Church or Parish Hall. If the first Thursday falls on a holiday period or other major parish event, it will be held on the following Thursday. Your child/ children are welcome to come as well.

Do We Have To Meet With A Priest Prior To The Baptism?

Yes. After you have handed in all the necessary forms and certificates, you will be invited to attend the Baptismal Preparation Class. Afterwards, you will receive a call from the parish office to meet with the Pastor who sets the date of the Baptism.

Can Our Child Be Baptized If We Are Not Married In A Roman Catholic Church?

Yes, but it will require preparation and participation in the Sunday worship. Ultimately, this decision is left up to the individual priest in dialogue with each couple. We strongly encourage such a marriage to be validated or witnessed in the Church prior to the setting of a date for Baptism. The validation of a marriage can be looked upon as a great opportunity for a couple to renew their love for one another.

Who Can Fill The Role Of Godparent(s)?

A Godparent must be a baptized Roman Catholic at least 16 years of age. It is customary for both a man and a woman to fulfill this vital obligation. At least one Godparent is required. Non-Catholics may serve as Christian witnesses only. The Godparents commit themselves to journey with the child – to help them grow in relationship with God. Please allow each Godparent to read the section of this package which pertains to them. **Godparents are required to attend the baptismal preparation class.**

Can We Have A Private Baptism?

Baptisms are to be a communal celebration. Private baptisms are permitted in extreme circumstances.

What Do We Need To Bring To The Ceremony?

A baptismal candle will be provided by the parish as a remembrance of your child's Baptism. We ask that you bring your faith and a real sense of enthusiasm. You are making a commitment on behalf of your child, a commitment to bring your child into a loving relationship with Christ, a Commitment to pass on your faith and love for Christ and his Church remembering always this maxim: if you celebrate your faith – so will your child.

PARISH INFORMATION

ST. JOSEPH PARISH
5440 DURIE ROAD
MISSISSAUGA, ONTARIO
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CONTACT

Telephone Number: (905) 826.2766
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Email: office@stjosephsstreetsville.com

PRIESTS & DEACONS

Pastor: Father Paul Dobson
Associate Pastor: Father Michael Corpus
Deacon: Lionel Gomes
Deacon: George Jurenas

SUNDAY MASSES

Saturday: 4:30 PM
Sunday: 8:00 AM, 9:30 AM, 11:00 AM,
12:30 PM & 6:00 PM

WEEKDAY MASSES

Monday to Friday: 8:30 AM
First Friday only: 7:30 PM
Saturday: 9:00 AM

OFFICE HOURS

Monday to Friday*: 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM
Closed 12 - 1 for lunch
Saturday: 9:00 AM to 7:00 PM
9am - 2pm during June - August
Sunday: 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM

*During the Months of July & August, the Parish Office is closed on Fridays.