

Saint Elizabeth Church



Baptism Preparation Booklet

You are a Child of God

You are wonderfully made

Dearly loved

And precious in His sight!

Psalm 139

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“Go therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit...”

Matthew

28:19

Let us begin by offering our congratulations. As parents you are probably filled with excitement and exhaustion!

This is a time of new beginning for everyone in your family.

As a member of St. Elizabeth Church, the Pastor and parishioners welcome you as you prepare for your child’s Sacrament of Initiation.

Please do not hesitate to call or e-mail the parish office if you have any questions or need to register at the parish to become a member.

May God Bless you and your family!

I.The Sacrament of Baptism

Your child is – and will become – the newest member of the spiritual family that Christ Himself established...the Catholic Church.

Your child will also become one of the newest members of our parish family here at St. Elizabeth.

What is Baptism?

Baptism celebrates becoming a new person. That is why the church's ritual begins with putting off the old, renouncing sin and the evil powers of the world, and pledging our loyalty to Christ.

“Through the Sacrament of Baptism, we are initiated into Christ's holy church.”



II. Baptismal Commitment

Baptism is like a seed recently planted. It will not grow unless it is nurtured.

Baptism has a permanent spiritual effect on your child's soul through the action of the Holy Spirit.

You are committing on your child's behalf to nurture their faith by word, deed, and dedication.

- Teaching the faith with Bible readings and your own words.
- Teaching the faith with your actions towards others.
- Teaching dedication such as attending Mass and services regularly.

Children learn from what they witness both good and bad. Therefore, they depend on you to know how to live as faithful Catholics.

How well are you living your faith?



III. Choosing Godparents

Choosing Godparents can be exciting and difficult!
“Which family member should I choose?”

Let's stop and think – being a Godparent is not simply an honorary title – it is a role of responsibility and commitment.

Your child needs a Godparent:

...who can ideally attend his/her First Holy Communion and receive along with your child.

...who can be eligible to be your child's sponsor at Confirmation.

...who will be knowledgeable and capable of answering your child's questions about the faith.

We often think of Godparents as those who will raise our child if we cannot do so ourselves. Consider that who you choose as Godparents will indicate to your family and friends that you are serious about putting your faith first when it comes to raising your child.



IV. The Godparent “Requirements”

A Godparent must be

- ❖ at least sixteen (16) years of age.
- ❖ a Catholic who has received the sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation.
- ❖ a practicing Catholic who attends Mass regularly and is a registered member of his/her church.
- ❖ if married, have been married in the Catholic church or with the church’s permission or have received an annulment.
- ❖ be able to obtain a certificate of good standing from their own church.
- ❖ a male or a female however, same gender Godparents will not be considered.

At least one Godparent must be a Catholic and if appropriate the second may be a Christian Witness.

Note:

A Catholic who no longer practices the faith or has changed to another faith cannot be considered as a Godparent or a Christian Witness.

V. Christian Witness

The Christian Witness is not precisely a Godparent because they cannot demonstrate and teach the catholic faith; however, the church gives due recognition to that person’s love of the child and the common Baptism that is shared by all followers of our Lord Jesus Christ.

VI. Baptismal Preparation

Prior to Baptism, parents must attend a baptismal preparation class. This class will explain the theology of the sacrament of Baptism, the removal of 'original sin', and explain your role as Catholic parents raising your child in the faith.

The Rite of Baptism will be explained, and symbols of Baptism reviewed.

The baptismal team will guide you through the ceremony and be there on the day of the Baptism to help you.

VII. Symbols of Baptism

➤ **Water**

Water is an essential aspect of Baptism. The water is blessed by the priest or deacon during the baptismal rite (*except during Easter season when water blessed at the Easter Vigil is used*). The water itself is a sign of new life as it calls us to die to our sinfulness, only to rise to the fullness of life offered by Christ. This water washes away 'original sin'.

➤ **Anointing with Oil**

Your child will be anointed with two oils. The first known as the Oil of Catechumens is applied to the chest invoking Christ's power and protection in the life of the child.

The second is the Holy Chrism which is placed on the child's head in an ancient sign of kinship. It represents the child's enrollment into God's people.

➤ **Light**

At the baptism the parents will be entrusted with the "Light of Christ" represented in a lit baptismal candle. The light is entrusted to the guardians to be kept burning brightly representing the child's faith protecting them from the darkness of sin.

VIII. Baptism Day

The child's attire will be discussed at the baptismal class. Children should have some discernable white garment when they arrive at church.

For older children a white tie or mantilla is acceptable. Please inquire at the time of your class.

Baptism is celebrated at the conclusion of the Sunday 10:00 am Mass. It is strongly recommended that all those attending the Baptism participate in this Mass. Directly following the Mass, a Baptism team member will speak with you and direct you through the celebration.

The celebrant will begin by addressing all those in attendance and parents/Godparents will be asked to reply to Baptismal questions on behalf of the child.

Then you will proceed to the Baptismal font where the celebrant will perform the rite of Baptism.



IX. Lifelong record keeping....

The donation to the church covers the perpetual record keeping on your child's behalf.

Each time your child receives a sacrament the church which confers the sacrament must send a record to the church of Baptism for your child's permanent record.

The current suggested donation is \$50 per child.



The love of God is all encompassing. As you present your children for Baptism, may they be blessed with joy and a loving family so that they find peace and shelter in our chosen faith.

We hope this booklet helps you in your preparations for your child's Baptism.



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