

St. Luke Catholic Church

"Baptism Guidelines"

The parent(s) of the child to be baptized are to be registered in St. Luke Catholic Church. If the parents are from another parish, have a letter of permission and verification of attendance at a Baptism Preparation Class from the pastor of your home parish sent to the pastor prior to the baptism.

First, attend a Baptism Preparation Class before the baptism. If you have attended a Baptism Preparation Class for an older sibling, it is not necessary for you to attend another class (though we'd happy to have you participate again!) Baptism Preparation Classes are an hour long, and are usually held on the 4th Sunday of each month in the Fr. Courtney Reception Room at 10:10 a.m. (between the 9:00 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. masses). **Please check our website "Baptism Preparation Classes" for currently scheduled classes.**

Second, Call our parish office and ask for our parish secretary Barbara McDermott to **schedule your child's baptism**. Barbara will ask you for the necessary information for the baptismal certificate. The best time to call Mrs. McDermott is after 9:00 a.m. and before 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Baptisms are usually held **after the 11:30 a.m. Mass** (Baptisms usually begin between 12:30 p.m. and 12:45 p.m.) Baptisms are in the sanctuary of the main church. If a scheduled baptism time does not fit your schedule, you may arrange with the pastor an alternative time. Please know that if an alternative time is scheduled, other families will be given the opportunity to have the same date and time for their child's baptism. Baptisms, as sacraments, are public celebrations (not "private" celebrations) of the Church. Baptism celebrations usually last about a 40 to 50 minutes.

There are specific requirements for **godparents**. You must have one godparent, or sponsor, for your child. Most families choose two godparents—one godfather, and one godmother. You may not choose two godfathers, or two godmothers. **Only one male (godfather) or one female (godmother) sponsor or one of each sex is to be employed (Canon 873)**. If a godparent cannot attend the baptism, it is fine to have a proxy stand in for the godparent.

To be admitted to the role of godparent (sponsor or proxy), a person must (Canon 874):

- be chosen by the parents;
- be 16 years old or older;
- be a Catholic who has been confirmed and has already received the sacrament of Holy Communion and leads a life in harmony with the faith and the role to be undertaken;
- not be the father or the mother of child to be baptized;
- a baptized person who belongs to a Protestant or Orthodox Church may be a godparent if the other godparent fulfills the requirements in number 3 above.

Parents often ask how much a baptism costs. Baptism, as a sacrament, is free, because Jesus paid the price for us on the cross so that we can know God's love always. Traditionally, an offering is given (by the parents or godparents) in thanksgiving to the church, and though not necessary, it is appreciated.

At the time of the baptism, a **candle** and **white garment** provided by the parish are given to the family according to the Rite of Baptism. Families have their own traditions—some have a baptismal gown passed on from generation to generation, others buy a new gown, and others bring their babies in regular baby clothes—you choose whichever is best for your family!

Thank you so much for having your child baptized in our Catholic faith here at St. Luke. May your family continue to grow in God's love and grace!