



SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM GUIDELINES

Catholics are brought into the Church through the saving waters of Baptism. Through this first Sacrament, we come to participate in the full and rich sacramental life of the Church and into a relationship with Jesus Christ. We offer this step-by-step process for those seeking to celebrate Baptism at the Basilica of St. Josaphat so that good order may be followed and that the experience will be meaningful for all who participate.

INFANTS & YOUNG CHILDREN:

Step 1: Parish Registration

- Parents must be registered parishioners at the Basilica. They must give witness to their practice of faith by regular Sunday Mass attendance and support of the Church. This policy applies even if only one parent is Catholic.
- If you are not currently a member of the Basilica of St. Josaphat, please contact the Parish office at 414-645-5623 to register.

Step 2: Baptism Registration

- After the parents are parishioners, they may register for their child's baptism by contacting Samantha El-Azem, Director of Religious Education, at either 414-645-5623 x 221 or at DRE@thebasilica.org.
- You will be asked to fill out the “**Infant Baptism Registration Form**” and the “**Godparent Certificate**” for each Catholic Godparent. The Godparent certificate will need to be filled out by the Catholic Godparent's parish(s) and returned to:
The Basilica of St. Josaphat
Attn: Samantha El-Azem, Director of Religious Education
2333 S. 6th St.
Milwaukee, WI 53215
- The “Infant Baptism Registration Form” can be mailed or e-mailed to the addresses listed above.
- There is a **\$25 Baptism Processing Fee** required to offset the cost of the preparation session, white garment, and candle. Please include this fee with your registration form by mail, or mail separately (if e-mailing registration) with note indicating it is for “Baptism registration.”

Step 3: Baptism Preparation Session

- For **first-time parents**, a formal preparation session is required. You will indicate what session you will attend on your registration form. If you cannot make any listed dates, please contact Samantha El-Azem and arrange a one-on-one preparation meeting. Upcoming dates of preparation sessions are on:

August 11th, 2015

November 10th, 2015

February 9th, 2016

April 12th, 2016

June 14th, 2016

All sessions occur in the Parish Center Living Room on the second Tuesday of the month from 6:30-7:30pm.

Please indicate which session you plan on attending on your registration form. Note that you have to attend a preparation session before your child's scheduled baptism.

- For **returning parents** (those seeking to baptize a second, third, fourth, etc. child), no formal session is needed. However, you are asked to arrange a brief (30-45 minute) "review session" with Samantha El-Azem that fits your schedule and times that you are at the Basilica. Please call (414-645-5623 x 221) or e-mail (dre@thebasilica.org) to arrange this meeting.

Step 4: Choosing Godparents

- Choosing a Godparent for your child is very important in the eyes of the Church. This individual is seen as a life-long spiritual guide and mentor in the baptized child's life. For this reason, there are several requirements in choosing a Godparent:
 - Must have completed their sixteenth (16) year of age.
 - Be a practicing Catholic in full communion with the Church. This means that they have already received the Sacraments of Baptism, Eucharist, and Confirmation and are an active member in their parish community. Each Catholic Godparent is required to submit a form completed by their pastor indicating parish membership and participation (see "Godparent Certificate").
 - Cannot be one of the child's parents.
- Typically two people are chosen to serve as Godparents (one male, one female), one of whom must be a practicing Catholic. A second, baptized person who belongs to another Christian tradition (i.e. Lutheran, Presbyterian, Non-denominational, etc.), can serve as a Christian witness together with the Catholic Godparent. If the second Godparent is Catholic, they also need to be a practicing Catholic.

Step 5: The Celebration of Baptism

- Baptism is typically celebrated in the Basilica Church on the second and fourth Sunday of each month. On the second Sunday, Baptisms are celebrated during one of the Sunday Masses assigned by the pastoral staff. On the fourth Sunday, Baptisms are celebrated after the 12:00pm Sunday Mass (about 1:00pm).
- Please contact Samantha El-Azem, Director of Religious Education, to inquire about available dates.
- The Sacrament of Baptism is not celebrated in the Basilica during the Liturgical seasons of Advent and Lent.

OLDER CHILDREN (OTHER THAN INFANTS):

- When older children are presented for Baptism, parents are obliged to follow the same policies as outlined above regarding parish membership and instruction. In addition, some special instruction may be needed in order to help the child appreciate the special sacramental action of Baptism in his/her life.
- If special consideration is to be given to a child due to age or some other reason (including special or developmental needs), the parents should be aware that extra time will be taken by the pastoral staff in preparation prior to the conferral of the Sacrament.
- In particular circumstances involving older children who have reached the age of reason (around 7 years old), preparation may be also needed in order that the child will be able to receive the Sacrament of Holy Eucharist.

Extra preparation for the Sacraments of Christian Initiation (Baptism, Eucharist, and Confirmation) should be accomplished in the Sunday morning Children and Religious Education (C.A.R.E.) program sponsored by the Parish Religious Education Office at the Parish Center. This preparation requires the involvement of the parents in this significant process and allows the pastoral staff to be of greater service to the entire family during this time of spiritual growth. In any event, the pastoral staff will assist the family in the proper method to be employed for their spiritual benefit and the celebration of the Sacraments with them.

Children in other circumstances (i.e. other parish schools, homeschoolers, etc.) are not automatically exempt from C.A.R.E).

ADULTS:

- Adults who wish to be Baptized or received into Full Communion with the Catholic Church participate in the program for the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA). This year-long process invites participants to explore the foundations of the Catholic

faith which culminates with the Easter Vigil at which the Sacraments of Christian Initiation (Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Eucharist) are conferred. Those wishing to participate in the RCIA are encouraged to contact the Director of Religious Education (414-645-5623 x 221; dre@thebasilica.org).