

your baby's

baptism



Dear Parents,

Congratulations! We join you in thanking God for the gift of your child. This is indeed a wonderful time in the life of your family.

We are indeed pleased that you have expressed interest in having your child baptised into the faith of the Catholic Church. Membership into the Church is accomplished through the sacrament of baptism.

Since your child is too young to understand and request this sacrament, it is you, the child's parents, who are undertaking the great responsibility to bring your child up in the faith of the Church, faith in Jesus Christ.

We hope that this baptismal information kit will help you understand more about the sacrament and enable you to prepare for the baptism. We are most happy to assist you in every possible way to set your child in this spiritual journey to faith.

Finally, the words of the introduction to the sacrament of baptism speak most eloquently about what we are trying to achieve here:

***“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?”***

Nga mihi,

Fr. Dennis Nacorda

BAPTISM PREPARATION KIT

This kit has been prepared to provide you with all of the information needed to begin the formal and immediate preparation process for the celebration of Baptism for your infant or pre-school child only. If your child is already attending school please contact us to discuss the process of preparation for your child.

We rejoice with you and ask that you take the time to read all of the material before you fill out your forms or contact the parish.

In this package you will find:

- What is a Sacrament?
- Short History of the Sacrament of Baptism
- A Word About Baptism
- Belonging to a Parish Community
- Godparents
- Some Questions Related to Baptism
- Parent's Prayer
- The Best Prayers
- Baptism Information Form (to be completed and returned)



The baptismal process in this Parish includes the following:

1. Read through the baptismal information kit.
2. After prayer and discussion if you feel ready to begin the preparation process, please return the Baptismal Inquiry Form to the parish office at office@stjosephlevin.com.
3. If after one week you have not been contacted or if you have any questions please call the office at 06-210-2891 to enquire about the status of your child's baptism.
4. After discussing the matter with Fr. Dennis, a date can be set for the celebration of your child's baptism.
5. There will normally be at least one meeting set up prior to the baptism.
6. We have an excellent video which we will encourage you to watch.

What is a Sacrament?

Sacraments are visible rites seen as signs and efficacious channels of the grace of God to all those who receive them with the proper disposition. We readily can see that there are three distinct ideas contained in that short definition:

1. *Outward sign*
2. *Instituted by Christ*
3. *To give grace*

The sevenfold list of sacraments is often organized into three categories:

- *the sacraments of initiation (into the Church, the body of Christ)*
 - *Baptism*
 - *Confirmation*
 - *Eucharist*
- *the sacraments of healing*
 - *Penance*
 - *Anointing of the Sick*
- *the sacraments of service*
 - *Holy Orders*
 - *Matrimony.*

Short History of the Sacrament of Baptism

The sacraments of initiation are Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist. In the early Church the three rites were celebrated together. Over time this changed with Confirmation and Eucharist being separated from Baptism. At the beginning of Christianity the initiation rites were primarily for adults who had decided to follow Jesus Christ into a new life and closer relationship with God and the church. From the first century baptized and practising Christians have asked that their children also receive Baptism. It is a child's first step into the faith of its parents and of the universal Church.

A Word About Baptism...

Your baby may have conceived in the mother's womb, Jesus tells us that your baby is not just your child. Your baby is also God's child. And Jesus, too, went to enormous sacrifice - even to dying on the cross for us - to show us how much he loves every child of his. Jesus knew that such love has to be seen to be believed. And baptism is the sign, or sacrament, that he gave us to show his love. Sometimes, people imagine that we have to be baptised to show our belief in God. In a sense, that's true. But baptism is far more than that. It shows God's belief in us.

Baptising a baby, before the baby can make the slightest effort to do anything for his or her own salvation, says very dramatically that all salvation is from God. Clearly, in the adult there must already be an element of faith" - some sign of accepting God's love. But an infant is carried to the font by the faith of the family.

Just like learning to walk, learning to walk by faith requires parental guidance. Neither the parish community nor Catholic schools can nurture your child's faith as they wish to do unless parents in the home undertake their primary responsibility.

Belonging to a Parish Community

Baptism initiates a person into the life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ. When baptism is celebrated in a church the person is also initiated into that particular believing community.

Belonging is important. From the moment of birth, children seek to belong. To know the faces, voices and touch of those we call mother and father is essential in the development of a child.

The need to belong is not limited to our family. We state our desire to belong to a parish community by being present in the parish. It is from this rather simple act that we learn, grow and become an example of the responsibility and commitment the baptismal vows speak of. We gather each Sunday with our brothers and sisters in Christ to worship God and that we want to support the work of the church.



Godparents

The role of the godparent(s) is often confused and misunderstood. It has been an erroneous belief that the role of the godparent is such that, should the parents be deceased, the godparents would assume custody of the child. This is not true and has nothing to do with the true role of the godparent.

A godparent is one who assists the parents in the “spiritual” upbringing of their child. They should have some life-contact with the child and be actively interested in praying for, and being a personal support to the child. Unfortunately, in the choosing of a godparent, sometimes people are chosen for purely honorary reasons. It is seen as honouring a person by asking them to assume the role of godparent. However, when taken seriously, this role is one that should and must reach far beyond the actual day of baptism.

It is a serious and important task that is placed before you as parents to carefully choose suitable candidates who will take their role seriously. The Church teaches that “godparents are to be present (at the actual Baptism) in order to represent both the expanded spiritual family of the one to be baptized and the role of the Church as Mother. As occasion offers, godparents help the parents so that the children will come to profess the faith and live up to it. In the actual celebration of Baptism, the part of godparents is to testify to the faith, and together with the parents, to profess the Church’s faith in which children are baptized.

GODPARENTS

In choosing godparents, please consider the following requirements:

1. The godparent you choose must be a Catholic 16 years of age or older who has received the Sacrament of Confirmation and the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, and leads a life in harmony with the faith and the role to be undertaken.
2. The person must be willing to profess his/her faith positively with the parents immediately prior to the pouring of water and should have no reservations about doing so.
3. The person must be willing to cooperate with the parents in helping to foster and nurture in the child a Catholic way of life.
4. Canon Law states that the child must have at least one Catholic godparent. **If there are two or more, then one man and one woman are to be chosen.**
5. If you have only one Catholic godparent you are permitted to have one Christian Witness of the opposite sex of the godparent to stand in as a witness to the baptism. If you have two Catholic godparents, you do not need a Christian Witness.
6. The requirement for a **Christian Witness** is that the person be a **baptized Christian** belonging to one of the non-Catholic ecclesial communities (eg. United, Anglican, etc.)

Some Questions Related to Baptism

1. When can we arrange for the baptism to take place?

Sunday at Mass is the ideal time to baptize so that the community can witness and take part in the celebration of the sacrament.

This is an important witness for everyone present because it recalls for us the promises undertaken at our baptism and how our vocation in life grows from this initial sacrament.

However, we can also arrange for baptisms to take place outside of these parish celebrations. Saturdays are usually preferred days for baptism.

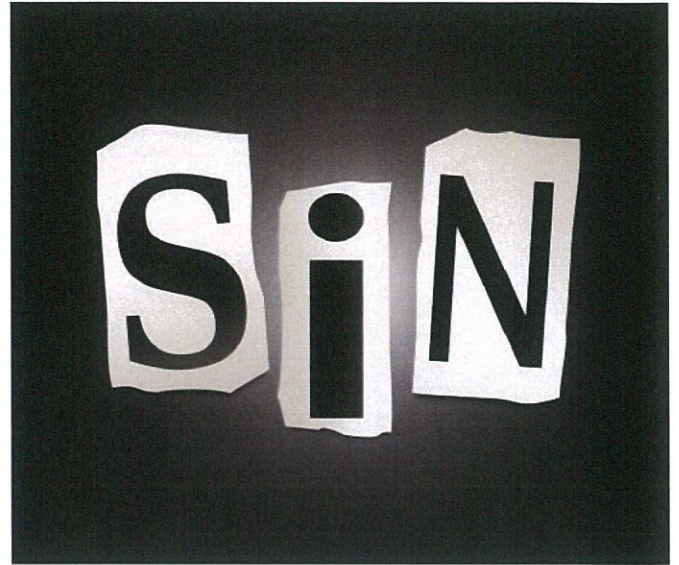
2. What does the church teach concerning unbaptized children?

“As regards children who have died without baptism, the Church can only entrust them to the mercy of God, as she does in her funeral rites for them... Jesus’ tenderness toward children which caused Him to say: ‘Let the children come to me, do not hinder them,’ allows us to hope that there is a way of salvation for children who have died without baptism.” (#1261 Catechism of the Catholic Church)

3. What does the church teach about original sin?

To understand original sin we need to examine our understanding of the word 'sin'. Sin is humankind's estrangement and alienation from God. Jesus in his life, death, resurrection and ascension repairs this estrangement for all people and for all time.

Through the sacraments of initiation (Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist) this estrangement is overcome in our own person.



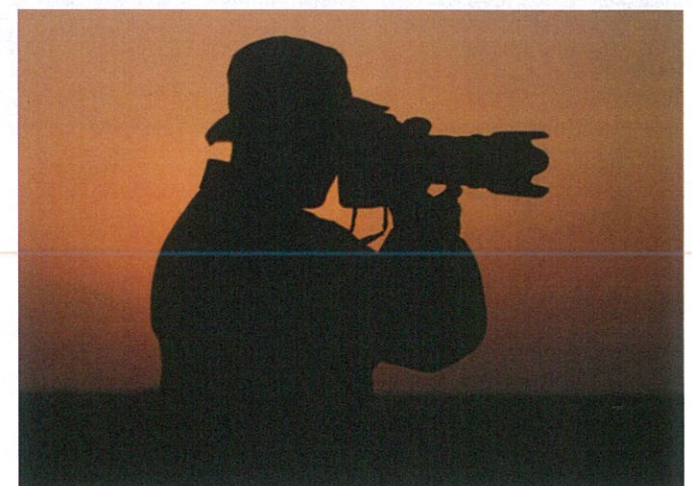
4. What does my child wear?

Traditionally the child wears a white garment. This will be referred to in the baptismal celebration. During the sacrament the child's head must not be covered. At the start of the baptism rite a special oil called the "Oil of the Catechumens" is used, normally on the breast bone of the child if the clothing permits that to happen.



5. Can we record or take pictures during the service?

Cameras and video equipment are permitted however we ask that they be used in a manner which respects the dignity of the church and the service.



6. What is the stipend for the celebration of a sacrament?

The church clearly states that there is absolutely no dollar amount attached to the celebration of a sacrament. No donation is required. However a donation will be gratefully accepted.

7. What else needs to be prepared?

Parents will be required to provide one candle for the baptism. This candle will be entrusted to the parents and godparents to remind them that they are now bearer of light that is Christ. This can be ordered at National Candle but one can make and design his own candle.



Parent's Prayer

God, our Creator and loving Parent,

thank you for the gift of life.

Cherish me as your daughter (son),

And fill my life with the creative power of your love.

Jesus, our Saviour and Brother,

Thank you for showing me the way of love.

Be with me as I try to be like you patient,

supportive and gentle with my child.

Let me share again the delight and wonder of childhood,

of discovering your face in the little things:

in the vivid petals of a flower,

in the measured movement of the caterpillar,

in the comfort of loving arms around me when I fall.

Spirit of God, our constant Friend and Guide,

thank you for leading me in the way of faith.

Help me to show my child the loving face of God

during our life together.

Let me bring healing to her (him)

in times of pain and doubt.

Help me care for my child

materially and spiritually,

and let us always be friends and believers together.

God- Creator, Saviour and Spirit,

You have trusted me with my child's life.

Help us grow together in all that is good and right.

Be with us in times of joy and in moments of pain.

Let us know that you are there for us,

even when we seem to lose sight of you.

Please be light and warmth in our home and in our hearts.

THE BEST PRAYERS

The best prayers are those which come from the heart. But there are times when we find it very difficult to pray and it is then that we need the help of prayers that we have learned "by heart".

The following are among the most loved traditional prayers.

Sign of the Cross

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Our Father

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Hail Mary

Hail, Mary, full of grace; the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now, and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Glory Be

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Act of Sorrow

O my God, I thank you for loving me. I am sorry for all my sins, for not loving others and not loving you. Help me to live like Jesus and not sin again. Amen.

Morning Prayer

O my God, you love me, you're with me night and day.

I want to love you always in all I do and say.

I'll try to please you, Father.

Bless me through the day. Amen.

Night Prayer

God, our Father, I come to say thank you for your love today.

Thank you for my family

and all the friends you give to me.

Guard me in the dark of night

and in the morning send your light. Amen.



St. Joseph Catholic Parish



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BAPTISMAL DETAILS FORM			
Candidate's name:			
Date of Birth:		Place of Birth:	
Home address:			
Home Parish / address:			
Date of baptism:		Time of baptism:	
Place of Baptism:			
Celebrant:			
Father's name:			
Father's religion:			
Mother's name:			
Mother's maiden name:			
Mother's religion:			
Godparents:			
Contact phone number:			
Other remarks:			
Office details:	Parish Register ref:		
	Notify home Parish:		

