

What about Baptism? Do you want to have your child baptized?

What a joy it is to experience the gift of new life that God gives to His people. Immediately the mystery of God's love is revealed in the mystery of His creative power which He allows Christian parents to share. Ss. Peter and Paul Parish rejoices with all parents beholding this tremendous gift.

The parish normally celebrates the sacrament of Baptism most Sundays of the year except the second Sunday of the month at 2:00 PM and the second Sunday Mass at the 11:00 am chapel Mass and 12:30 pm Mass in the church; however, prior registration is necessary well in advance of the baptism. Since the Sacrament of Baptism is essential to the Christian life, Ss. Peter and Paul Parish abides by all the norms set forth by the Catholic Church in administering the Sacrament of Baptism. We want the baptism of your child to bear the full Grace that Christ bestows in this sacrament and we do not want any obstacles which would be created by not following these norms.

These norms are laid down by the Roman Catholic Church and are age old and time tested norms. We ask all parents to understand the sacred nature of this sacrament which these norms protect and therefore the inability for Ss. Peter and Paul Parish to compromise these norms without endangering this sacred character.

The code of canon law declares:

Baptism, the gate to the sacraments, necessary for salvation in fact or at least in intention, by which men and women are freed from their sins, are reborn as children of God and, configured to Christ by an indelible character, are incorporated in the Church, is validly conferred only by washing with true water together with the required form of words.¹

Further, in order to celebrate the sacrament of baptism licitly the priest must have "a founded hope that the infant will be brought up in the Catholic religion; if such a hope is altogether lacking, the baptism is to be put off according to the prescription of the law and the parents are to be informed of the reason."² Please note that this is a direct quotation from the Code of Canon Law which is the universal law of the Roman Catholic Church. This well-founded hope is manifested not simply by the parents' statements but also by their actions. The parents manifest this founded hope when they attend Mass regularly and seek an on-going relationship with the Church.

¹ CIC 1983, canon 849.

² CIC 1983, canon 868,2.

Godparents

When choosing godparents, it behooves the couple to be quite selective. The purpose of the godparent is to guide the child in the ways of the faith so that they might reach heaven. The Code of Canon Law explains that the godparent is one who “will help the baptized to lead a Christian life in harmony with baptism, and to fulfill faithfully the obligations connected with it.”

This godparent must:

- **Have completed the sixteenth year.**³
- **Be a Catholic who has received their first communion and the Sacrament of Confirmation.**⁴
- **Lead a life in harmony with the faith and the role to be undertaken.**⁵
- **Not be bound by any canonical penalty legitimately imposed or declared.**⁶
- **Not be the father or the mother.**⁷

A life in harmony with the faith and the role to be undertaken means someone who is practicing their faith weekly, believes what the Church believes, is validly married in the Church or living a chaste single life and has no other obstacles to being a good Catholic example of Christian life.

A person of another Christian denomination or other religion cannot be a godparent; however, a Christian person of another Christian denomination may serve as a Christian witness which is not a godparent and whose name does not appear on the baptismal certificate.⁸ A Catholic cannot be a Christian witness. Any Catholic party is bound by the laws which govern godparents, cf. above. An individual who has left the Catholic faith cannot be a Christian witness because they have freely chosen no longer to live the Catholic faith.

Parents may choose to have only one godparent. If the parents choose to have two godparents, one must be male and one female.⁹ The relationship of two godparents emulates spiritually the parenthood of the biological parents. Just as it is impossible to have two biological parents who are of the same sex so is it impossible to have two godparents of the same sex.

³ CIC 1983, canon 874, 1.

⁴ CIC 1983, canon 874, 1

⁵ CIC 1983, canon 874, 1

⁶ CIC 1983, canon 874, 1

⁷ CIC 1983, canon 874, 1

⁸ CIC 1983, canon 874, 2

⁹ CIC 1983, canon 873

In order to avoid any embarrassment on your part, it is advisable that you contact the parish office prior to choosing your godparents. Your godparents will be asked to have their parish priest fill out a godparents form testifying that they fulfill the canonical requirements.

Thank you for your cooperation and may Almighty God bless you and your family.

Ss. Peter and Paul Church
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