

Baptism Packet

Congratulations on taking the first step in preparing to have your child baptized. The Catechism calls baptism "the priceless grace of becoming a child of God." Baptism is receiving the grace for salvation. This gift speaks of the love that God has for every individual he has created and of his desire to have everyone in a relationship with Him. This relationship will grow from infancy through adulthood. Faith, by nature, grows by hearing and seeing. As part of the ceremony of Baptism the parents are individually blessed to receive graces to aid in the nurturing of the child. With parenting being one of the biggest challenges that you will undertake, every grace is needed to help you with helping your child grow spiritually.

1. Please read all the information enclosed
2. Give each sponsor an Eligibility Form, including sponsors registered at St. Monica.
3. Sponsors who are not registered at St. Monica Parish need to have the form signed by a priest where they are registered certifying that they are eligible to be a sponsor
4. Read the Baptism Information sheet regarding who can be a sponsor
5. The Sponsor Eligibility Forms need to be returned to you. Bring all completed forms including your child's Baptism Information Form to the parish office.
6. Register to attend a Baptism Preparation Class (Please don't pick a baptism date before attending the class)
7. Make an appointment to meet with Father Anthony by calling the Parish office at (386) 325-9777

If you have any questions, please call Karen Lee (386) 972-0316

In preparing to have your child baptized, you are fulfilling a promise you've made at your wedding to bring up your children in the Catholic Faith. Single parents also see, as one of their responsibilities to pass on this wonderful gift of faith which they have received.

We are all excited that you and your child will be part of our faith community and know of our prayers for you as you undertake this very important step in your child's life and yours.



Infant Baptism Request Form

St Monica Catholic Church
114 South 4th Street Palatka, Florida 32177

Please print all information clearly.

Name of Child: First _____ Middle _____ Last _____

Date of Birth _____ City & State of Birth _____

Name of Mother: First _____ Middle _____ Maiden _____

Religion of Mother _____

Name of Father: First _____ Middle _____ Last _____

Religion of Father _____

Mailing Address _____

Daytime Phone _____

Has your child been previously baptized? _____ If so, where? _____

Parish where you are registered _____ How long? _____

How often do you attend Mass (weekly, monthly, never or other)? Mother _____ Father _____

How often do you receive the Sacraments? Mother _____ Father _____

How are you involved in parish life? _____

Requested Date of Baptism (choose two dates): _____

Questions Regarding Marriage and Family

Are you married? _____ Name of Church _____

Date of Marriage _____ City & State _____

If not married in a church, where were you married? _____

Did you, as an individual/couple, decide to marry outside of the Catholic Church because of a divorce situation? _____

Were you given permission by the Catholic Diocese in which you were married to have your wedding at a place other than a Catholic Church? _____

Number of children _____ Ages _____

Are the children enrolled in a religious education program or in a Catholic school? _____

We hereby request the Sacrament of Baptism for our child:

Father _____ Date _____

Mother _____ Date _____

CHECKLIST FOR BAPTISM OF INFANTS

St Monica Catholic Church

For Parents:

- 1) Meet with Father Anthony
- 2) Attend Baptism Preparation Class
- 3) Complete Infant Baptism Request Form and turn in to the Parish Office
- 4) Copy of your child's State-registered Birth Certificate
- 5) If you are not a parishioner of St. Monica- A letter from your parish pastor granting permission for your child to be baptized at St. Monica.
- 6) Letters of Verification of Full Communion with the Church from the parish of each Godparent
- 7) Completed and signed Godparent Eligibility Forms.

For Godparents:

- 1) Have each Godparent fill out and sign a Godparent Eligibility Form..
- 2) Have Godparents view the Reborn series on Formed.org
- 3) Ask each Godparent to request a Letter of Verification of Full Communion with the Church from their parish. The letter must be signed by the pastor and stamped with the parish seal.

For a person to stand as a Godparent or Sponsor, the following requirements must be met

- * Be designated by the candidate, parents, guardians, or pastor
- * Have the intention of performing the role of sponsor
- * Be at least 16 years old
- * Be a fully initiated Catholic (received Baptism, First Communion and Confirmation)
- * Lead a life in harmony with the Faith and role of a sponsor (i.e. be a registered member of a parish, attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days and faithful to the laws of the Church regarding marriage)
- * Not the father or mother of the candidate

At least one of the persons you choose must fulfil these requirements.

If you wish to honor a non Catholic member of your family, they may stand as a Christian Witness to your child's Baptism, provided they have already been baptized.

Baptism Information

Commonly asked questions about Baptisms

General Information

Why do the parents choose to have their baby baptized and not let the baby choose for him/herself when they get older?

The greatest thing we can pass to our children is God himself together with our faith in him.

My child is over 7 years old, is it too late to baptize him?

It is never too late to baptize your child. Children thru the age of 7 are baptized in the Infant Baptism program. Older children are taken through the RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation) process adapted for children. For more information, please contact the parish office.

Can a person be baptized more than once?

If a person has been baptized in another faith tradition where they use the Trinitarian formula of water and (in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit) it is recognized as a valid baptism in the Catholic Church.

Does the father of my baby need to be on the certificate if he is not part of her life?

The Baptism Certificate needs to reflect the same information that the Birth Certificate does. If the father is listed on the Birth Certificate, he must be listed on the Baptism Certificate.

Some family and friends have used the name "christening." Is that the same as baptism?

Christening is another name for baptism.

Why do I have to have a candle and stole?

The candle and stole are part of the Baptism ceremony and each family is requested to have one for their child. During the ceremony you will be told when to light the candle and when to put the stole on your child. The candle and stole are provided as a gift from the parish.

Must the parents attend church regularly to have the baby baptized?

Parents make a commitment on behalf of their baby, and it is difficult to bring the child up in the practice of the faith without consistent church attendance. The spiritual strength of the baby depends on the parents. Like God, the Church can only hope for the participation of the parents.

Must the parents of the baby be married by a priest?

It is recommended that the parents be married by a priest, but this does not affect the Baptism of the baby.

Sponsors

What is a Sponsor?

The role of a sponsor is to set a good Catholic example for your child and encourage your child in his or her faith journey. It is not an honorary title. Sponsors serve a special role and must be selected carefully. It should be someone that lives their faith in accord with the teachings of the Catholic Church. Their role is an important one throughout your child's life .

Are there requirements/qualifications for sponsors?

Yes. According to Canon Law:

A sponsor must be fully initiated in the Roman Catholic Church. This means they have received the Sacrament of Baptism , Eucharist , and Confirmation .

They must be at least 16 years old .

They cannot be the parents of the child.

They cannot be bound by any canonical penalty. An example is that if they are married, they need to have been married in the Catholic Church or had a dispensation to get married outside the Catholic Church. They also cannot be cohabitating unless married .

They attend Mass on the weekends and Holy Days of Obligation and regularly receive the Sacraments of Holy Communion and Reconciliation. This also means they are registered in a parish .

How many sponsors/godparents are necessary?

You only need one Sponsor. It doesn't matter if the sponsor is male or female. If you choose two sponsors, then they need to be one male and one female and they meet the requirements/qualifications for sponsors. You may not have more than that in the baptismal registry.

Do both godparents have to be Catholic?

At least one of the godparents must be a practicing Catholic . The godparents are agreeing to raise your child in the Catholic faith if anything should happen to you. Therefore, it is imperative that at least one of them is a practicing Catholic. The non-Catholic may be a Christian Witness as long as he or she has been baptized into a faith that shares our belief about the Trinitarian nature of God. This means they were baptized with water and the minister used the words, "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." You may call the parish office if you are unsure or have more questions. On the Baptism Certificate , next to the name of the witness you will see "witness". The Christian Witness cannot be someone that was baptized Catholic but has not completed their Sacraments of Initiation.

Where does the godparent get a sponsor certificate?

The prospective godparent should get a sponsor certificate from the parish where he or she is registered. If the godparent is a registered parishioner here at St. Monica he or she will still need a sponsor certificate.

Can I have a proxy?

A proxy is acceptable and does not have to be Catholic, however, he or she should be a baptized Christian.

Preparing for Baptism

How soon after my baby is born should we have our child baptized?

Babies can be baptized as soon as they are born. What has traditionally occurred is that children are baptized within weeks of their birth. The Church encourages families to baptize their children as soon as possible.

When should I start making arrangements for my baby's baptism?

It is never too early. Many families start planning for the baptism while they are pregnant.

IMPORTANT: Arrange a class date *before* making arrangements with family and friends. At the baptismal seminar you can pick any date.

Can we take pictures at the Baptism?

You are welcome to take as many pictures and videos as you wish. Please feel free to walk around to get the best angle for your pictures. Additionally, you are invited to stay immediately after the ceremony to take pictures of the baptismal font, the church, your family, etc ...

Should the parents be registered at St. Monica parish?

Because of the emphasis on community in the Church today, the proper understanding of the Sacraments, issuing of sponsor certificates, etc ... the answer is Yes .

What is the offering/fee for a Baptism?

There is no set charge for a Baptism. Similar to a wedding or funeral, it is customary to give the priest a stipend or offering for his services. The amount of the stipend is entirely at your discretion. The offering is usually handed to the celebrant in an envelope or thank you card immediately after the ceremony .

When will I receive the Baptism certificate?

After the Baptism is recorded in the church records, the certificate will be mailed to you. On the day of the baptism, be sure that all the information on the form which was filled out at the Baptism Seminar (date of birth, godparents' names, etc ..) is correct.