



# Someone New in Your Family? Congratulations!

## *Next Step - Baptism*

We are delighted that you have chosen to present your child for the Sacrament of Baptism at the Parish of the Holy Cross. This is a sacred and meaningful time for you, your family, and our entire parish community. The Pastoral Team and Staff are here to help you along the way.

### **Some General Points of Information:**

- Baptisms are celebrated usually on the second and last Sundays of the month at 1:00 PM. (*For children older than 7, please contact the Religious Ed. Office at ext. 111.*)
- Families requesting Baptism are asked to register in the parish.
- No more than 8 families are at any Baptism celebration. If a family anticipates having more than 25 guests in attendance, we request that you call and let us know.
- In the case of adoptions, parents are asked to bring legal documentation to their meeting with a member of the Pastoral Team.
- There is no fee for Baptisms, but donations are appreciated. Parents will be given an envelope for whatever offering they choose to give.
- Holy Cross has a three-step preparation process for parents, so, to ensure that the process is completed before the Baptism date, we recommend that parents call the parish office *about 3 months* before their desired date of Baptism.

### **Baptism Preparation in Three Steps:**

1. Call Jane at the Parish Office (ext. 122) and let her know that you wish to have your child baptized at Holy Cross. She will direct you to this website so that you can read “About Baptism” and “How to Choose a Godparent.” She will also take your contact information.
2. A member of the Pastoral Team will contact you to set up an appointment to discuss your plans and to answer any questions you may have after reading the Baptism information. At this time, you will also receive the date for one of our Sunday Parent Gatherings, as well as the date of the Baptism itself.
3. Parents will attend a 9:30 AM Sunday Mass, followed by a gathering with refreshments and conversation in the Fr. Joe Room. At that time, they will meet other parents from the parish who will share the joys and challenges of raising their children in this Catholic community. These gatherings are held on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of each month (except November and December). Children are welcome.



## About Baptism

Baptism is the first Sacrament of the Catholic Church, the first of the three Sacraments of Initiation: Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist (Communion). Like all Sacraments, Baptism is an encounter with God and a celebration of community. The Baptism ritual involves symbols, words, and actions which express its purpose: the beginning of a new life with God and a welcome into the family of the Church.

But Baptism is more than the actual celebration; what happens after the ceremony is vitally important in living out that sacrament. Since babies cannot speak for themselves, parents and Godparents make promises of faith for them. Those promises will begin to form the child into a faith-filled follower of Jesus Christ. As the child grows, parents and Godparents will have the responsibility of modelling the Christian life, setting good example, and answering the child's questions about God and the Church. And so, the Baptism of their child provides parents with an ideal time and opportunity to re-commit to their own faith and to their connection to their Church community.

As you promise to raise your child as a faithful Catholic, you also are promising to be a faithful Catholic yourself. The Parish of the Holy Cross stands ready to help you in this most holy endeavor. Thank you for choosing Holy Cross, and may God bless you on your journey.

## How to Choose a Godparent

The Catholic Church has several requirements for Godparents (only one Godparent, or Sponsor is required, but if two are chosen, one must be female, one male):

1. At least one Godparent must be:
  - a) a fully initiated Catholic (having received Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist)
  - b) at least sixteen years of age
  - c) in good standing with the Catholic Church
2. One Godparent may be non-Catholic, provided s/he is a baptized Christian of another faith, at least sixteen years of age, and able to give good example to the child. This person is a "Christian witness." Non-baptized persons (e.g., Jews, Muslims) may not be Godparents, as they cannot profess their faith in Jesus Christ.
3. The age requirement may be lowered in some cases if the other requirements are met and the pastor gives permission.