



SAINTS PANTELEIMON, ANNA & PARASKEVI GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

ΙΕΡΟΣ ΝΑΟΣ ΠΑΝΤΕΛΗΜΟΝΟΣ, ΑΝΝΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΑΡΑΣΚΕΥΗΣ

Ελληνορθόδοξ Κοινότητα Μάρκχαμ και Περιχώρων | Μάρκχαμ ΟΝ | Καναδά

Greek Orthodox Community – York Region | Markham ON | Canada



UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF THE ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE & THE GREEK ORTHODOX ARCHDIOCESE OF CANADA

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM AND CHRISMATIONS INFORMATION

Beloved in the Lord,

Your decision to participate in the Sacrament of Baptism in the Greek Orthodox Christian Church is an exciting one because through the Orthodox Christian Baptismal Service you are joined to Christ and His Church. This means you are also joined to our Community. The time before baptism should be used to get to know the Church, our Community, and the Parish Priest. Here are some of the steps to help in becoming a closer member of the community and preparing for your Baptism in Christ:

- ***We must take the time needed.*** The time and effort you put into getting ready for your Baptism is never a waste. It is important that this period of preparation is never rushed but used effectively to build a strong relationship with the people around you.
- ***Baptism Preparation Seminar.*** All parents and sponsors must attend a mandatory baptism preparation seminar, which will take place on prescheduled dates. These seminars will take place on a Wednesday evening at 7 PM and will be preceded by an evening Liturgy at 6 PM. You are encouraged to attend the Liturgy as well. After Liturgy, Father will meet with all of the families which have scheduled baptisms during the upcoming months, explain the sacrament, the obligations of the parents and godparents, and answer any questions you may have.
- ***For Adults - Catechism.*** It is important to get to know the faith you will be entering. For this reason, Catechism sessions are held for a few months before baptism in order to learn our faith, its practices and traditions. This is a chance to get acquainted with Fr. Constantinos, other who are coming to the Orthodox Christian Faith, and our Church Community.
- ***Participating in the Liturgical Life of the Church.*** This means coming to Church a regular basis, especially Sunday Liturgy, beginning to fast and pray at home, and centring your life around Christ. In the coming Sundays you can get to know Fr. Constantinos and speak about how to involve yourself in the Church.
- ***Godparents or Sponsors (The Nouno/Nouna).*** The person(s) who will be involved in the Baptismal service, by becoming a spiritual parent, must be a role model in living an Orthodox Christian lifestyle and therefore must be a member in good standing; this means that they attend Church regularly, and follow the canons of the Church. It is preferred that they be members of the Church you will be baptized in and belong to. They will be a source of support during this time of preparation and afterwards in your daily life. It is a good idea to discuss candidates for godparents with Father to make sure they fulfil the requirements of our Church.
- ***Community Participation.*** It takes Community to know God. It is the Christian teaching, that to join to Christ is inseparable to joining His Church. This means that, as we stated before, being Baptized in a Church leads to being a member of that Church. Being a part of the family has both physical and spiritual benefits and responsibilities. One of these responsibilities is to keep your membership current and up to date. Your contributions to the Church: your time, talents (*volunteer abilities*) and treasure (*financial contribution*), is what allows it to live and grow. In return you are joined by an entire group of like-minded persons all working for the same common goal, a loving relationship with each other in Christ. For information on membership please contact our Community Office.

All good things come with hard work and that usually means it is accompanied by stress. While difficulties, both spiritually and logistically are unavoidable when planning for your Baptism, don't forget you are not alone. To assist you we have prepared a baptismal checklist, which is attached to this letter. If you need any help, advice, or just to have someone listen, please feel free to contact the Church.

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age. Amen”

Matthew 28:19-20



SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM CHECKLIST

- Paid Community Membership & Paid Baptismal Fee: *The Parents and Sponsor(s) (Godparent) are both required to pay their respective membership commitments, and Honorarium for the Chanter and Caretaker (Neokoro).*
- Bath robe (*optional*) to wear before being baptized.
- Towels and Sheet: *One white bath towel to receive the newly baptized into after baptism, a white sheet to be put over the bath towel (ladopano), one white hand towel to wash hands with.*
- A bar of soap to wash hands with.
- A bottle of Olive Oil.
- A bottle of sweet red communion wine, oil, and prosfora (*church bread*): *Can be donated from the Church Bookstore in the Narthex (foyer) or by calling the Community office and making a donation.*
- Sponsor (*Godparent*) buys a cross and chain for the newly baptized to wear.
- New white or light coloured clothing to be blessed by Priest and worn by newly baptized.
- 3 white candles (*can be bought from the front of the church Narthex*): *Two small for the table and one big baptismal candle (lambada).*
- Little crosses (*Martyrika*) to be pinned onto the attendants of the Baptism. (*Optional.*)

Important Notes:

It is suggested that the parents and godparent(s) also participate in the Sacrament of Holy Confession and receive Holy Communion before the baptism so as to also be prepared. Essentially a confession should include everything that a person may have done in their life up until this point that is not *'Christ-like'*. Sometimes it is helpful to make a list so as to not forget anything. The candidate is being re-born through Holy Baptism, therefore it is important for the family to start this new life in Christ together completely prepared. It is important for the family and sponsor (*Godparent*) to attend Church with the candidate on a regular basis leading up to the Baptism but also as often as possible after the baptism. The days before the baptism should be devoted to prayer and preparation. The sponsor is required to know the Creed of Faith and recite it at the baptism. The sponsor is essentially giving their word to God that they will love, protect, guide and teach the child the Orthodox way of life.

After the baptism the newly-illuminated (*baptized*) Christian receives Holy Communion for three Divine Liturgies (*can be Sundays*) along with the Godparent and parents, while holding the large Candle (*Lambada*). The towels, sheet and clothes worn at the Baptism are to be washed by hand and the water the water and oils that come from washing it should be poured somewhere where no one will step or poured into a natural body of water.

THE CREED OF FAITH (*Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed*)

I believe in one God, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the Only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all ages.

Light of Light, True God of True God, begotten, not created, of one essence with the Father, through Whom all things were made.

For us and for our salvation,
He came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became man.

He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate, and He suffered and was buried.

On the third day He rose, according to the Scriptures.

He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and dead, and His kingdom will have no end.

And in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Creator of life, Who proceeds from the Father, Who together with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, Who spoke through the prophets.

In One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church.
I acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
I expect the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the age to come. Amen.