

# Preparation for Baptism

## Responsibilities of Parents:

The Church sees parents as the first and most important teachers of their children in the ways of faith; thus, it is of vital importance that the parents themselves value and practice their religion. Both the baptismal ceremony itself and the preparation process beforehand stress the parental responsibility. Failure to accept it has serious implications. Instruction is required so that parents understand the true meaning and importance of baptism and the obligations attached to it. Thus, the following requirements are meant to ensure the deepest possible respect and appreciation for the sacrament and all it entails. Only when parents and godparents themselves are practicing the faith is there a realistic hope that their children will be raised as committed Catholics.

*Parish membership is required for baptism.* Exceptions due to extraordinary circumstances are made at the discretion of the pastor.

Baptismal preparation classes are offered on a monthly basis. Parent attendance at one of these classes is mandatory before a child may be baptized. Call the Front Office at (269) 327-5165 for more information or to register for one of the classes.

*The completed baptismal registration form is due in the church office no later than two weeks prior to the baptism. If you are able to return it sooner please do so.*

## Qualifications of Baptismal Sponsors\*

Code of Canon Law #874

To be admitted to the role of sponsor (Godparent), a person must:

1. Have completed their sixteenth year of age.
2. Be a Catholic who has been Confirmed and already receiving the Sacrament of Eucharist and lead a life in harmony with the faith and the role undertaken.
3. Not be the mother or father of the one to be baptized.
4. A baptized person who belongs to a non-Catholic Church may act as a witness to the baptism but only with a Catholic sponsor.

\*A Sponsor who is not a registered member of St. Catherine's will need a letter from their home parish stating that he/she is a Catholic in good standing. This letter **MUST BE RECEIVED** here no later than two weeks before the baptism.

\*It is **highly recommended** that Sponsors attend either the Baptismal class here or one at their home parish so that they may adequately appreciate the theology of the Sacrament of Baptism as well as the meaning and obligations attached to the ceremony.

St. Catherine parishioners who want to be Godparents need to sign an affidavit along with the letter of permission signed by the Pastor. These can be obtained in the Front Office or the website. They will also need to submit, the name of the child, date, church and address of church where the Baptism will be performed.