



General information

Candles are provided by the parish for the Rite of Baptism, but feel free to bring your own. You may bring your child dressed in the white garment you have prepared for him or her.

For children age 5 and over, please consider baptizing them at the age of 7, when they can receive their first communion at the same time by enrolling them in the Rite of Christian Initiation for Children (RCIC).

Please be judicious about choosing godparents. They are considered witnesses to the baptism and representatives of the Christian community. Once witnesses at a baptism, godparents are assigned as such permanently. They cannot be changed.

If parents have not completed their sacraments of initiation or are not married in the church, they should inquire as to how they may complete and celebrate these sacraments for themselves. Of course, if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call our office.

The baptism of an individual, whether it is an infant or adult, means that the baptized person is initiated as a new member of the church and is claimed for life in Christ Jesus. Only you know if you are prepared to baptize your child in the faith. Our task is to help you to make a good decision based on faith and reason. This decision requires you to search your conscience for the right answer. The purpose of our instruction, the Rite of Welcome, and the interview is to help you reflect on the seriousness of what you are asking.

How Do We Prepare For Baptism?

Interview

The interview is the first step in the process. Here we will assess your readiness to baptize your child. He will also complete a form that gives us basic information in order for us to record the baptism. At the interview, you can schedule the orientation class and arrange for a date for the Rite of Welcome and Baptism.

Orientation

The orientation class for baptism is held on the first Thursday of the month in the conference room of the Pastoral Center. The class begins at 7:00pm. The baptismal instructor will review the fundamental understanding of baptism. He/she will also explain the Rite of Welcome and answer any further questions you may have.

Rite of Welcome

The final step is attendance to the Rite of Welcome. The Rite of Welcome takes place on the 2nd Sunday of the month at the 11:15 Family Mass. Here you will be recognized as parents who will be baptizing their children in the coming days. During this time the priest will also anoint your child with the Oil of Catechumens

What Happens on the day of Baptism?

Baptisms at St. Mary take place on the third Saturday of the month at 10:00 AM and at the 5:00 PM mass. We celebrate Baptisms as a community of believers' together celebrating God's love for this new child. There is no such thing as a private Baptism as the Sacrament is a communal celebration of belonging to the family of God. The exception to this rule is Saturdays that occur during the season of lent. We observe the solemnity of this season and postpone baptisms until Easter Sunday. On the day that you have scheduled for Baptism, please arrive 15 minutes early. Choose seats in front—closest to the sanctuary and altar— when you and your family arrive. Parents and godparents sit nearest their close to the aisle

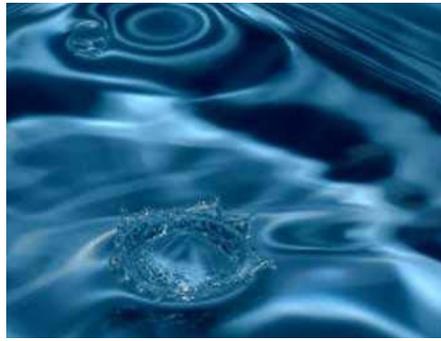
What about the Godparents?

Sponsors (godparents) should be at least 16 years of age, confirmed and participating in the worship and life of the Church. Sponsors are witnesses to the faith and the actual event of baptism. One godparent is necessary and not more than two will be recorded as witnesses. Sponsors are encouraged to attend the instructions offered for baptismal preparation and the Rite of Welcome. Out-of-parish sponsors may attend baptismal preparation at their own parish or the parish

ST. MARY'S LOS GATOS

BAPTISM





ST. MARY'S BAPTISM PROGRAM

Welcome

The staff and people of St. Mary's warmly welcome you as you prepare for your child's baptism. We encourage every parent to reflect on the importance of the Sacrament of Baptism, and we want to assist you in this process. For this purpose, priests and members of the parish will guide you through the formal process. Before setting the date of baptism, we ask that you read through this pamphlet and follow the process as presented. We would like to thank you in advance for your cooperation, and we hope that your child's baptism will be an experience of renewal and fulfillment for your family and the entire Christian community.



Why Baptize?

The celebration of infant baptism has been the practice of the church for many centuries. In the same way, parents who baptize infants base their decision on their experience of faith and reason. In order for a sacrament to be valid, sacraments must be received in freedom. Parents who wish to baptize their child do so freely and for the reason of raising their child as a Roman Catholic

Our understanding of baptism is twofold. Before you bring your child to the church for baptism, we recognize that he or she is already a child of God. Baptism marks the beginning of the child's new life in Christ as God's own child, as a member of the Roman Catholic Church. As such, we celebrate what we already believe about the child and bear witness to the rebirth that we receive through baptism in Christ Jesus.

It is important for parents to recognize that they are the primary teachers of their children in the ways of the faith. They form the domestic church and therefore are witnesses of the gospel to their children by the way they live their lives. A child will learn about the gospel of Jesus from his or her parents first. Parents are encouraged to make this responsibility and privilege their special care.

How Do We Make a Donation?

A donation is not required but does reflect a commitment to responsible Christian stewardship. A suggested donation of \$75.00-\$100.00 is appreciated greatly. You can give the donation on the day you arrange for the date of baptism at the parish office or at the time of the interview.

Why Must We Go Through Preparations?

Whenever someone receives a sacrament, it is appropriate to prepare. Many remember going to CCD when they were children. Perhaps it has been some years since you have had any formal religious education. Preparation before baptism will help you to know what you are celebrating in the sacrament and to understand the responsibility of raising your child in the life of the church.

Furthermore, this will give you the opportunity to meet parish members who assist in preparing couples for baptism, the priest of the parish, and others at St. Mary's Parish who will also baptize their children. As you prepare, remember the importance of your decision to baptize. We hope your preparation process is fruitful.