

Who may have a baptism at Ascension?

Any registered parish family may schedule a baptism. If one is not registered in the parish, one may still schedule a baptism provided they obtain a letter of permission from one's own pastor. It is typical that out-of-parish families would have significant ties to Ascension.

Who will perform the baptism?

All baptisms are normally performed by Fr. Tim Daniel. Other priests and deacons are welcome to come, however, provided they contact Fr. Tim ahead of time. Priests and deacons of the Archdiocese of Washington need not provide documentation. Priests and deacons from outside the Archdiocese of Washington must provide a letter of suitability from their own diocese or religious superior.

When are baptisms?

Baptisms are normally scheduled on Saturdays after the 9 AM Mass. In special circumstances, other arrangements may be requested.

Will the baptism be private or with other families?

Baptisms are normally scheduled with each individual family. At times, however, baptisms may be combined with one or two other families.

How many godparents do we need?

A child only needs one official godparent, however, there may be two – one of each gender. Godparents must be practicing Roman Catholics in good standing with the Church. If married, they should be validly married in the Catholic Church. They should be attending Mass, and if they are outside the parish, they must obtain a letter of suitability from their own parish priest. If a godparent is not able to attend the ceremony, someone may serve as a proxy for them.

Can my non-Catholic family member or friend be a godparent?

Non-Catholics who are Christian may be listed in the baptismal registry as "Christian Witnesses" provided the child has at least one Catholic godparent.

Is there a class required before the baptism may be scheduled?

For the first child, a one-time baptismal preparation class is required. Please contact Fr. Tim Daniel, 301-262-2227 to schedule a time. If a couple is coming from out of town, the class may be taken elsewhere provided proof of attendance is obtained. After a couple has taken the class once, they need not attend again for future baptisms.

Is there a donation required?

It is customary to make an offering to the Church for a baptism. While it is not required, couples may also choose to make a small offering to the priest or deacon performing the ceremony. These donations, while not expected, are greatly appreciated. Fr. Tim will advise couples about customary amounts.

What if we are not attending Mass, not married in the Church, or not married at all?

Part of the baptism ritual includes the parents and godparents of the child promising in the sight of God to raise their child in the faith. In order to do that, a couple should be attending Mass and validly married in the Church. Couples who are not attending Mass or who are not married in the Church may be asked to meet privately with Fr. Tim to discuss their situation. This will not, however, preclude them from having their child baptized.