



## ***St. Aloysius Catholic Church***

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## **CELEBRATING BAPTISM**

### **Pastor's Message**

Dear Parents,

The Christian community of St. Aloysius Parish is happy to welcome your child as a member of God's family in the Sacrament of Baptism.

Baptism is the first of the "Sacraments of Initiation" which also include Confirmation and Eucharist. In Baptism, your child receives the new life of grace in Jesus Christ. Confirmation strengthens the Baptismal grace and commitment, and regular celebration of the Eucharist is our nourishment for our Christian journey.

Baptism is rightly seen as the "gateway" to the other sacraments, and the first step on a lifelong journey of faith. We hope that you will recognize it as such and do everything you can to ensure that your child continues to be formed in the Catholic faith in which he/she is baptized.

This handout has been prepared for your information, as you prepare for this joyful occasion in the life of your family. Please read it and contact our parish office to make the necessary arrangements for Baptism.

In Christ,

**Father Melvin Pinto, Ocd  
Pastor**

## COMMON QUESTIONS

### Who can be baptized?

Any child or adult not previously baptized in the Catholic Church or another mainline Christian community. In the case of infants, generally at least one of the parents will be a baptized, practicing Catholic.

### What about adult baptism?

The Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults is specifically designed to assist adults in their preparation for baptism and/or the other sacraments of initiation. The process begins in September and the sacraments of initiation are celebrated at the Easter Vigil.

### How do I request baptism?

Kindly contact our parish office and speak with the secretary. You will be asked to fill out an application form and bring it to the office. You can mark the day and the month in which you would like to celebrate baptism. A meeting will be arranged with the Parish Priest prior to the Baptism.

### How far in advance of my desired date should I call?

It is a good idea to call at least six weeks before the desired date of baptism.

### Do the parents of the child have to be registered at St. Aloysius Parish?

Any Catholic living in the territory of our parish is considered to be a member of St. Aloysius. However, we do encourage Catholics to register as a sign of commitment to the parish. Registration forms can be obtained at the information centre in the main Church foyer or from our Parish office.

Catholics who live outside our parish territory but who regularly attend here should certainly be registered to establish membership.

Catholics who have family members in our parish or who, for another good reason, wish to have their child baptized here, may do so with a letter of permission from their parish priest.

### Do parents have to be married in the Catholic Church to have their child baptized?

Children will not be denied baptism because of the marital status of their parents. For the sake of family stability and faith practice, however, it is seen as a proper thing that Catholic parents be married according to the rites of the Church. Where this is not the case, you will be asked to meet with the priest so that we may better understand your situation and assist you.

**Who can be a godparent/sponsor?**

The rite of Baptism itself is very clear on this: godparents must be baptized and confirmed Catholics, at least 16 years old, living a life consistent with the faith and the responsibility of a godparent.

**Can a non-Catholic be a godparent?**

A baptized Christian may act as a Christian Witness to the baptism. A Christian witness must be accompanied by a Catholic godparent.

**Multiple Godparents? Two of the same gender?**

The rite of Baptism requires only one godparent. Where two are chosen, the norms speak of a godfather and godmother. Should you choose additional sponsors please note that only two names will appear on the certificate and in the register of baptisms.

**Do we have to attend a Baptism Preparation Course?**

Parents are required to take a baptismal preparation class. This is usually offered on the last Tuesday of the preceding month of Baptism, at 7:30 p.m. in the church. Parents who are bringing a second or third child for baptism here may be excused from this at the discretion of the pastor.

**Do godparents attend the class?**

Godparents and Christian Witnesses are welcome and encouraged to attend, especially if they live locally. However, they are not obliged to attend.

**Do you need to pay fees?**

For Baptism there is no fee but we always encourage you to make a free-will offering. Anything you give will be a great support to help with the expenses of running the parish. (An offering envelope will be given to you during the preparation meeting. You can return it on or before the celebration.)

**Where is the Baptism recorded?**

Our parish, like every Catholic parish, keeps complete records of all baptisms celebrated in our church. Copies of certificates can be obtained from the parish office.

**Finally....**

You are to be commended for wishing to share the gift of your Catholic faith with your child. We are always here to help you as you continue to raise your child in the faith and help him or her to become a devoted follower of Jesus Christ.

## WHAT TO DO NEXT?

1. **Fill out the application form and return it to the parish office. It can be dropped off, mailed in, or scanned and emailed to the office.**
2. **Please contact the parish office to make arrangements with the Priest. You will then be informed of the Baptism Preparation Class date/time and the date/time of your child's Baptism. (Due to Covid-19 Health Guidelines all Baptism Prep classes are suspended until further notice).**
3. **Come to the Baptism Preparation Class (During the Pandemic, our Priests are working with couples on an individual basis as the Preparation Classes are currently suspended).**
4. **Come to the Baptism Celebration.**

## Interesting Facts about Baptism

### Why are we baptized as infants?

What sin has an infant committed? None. Before he or she reaches "the age of reason" – maybe 6 or 7 years of age – a youngster has a very hard time distinguishing right from wrong. This is why, prior to the age of reason, children do not commit personal sins. Rather – a child – like all of us – is born with Original Sin.

Because the first human beings turned away from God (the story of Adam and Eve in the Book of Genesis), all humanity since that time has suffered the consequences. Simply put, we are all born with the Original Sin which was committed by Adam and Eve. Baptism washes that sin away and makes us children of God.

According to early Church writers (including St. Irenaeus in the second century and Origen in the third), the Baptism of small children has been a part of the Church's tradition since apostolic times. Gradually, by the fifth century, it became the norm.