

Q. Are there any age requirements to have my child baptized?

A. Parents may schedule children ages 6 and under for the Sacrament of Baptism through the Pastoral Center Office by following the procedures outlined in this booklet. Information on Baptism for children 7 and older is available through our religious education office at (504) 341-8477.

Q. What if my spouse is not Catholic?

A. Since parents promise to teach their child the Catholic faith at his/her baptism, at least one parent **SHOULD** be a practicing Catholic. Non-Catholic parents who wish to learn more about the Catholic faith are encouraged to attend RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults) which begins in August of each year. Contact the Pastoral Center Office at 347-2203 for more information.

Q. What forms must parents complete?

A. All parents are required to complete a blue Baptismal Information Form and sign a white Parental Testimonial form. Godparent Testimonial forms must be signed by each godparent. **Only fully completed forms can be processed.** If parents reside in Visitation of Our Lady Parish but are not registered, they are required to register with the parish. To register to become a VOL parishioner please go to www.vol.org/parishioner-registration and follow the link to create an account. This must be done prior to baptism.

Also, if the parents are not married to each other, you must bring the **ORIGINAL** birth certificate of the child to the Pastoral Center for a staff member to see. **Copies of the certificate are not acceptable.**

Q. What is the deadline for turning in required paperwork?

A. All baptismal forms **MUST** be turned in prior to scheduling your child(s) baptism. Baptisms **WILL NOT** be scheduled until all completed paperwork is turned in and everyone has attended the required baptism seminar.

Q. What if I am not married?

A. If the child's parents are not married, only **ORIGINAL** birth certificates **are** acceptable as proof of paternity. **Copies of the certificate are not acceptable.** If this form is not provided to the Pastoral Center by the time of Baptism, the father's name will be indicated as "Not declared" until the birth certificate can be presented as proof of paternity.

Q. What if my family does not live in Visitation Parish?

A. Non-parishioners are welcome to have their children baptized at VOL. Parents who **do not** live in VOL's church parish must obtain permission from the church parish in which they reside. Parents should contact the church office in their home parish and ask that a Letter of Permission be sent to Visitation. Letters of Permission may be mailed or faxed to the Pastoral Center at (504) 347-2223. If you are uncertain if you reside in VOL's church parish, please call the Pastoral Center Office at 347-2203.

Q. My family lives in Visitation Parish, but we are not sure if we are registered. How can we find out?

A. If you reside in VOL parish, you must be a registered parishioner at VOL in order to have your child baptized here. To register to become a VOL parishioner please go to www.vol.org/parishioner-registration and follow the link to create an account. This must be done prior to baptism. Families who are unsure if they are registered may call the Pastoral Center to verify their registration.

Q. What are the requirements for the Godparents?

A. **Both** Godparents **MUST** be at least 16 years of age; one male and one female. **At least one** Godparent **MUST** be a **Confirmed Practicing Catholic**. Non-Catholic Godparents are identified as Christian Witnesses on church records. Catholics who are not yet confirmed cannot serve as either a Godparent or as a Christian Witness. Catholics who are not practicing their faith in any manner or who are not in “good standing” cannot serve as Godparents or as Christian Witnesses.

Q. Do we have to attend any special meetings?

A. Parents and Godparents are required to attend a Baptismal Seminar before their child is baptized. Baptismal Seminars are held the first Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the main body of the Church (near the baptismal font). There is no fee for the seminar; however, registration is required. Please call (504) 347-2203 to register.

Q. When are baptisms held?

A. Baptisms are held on the first and third Sunday of every month (except holidays) after the 12:00 noon Mass. No more than three (3) children may be scheduled per Sunday. After completing and returning the appropriate forms **and** attending a Baptismal Seminar, parents may then call the Pastoral Center to schedule the Baptism. **Please note: BAPTISMS ARE NOT SCHEDULED UNTIL ALL FORMS ARE TURNED IN and EVERYONE HAS ATTENDED A BAPTISM SEMINAR!**

Q. Do we have to know any special prayers?

A. Parents and Godparents will be given a special “Rite of Baptism” booklet on the day of the baptism with all prayers and responses.

Q. Is photography and videography allowed?

A. Yes! However, we ask that you be mindful to not block the paths of the priest, deacon, and other parents and Godparents.

Q. Are there any fees?

A. There are no fees required to have your child baptized, but many parents choose to give an offering to the church to help defray costs.

Q. When will I receive my child’s baptismal certificate?

A. Baptismal certificates are usually mailed within 2-3 weeks. Parents wishing to pick up their child’s baptismal certificate may call the Pastoral Center at 347-2203.