



## **Baptism & Godparent Questions and Answers**

### **What preparation is required for parents?**

One or both parents must attend a Baptism preparation meeting before the Baptism. If the parents have attended a class for a previous Baptism, within five years, they do not need to attend again. Check with the parish secretary.

### **How do I schedule a Baptism?**

Call the parish office at (509)747-4421. The parish secretary will check the schedule and will let you know what documents you need and answer any questions you may have.

### **Do godparents have to be Catholic?**

Listed below are the qualifications for being a sponsor/godparent as required by Canon Law:

- At least sixteen years of age
- Fully initiated Catholic (Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist)
- If married, is in a valid Catholic marriage
- A good example of Christian living
- Attends Mass regularly
- Is willing to accept the responsibility of being a godparent

### **What if the person I want for a godparent is not a Catholic?**

One godparent must be Catholic as described above. A second person may function as a Christian Witness.

### **What is a Christian Witness?**

Qualifications of a Christian Witness:

- At least sixteen years of age
- Baptized with water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, in a non-Catholic, Christian denomination
- Actively participates in his/her church
- Is a good example of Christian living

### **Can an unbaptized person be a godparent/Christian Witness?**

No, because the godparents renew the promises made at their own baptism. An unbaptized person has never made baptismal promises to renew.

### **Why can't I choose whomever I want as a godparent?**

Baptism is an official liturgy of the Church. It welcomes someone into the Catholic Church. Therefore the Church has set criteria for being a sponsor. The sponsor is to assist the parents and the child in living a Catholic life. In order to do so, the sponsor needs to provide a good example of living that life. A person who is not Catholic, or who is not living in a way consistent with the Faith, obviously cannot provide the example that is part of the task of the godparent.

**How many godparents do I need?**

One godparent who meets all the requirements is necessary. If you have two godparents, one must be male and one female.

**What if the godparents are not parishioners of St. Augustine Parish?**

If the godparents are Catholics from another parish, they are required to submit a letter verifying that they are parishioners in good standing completed by their home parish. This letter is sent to St. Augustine Parish.

**Can I bring paperwork on the day of the Baptism?**

All documentation must be submitted before the Baptism.

**Can grandparents be godparents? Aunts, uncles, brothers, sisters?**

Yes, if they meet the requirements.

**Can we use the same godparents that we chose for our other child(ren)?**

Yes

**One of the godparents cannot be there for the Baptism. Can we have a proxy godparent?**

Yes. Proxies for the godparents are acceptable when the sponsors cannot be physically present on the day of the Baptism. The name of the designated sponsor is entered in the register. The name of the proxy is entered under the name of the sponsor with the remark, "proxy".

**Do I need to be registered in the parish to have my child baptized?**

In most cases, yes. However, if there is a reason to have your child baptized at a parish that is not your own, you may ask the pastor of your parish to provide a letter of permission to celebrate the sacrament here. You must be registered with your local parish. If you have questions, please call the church office.

**Can our child be baptized if we are not married in the Church?**

Baptism welcomes your child into the family of faith. The role of the parents is essential to the faith development of the child. This would be a good time to discuss your marriage situation with a priest or deacon.

**What if the parents are not married at all?**

The parents should discuss the situation with the pastor.