

The following guidelines will help parents understand what is required in preparing for and celebrating the Sacrament of Baptism in our parish:

- A child as referred to in this policy is a person up to the age of 7 years old. Once a child reaches the age of 7 he or she may enter the Rite of Christian Initiation for Children.
- Baptism Preparation, which consists of two group sessions, is required for parents seeking to have their child baptized. Through participation in the session, parents will explore the meaning and ritual of the sacrament and discern their readiness as a family to celebrate their child's Baptism. Baptismal preparation will be offered six times a year. Parents are encouraged to attend preparation during the expectant months in order to avoid delays in scheduling this important moment in your family's life. For parents who have had a child previously baptized, who are known by the parish and practice their faith only session two is required as preparation for the Sacrament of Baptism.
- After completing the program, parents may work with the parish to set a date for their child's Baptism.
- Active participation in a Catholic Parish by the Catholic parent or parents is a requisite for the Baptism of a child. Please note that the *Rite of Baptism* (no. 3) states: "in the complete absence of any well-founded hope that the infant will be brought up in the Catholic religion, the baptism is to be delayed, ...and the parents are to be informed of the reasons."
- Because the community has such an important role in welcoming new members of the Christian community, Baptism will ordinarily be celebrated during a Sunday Eucharist. Baptisms during the Eucharist will be celebrated on the Second Sunday of the month at Saturday 5:30 PM, or Sunday at 9:00 or 11:30 AM. A maximum of 4 baptisms would be scheduled for any one celebration.
- The ordinary minister of the Sacrament of Baptism in our parish is the Pastor, a parish priest, or a deacon assigned to our parish. However, participation in the ceremony by a visiting priest or deacon who has special ties to the family is welcomed. Please notify parish staff in advance in order to accommodate any visitors.
- Parents who are members of another parish may have their child's baptism at St. Dominic. In order for this to be accomplished a letter from the parent's local parish stating that they have both received baptismal preparation and are practicing their faith must be received before the baptism can occur.
- A sponsor (godparent) must be a Confirmed, and actively practicing Catholic, at least 16 years of age. A non-Catholic or un-Confirmed Catholic may serve in the role of "Christian Witness". An un-baptized person may never serve as a sponsor and cannot be a Christian witness because they themselves have not been baptized into Christ. According to Canon Law, Godparents should also be prepared for this life long journey and commitment and therefore, are strongly encouraged to attend baptismal preparation along side the parents of their soon to be godchild. This may take place at St. Dominic Parish or at a parish in closer proximity to their home. Godparents not known by the parish of St. Dominic must have a letter stating that they do meet the criteria to be a sponsor/godparent.

- Parents are encouraged, but not required, to observe the tradition of conferring on their child the name of a saint who may serve as patron and model for the child.
- For information regarding the Baptism at St. Dominic please speak with any priest, deacon (661-5130) or call our Coordinator of Religious Education, Brenda Christian at 661-7629.