

## **Church of the Ascension Baptism Process**

Our Preparation Process for baptisms.

Infant baptism is a sign of God's desire to give us "more than all we can ask or imagine" (Ephesians 3:20). Obviously, the tiny baby cannot ask for or even imagine the richness of new life in God. It is a gift, one so precious that, by its very nature, it calls for a response. In the case of infant baptism, the immediate response of joy, gratitude and commitment is offered by the parents, the godparents and the entire Christian community.

We, as Church, believe it is our duty to offer you, as parents, the opportunity to fully understand the commitment you are undertaking for your child and yourselves through the Sacrament of Baptism. Our process consists of four parts:

1. Attend one baptism class (for first time parents only)

These classes are held every other month – typically, the second Sunday at 1:00 and are 90 minutes in length. In the class, you will have the opportunity to meet other couples preparing for baptism. Together, we will reflect on the meaning and signs of baptism. Through the signs and the words of the rite, we will deepen our appreciation of the richness and significance of this sacrament. Please sign up for these classes in advance by calling the parish office at 913-681-3348.

2. Complete the Baptism registration form which can be found on our parish website or picked up in the parish office and turn it into the parish office.

3. Schedule the Baptism

Contact the parish office at 913-681-3348 to schedule the baptism. Baptisms are typically celebrated every Sunday after the 11:45 am Mass. Baptisms are scheduled after the completion of the baptism process. We request you contact us after you have selected your child's Godparents and before you make flight arrangements for traveling friends and family members.

4. Select Godparents/Christian Witness. Godparents need to turn in a completed Godparent Form to the parish office two weeks prior to the desired date of baptism. Forms can be found on Website or picked up at parish office. Please see information regarding Godparents and Christian Witnesses on separate forms.

It is our sincerest hope that you find the baptism preparation process meaningful and that it puts you into a more relaxed and prayerful state of mind as the baptism day approaches.

## **Canonical Requirements for Godparents & Confirmation Sponsors:**

The Church sometimes uses the terms “godparents” and “sponsors” interchangeably. The term “godparent” usually refers to a sponsor for baptism. When selecting a godparent or sponsor, one should consider individuals who are committed Catholics, embrace the fullness of the Catholic faith and will be dedicated to helping the child/adult mature in their faith. Don’t select someone just because they are nice or because they’re the only relative that hasn’t yet been selected for anything.

The *Code of Canon Law of the Catholic Church* clearly states what is required of a person to fulfill the role of a godparent or a confirmation sponsor.

**Canon 872.** Insofar as possible, a person to be baptized is to be given a sponsor who assists an adult in Christian initiation or together with the parents presents an infant for baptism. A sponsor also helps the baptized person to lead a Christian life in keeping with baptism and to fulfill faithfully the obligations inherent in it.

**Canon 873.** There is to be only one male sponsor or one female sponsor or one of each.

**Canon 874.** §1. To be permitted to take on the function of sponsor a person must:

1. be designated by the one to be baptized, by the parents or the person who takes their place, or in their absence by the pastor or minister and have the aptitude and intention of fulfilling this function;
2. have completed the sixteenth year of age, unless the diocesan bishop has established another age, or the pastor or minister has granted an exception for a just cause;
3. be a Catholic who has been confirmed and has already received the most holy sacrament of the Eucharist and who leads a life of faith in keeping with the function to be taken on;
4. not be bound by any canonical penalty legitimately imposed or declared;
5. not be the father or mother of the one to be baptized.

§2. A baptized person who belongs to a non-Catholic ecclesial community is not to participate except together with a Catholic sponsor and then only as a witness of the baptism.

**Catholics who intend to be godparents or sponsors must be active in the practice of their faith, be in full communion with the Church and, if married, be in a valid Catholic marriage.**