



St. Charles Borromeo

BAPTISMAL PREPARATION FOR PARENTS AND GODPARENTS



Introduction:

Welcome to this time of preparation for the Sacrament of Baptism. If this is the first time that you have attended a preparation session for Baptism, we Welcome You and hope the following information will make your child's Baptism a meaningful event.

Before you look into the Baptismal preparation information, we want to share a little about our parish. Whether you are new to the parish or a long-time member, belonging to a parish has an impact on you, your children, and your family as a whole.

The Catholic hymn "All Are Welcome" by Paul Tate and Marty Haugen speaks of a place where all are welcome; it starts with...Let us build a house where love can dwell, and all can safely live. A place where saints and children tell how hearts learn to forgive. The chorus is "All are welcome, all are welcome, all are welcome in this place."

Later in the hymn it adds...Let us build a house where hands will reach beyond the wood and stone. To health and strength, serve and teach and live the word they've known.

This has always been a powerful hymn to many, and as you are the first teachers of the faith, it identifies the parish as a great resource to help your child grow in their faith at an early age.

We hope that you will be engaged by our presentations, and we thank you in advance for your participation in our discourse. May this preparation make your child's baptism a truly joyful and spirit-filled event.

The St. Charles Borromeo Baptismal Preparation Team

Pastor- Rev. Daniel E. Kirk

Parish Administrator- Mrs. Janet Ridgway – 856-829-3322

Baptismal Coordinator- Mrs. Betsy Kearney

Baptismal Hospitality Team Members

- Marge Gaffney
- Sarah Rossi
- Victoria Interra

Origin And Key Historical Aspects Of Baptism

The USCCB (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops) teaches that Baptism's history originates with Jesus' own baptism by John the Baptist, establishing it as the pathway for entry into Christian life, symbolizing death to sin and rebirth in Christ, with roots in Old Testament foreshadowing (creation, Red Sea) and developing into the Church's central sacrament for initiation, grace, and community membership through the Trinitarian formula. The ritual evolved from Jewish customs, gaining fuller meaning through Christ's command, and today serves as the foundation of Christian identity and salvation, incorporating elements such as the Creed and communal celebration.

Origins in Scripture & Jesus:

- Jesus' Example: Jesus' submission to John the Baptist's baptism showed His solidarity with humanity, cleansing the waters for His own ministry.
- Great Commission: Jesus instituted Baptism as a sacrament when he commanded his disciples to "make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19).

Jewish Roots & Christian Development:

- Prefigured in Old Testament: The Church sees Baptism prefigured in events like creation (Spirit over water), Noah's Ark, the crossing of the Red Sea (liberation), and the Jordan River (entering the Promised Land).
- From Repentance to Grace: While John's baptism was for repentance, Christ's Baptism gives inward grace, making the person a new creation, adopted by God, and a temple of the Holy Spirit.

Key Historical Aspects:

- Initiation into the Church: From the Apostles' time, Baptism was the corporate rite for entering the Christian community, often a communal event during Lent, leading to the Creed's development.
- Theological Meaning: It signifies dying to sin (Original and actual) and rising to new life in Christ, receiving sanctifying grace, and becoming a member of Christ's Body, as explained in the *United States Catholic Catechism for Adults*.

Biblical Origins and Institution

- **Foundation in Christ:** The USCCB teaches that Jesus Christ is the origin and foundation of Christian Baptism. Although he was without sin and did not need purification, Jesus submitted to the baptism of John the Baptist to show solidarity with humanity and to "cleanse the waters".
- **Distinction from John's Baptism:** While John the Baptist offered a "baptism of repentance" (an outward ritual), the Baptism instituted by Christ conveys inward grace through the Holy Spirit, reviving the soul and incorporating the person into the Body of Christ.

Historical Development

- **Early Church Practices:** In the era of the Apostles and the Early Church Fathers, Baptism was a corporate event rather than a private ceremony. By the fourth century, the development of the Lenten fast was tied to the final instruction of catechumens, with their Baptism occurring during the Paschal Vigil.
- **Infant Baptism:** Since the earliest times, the Church has administered Baptism to children. This practice reflects the belief that Baptism is a free gift of God's grace that does not depend on human merit.
- **Evolution of the Rite:** Early initiation was often a long process of preparation. Over centuries, this was simplified into the current rites, though the Second Vatican Council restored the Catechumenate (the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults or OCIA) to emphasize the journey of faith.

Modern Historical Milestones

- **Mutual Recognition (2010):** A significant historical step for the USCCB was the 2010 ratification of the Common Agreement on Mutual Recognition of Baptism with four Reformed ecclesial communities (including the Presbyterian Church-USA and the United Church of Christ). This agreement confirmed that any Baptism performed with flowing water and the Trinitarian formula ("in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit") is considered valid by all signatories.



The Sacrament of Baptism

What is a Sacrament? A Sacrament is an outward sign instituted by Christ to give grace.

Holy Baptism is the basis of the whole Christian life, the gateway to life in the Spirit and the door which gives access to the other sacraments. Through Baptism we are freed from sin and reborn as sons of God: we become members of Christ, are incorporated into the Church and made sharers in her mission: *“Baptism is the sacrament of regeneration through water and in the word.”* CCC 1213

What is Baptism?

Baptism is the beginning. The person who is plunged into the baptismal font emerges from the waters as a “new Creation” with a new life. This new life is the Holy Spirit making a home in us and giving us the power to know God and fulfill his plan for our lives.

Baptism confers the character of Christ; it gives that baptized person a share in Christ’s life and entrance into his faith community. That is why we must be baptized before we can celebrate any other sacraments.

Gestures and Words of Baptism:

- The ***sign of the cross*** marks the imprint of Christ, the one who is going to belong to him, and signifies the grace of the redemption Christ won for us by his cross.
- The proclamation of the ***Word of God***- enlightens the candidates and the assembly with the revealed truth and elicits the response of faith.
- ***Exorcism*** is pronounced over the child to signify the liberation from sin and from the instigator, the devil.
- Baptismal ***water***-
- Anointing with ***sacred chrism***- signifies the Gift of the Holy Spirit to the newly baptized who has become a Christian, that is, one “anointed” by the Holy Spirit, incorporated into Christ who is anointed priest, prophet, and king.
- The white garment is an outward sign of the Child’s Christian dignity.
- The candle- lit from the Easter candle- signifies that your child has been enlightened by Christ so they may always walk in the light.
- Prayer over ears and mouth- for your child to hear God’s word and to proclaim his faith.

Taken from the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

Getting Started

As you begin this grace-filled time, preparation is required along the way! Expectant parents may begin to plan well in advance so that once your child is born, you are prepared for this special day.

Please register with St. Charles Borromeo if you have not done so by contacting the Parish Office – 856-829-3322.

Baptismal preparation for parents of infants & children under the age of 7:

- Read the requirements in this packet carefully.
- Register today in the parish and include all members of your household.
- Contact the parish office to set your date for the Baptismal.
- Choose Godparents. *See below for more information.*
- Attend our Baptismal class online.

Two weeks before the Baptism:

ALL the following must be delivered to the parish office no later than two weeks prior to the date:

- ✓ Baptismal registration form.
- ✓ A photocopy of the child's birth record with full names for Baptismal documentation purposes.
- ✓ Godparent Letter of Eligibility.

For children in third – sixth grades:

If you would like more information on Baptism (and Communion) for your child (in grades 3-6), please contact Michelle Dore', Director of Religious Education at St. Charles Borromeo by email mdore@pcscb.com or phone 856-829-9119.

When a child has NOT been baptized as an infant, they will need to attend Sacramental preparation classes on Wednesday afternoons starting in September and continuing through May from 4:15-5:25 pm.

Parents of children entering first grade who have not yet been baptized should contact the parish office to schedule a Baptismal date before the school year begins.

For Teenagers and Adults who are interested in Baptism (Communion & Confirmation) and finding out more about the Catholic Faith, contact OCIA (Steve Miller at 856-780-0434 or Ironon12@gmail.com)

Eligibility of the Godparent

If you are visiting us today because you have been asked to be a Godparent, or are considering Godparents for your child, congratulations!

To be a Godparent, the person must*...

1. Must be at least 16 years old.
2. You are fully initiated, practicing Catholic (by having received all of the Sacraments- Baptism, Holy Communion, Confirmation,* and Marriage – in the Catholic Church.
3. You are an established member of a parish by actively participating in Sunday Mass for at least six months since registering, with regular reception of the sacraments (Reconciliation/Holy Eucharist).
4. You are living in conformity with church teachings in married life (Sacramentally married/ not cohabitating if single; not remarried)
5. Must obtain a Letter of Eligibility from Godparent's church

There should be two Catholic Godparents- one man & one woman.

However, the following are acceptable:

- Only one Catholic Godparent* OR
- Two persons- One Catholic Godparent*, & One Christian Witness**

**A non-baptized or non-Christian person cannot stand as a Christian Witness.

If you are an “eligible” Catholic, please contact the church you are currently registered with or were most recently registered with to obtain a Letter of Eligibility.

***A person unable to stand as Godparent or Sponsor who may not request a letter is

- Under the age of 16.
- Cohabitating or civilly married.
- Not fully initiated (did not make all of the Sacraments of Baptism, Holy Communion, Confirmation in the Catholic Church)
- No longer practicing their Catholic Faith as an active member of a Catholic parish community.
- A person who was fully initiated into the Roman Catholic Church who now belongs to a Christian church or other belief.



Role of the Godparent

The Godparent should be a person “who leads a life of faith in keeping with the function to be taken on” or, as the Catechism of the Catholic Church states, the Godparents “must be firm believers.”

A firm believer is someone who has faith and trust in God, is a disciple of Jesus, is a member of the Church, belongs to a parish, prays regularly, attends Mass, is a frequent recipient of the Sacraments, attempts to conform his or her life to the Gospel, is growing in virtue, gives good example, and is a loving, generous and caring person. The Godparents' faith need not be perfect, but it must be a priority and active.

Next, according to the Catechism, the Godparents must be “able and ready to help the newly baptized...on the road of Christian life.” “Able and ready” means someone who is eager to serve, who will joyfully embrace the role, and who can be available to have regular contact with the child. “Help” is offered to facilitate growth in the Catholic faith, and it can be given in a wide variety of ways:

- To pray with their godchild.
- Pray for their godchild.
- Teach prayers.
- Take their godchild to Church.
- Help their godchild prepare for other Sacraments.
- Be present for the celebrations of future Sacraments- possibly serve as the Confirmation sponsor.
- Be a role model.
- Offer spiritual support and encouragement.
- Model the Works of Mercy with their godchild.
- Extend special kindnesses to their godchild.



A Walk Through the Rite of Baptism

- ***Rite of Receiving the Child***
 - The celebrant greets those present, especially the parents who received their gift from God, and asks them what name they have given their child.
- ***Sacred Celebration of the Word of God***
 - The celebrant will read one or two Sacred Readings and will give a homily.
- ***Prayer of the Faithful***
 - Prayer intentions that ask God to bless and protect the newly baptized child, their parents, godparents, and the broader community.
 - Response is – Lord, we ask you, hear our prayer.
- ***Prayer of Exorcism and Anointing before Baptism***
 - The Prayer of Exorcism asks God to free the candidate from original sin, evil influences, and spiritual darkness, and to prepare them to receive the Holy Spirit and publicly profess their faith.
 - The child will be anointed with the Oil of Catechumens.
- ***Blessing of the Water***
 - The celebrant will bless the water in the Baptismal font.
- ***Renunciation of Sin and Profession of Faith***
 - Parents and godparents publicly reject evil and declare their commitment to follow Jesus Christ and the teachings of His Church.
- ***Reception of Baptism***
 - The celebrant will invite the parents, the child, and the godparents to come to the Baptismal font, and the Blessed Water will be poured over the child's head three times for the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- ***Anointing with Chrism***
 - The celebrant will anoint the child with Sacred Chrism to remind the child they are a member of Christ, Priest, Prophet and King.
- ***Clothing with a white garment***
 - The child is clothed with a white garment as a sign of their Christian dignity.
- ***Reception of the candle***
 - The father or godfather will light a candle from the Baptismal candle.
 - The receiving of light signifies how the child may always “walk as a child of the light and persevering in the faith of the Lord.”
- ***Ephphatha***
 - The celebrant touches the ears and mouth of the child so they may hear and speak the word of the Lord.
- ***The Lord's Prayer and final Blessing***
 - Everyone will recite the Lord's Prayer
 - The celebrant will give the final blessings to all who attended.

Things To Know

On the day of your child's Baptism:

- You are invited to attend the 10:30 am Mass with your child and family.
- Arrival time at church: 11:45 am.
- Check in with the Baptismal Hospitality Team Member.
- Family and friends are encouraged to attend your child's baptism, the first Sacrament of Initiation.
- Please use the main front church doors.
- The service starts at 12:00 pm.
- Please do not bring food and/or drinks into church.

Facilities

- There is a restroom in the church gathering space.
- Our church is handicapped accessible through the main front doors.
- There is wheelchair seating on the front left and right side of the church that is visible for the service.

Parking

- Please use the large parking lot.
- Handicapped parking spots are available at the front of the church, accessible from the main church doors.



Catholic Prayers

SIGN OF THE CROSS

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father who art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. Amen

HAIL MARY

Hail Mary, full of grace, the LORD is with thee. Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

GRACE AT MEALTIME

Bless us, O Lord, and these thy gifts, which we are about to receive, through thy bounty, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

GLORY BE

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

ACT OF CONTRITION

O My God, I am sorry for my sins; in choosing to sin and failing to do good, I have sinned against You and Your Church. I firmly intend, with the help of Your Son, to make up for my sins and to love as I should. Amen.



Baptismal Prep Class Questions

➤ **Question before video-**

Why is Baptism important to you as a parent?

➤ **Questions asked after the video-**

1. What touched your heart during the video?
2. What was something new you learned about the Sacrament of Baptism from this video?
3. What are challenges your child could face with their faith?
4. Do you think your answer to “Why is Baptism important to you as a parent?” changed after watching the video? If so, how?

➤ **Discussion question-**

Are there traditions associated with your faith you would like to pass on to your child?

What Comes After Baptism?

- Go to church as a family.
 - Mass schedule at St. Charles Borromeo
 - Saturday evenings at 5 pm.
 - Sunday morning at 8:30 am & 10:30 am.
 - Children's Liturgy is during the 8:30 am Mass for students in grades K-5.
- Take a few minutes to say grace at family mealtimes.
- Make prayer a regular part of daily life.
- Learn more about the Catholic faith.
- Help with your child's faith.
 - Enroll your child at St. Charles Borromeo for Pre-School through 8th grade.
 - Enroll your child in Religious Ed at St. Charles Borromeo if they are attending public school- Kindergarten through 8th grade.

