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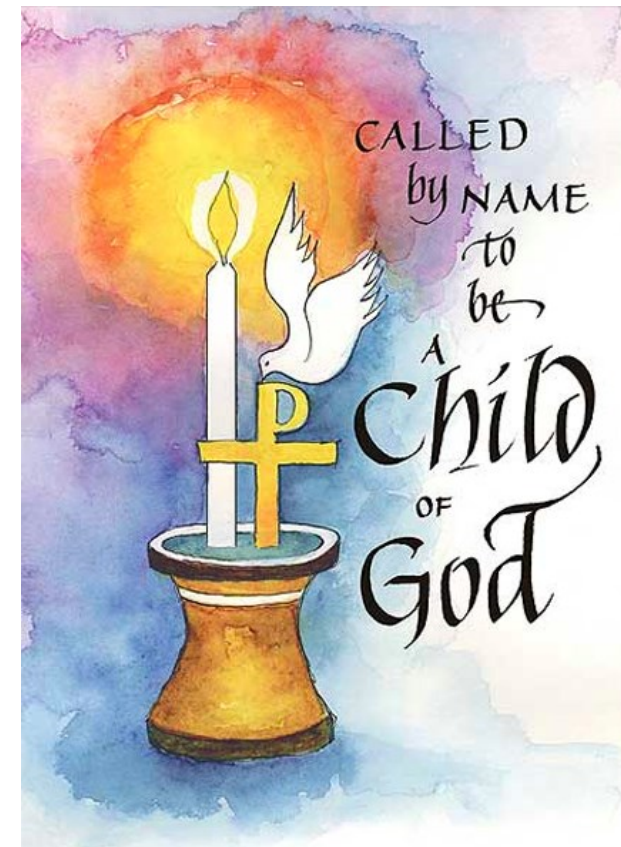
**Notes:**



# My Infant Baptism Guide

**St Francis  
&  
St Joseph  
Churches**

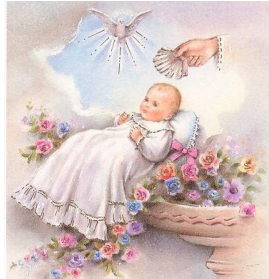
**Hazel Green  
WI**



**What really is Baptism?** The Catechism of the Catholic Church # 1213

*“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 in the word.”*

**Who can receive this Sacrament?** CCC # 1246 *“Every person not yet baptized and only such a person is able to be baptized.”* So if you have already been baptized in another Christian faith that has used the Trinitarian formula, *“I baptize you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”* – then it is a valid Baptism and no other Baptism is needed – it is God who marks your soul with His seal – so, if He marked you once, there is no need to have Him do it again; you cannot be re-baptized.



**A short history:** Adam and Eve talked with God every afternoon (Gen 2:8), it was their time to communicate with God. But when they sinned they hid themselves from God – they were afraid to see Him or to talk with Him. Once expelled from the Garden, God would not come down from heaven any longer to talk with His people. It was only through the prophets that God communicated His wishes to mankind (i.e.: Moses, Joshua, Elijah, Isaiah, the Judges...) and He guided the Israelites thus. But the people did not respond to the call of God’s servants – some they beat, others they killed (Mk 12:5).

**In the fullness of time,** it was God’s plan to send His Son to us to open the channels of communication (divine grace). When Christ lived on earth, He always communicated with His Father: He was often seen praying (Mt 14:23, Mk 1:35, Jn 6:15...); in the Garden of Gethsemane He calls upon His Father for help (Lk 22:41-44) and He was even heard praying on the cross (Lk 23:46). He was one with His Father (Jn 10:30; 14:10); He was always in the Father’s presence; He did what the Father asked Him to do (Lk 2:49). There was a total communication between the Father and Son in the power of the Holy Spirit.

**Now here is a new idea:** one might think, if only I could become one with Jesus, I would also be able to communicate with God the Father. Wouldn’t that be nice? Of course it would and this is the reason why Jesus came to us. We have only to find a way to become one with Jesus as He is one with His Father. Take a guess,

- We need an UPDATED copy of your Baptismal certificate (call the Church of your Baptism and request a certificate).
- We need a copy of the First Communion and Confirmation certificate (should be noted on the back of the updated baptismal certificate - if not, supply a separate copy of this certificates).
- If married, marriage certificate from Church.
- If single, must truly be living a single life!

I ♥  
my  
godparents

### Who can be a Godparent?

- Only Practicing Catholics can be godparents/sponsors.
- One sponsor, male or female, is sufficient; but there may be two, one of each sex.
- A Godparent must be no less than sixteen years of age.
- Be a catholic who has been confirmed and has received the holy Eucharist, and who lives a life of faith which befits the role to be undertaken.
- Be not excommunicated by the Church.
- If married, they must be married by the Catholic Church and must bring a copy of their Church marriage certificate.
- Father or the mother of the child cannot be godparents.

✠✠✠  
I BELIEVE.  
~JOHN 3:16

**Christian Witness:** A baptized person who belongs to a non-Catholic ecclesial community may be admitted only in company with a catholic sponsor, and then simply as a Christian witness to the Baptism. They need to supply a Baptismal certificate.

**Sacrament of Reconciliation** As part of the preparation for their Baptism, we encourage Catholics to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation prior to this occasion; see schedule for Confessions in the bulletin and/ or arrange a meeting with the priest.

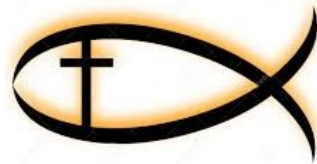
**Above all, pray!** Baptism is an act of worship. As such, it is a time to offer praise and thanks to God for His gifts, and to seek His continued blessings and help in your lives. In particular we thank God for the gift of new life and pray to the Lord to bless this bundle of joy now and always. Prayer and sacrifice will be needed for the rest of your lives for the physical and spiritual well being of your child (ren).

the Sacrament of Marriage - even if not living together. The father or mother of the child cannot be a godparent (Code 874).

**The godparents role** is to present, along with the parents, the infant candidate, and also to devote himself/herself in the education of the child in such a manner that the baptized child might live a Christian life (Code 872). The Godparent has to attend classes as well - either here in our parish, or at their own parish. If they attended classes at their own parish, they must then bring a letter, stating that he/ she attended classes in their parish, is in good standing with the Church and has permission from the pastor to be a godparent). Only one godparent is needed. But in case if two godparents are chosen, they have to be one male and one female (Code 873).



**Non-Catholic Christians** (a member of a non-Catholic community but baptized), who wish to be witnesses to the Baptism are not to be admitted except with a Catholic godparent - and then only as a witness and not as godparent; the non-Catholic must also practice his/her Christian faith (Code 874 § 2). Non-Christians are not eligible for the role as a godparent or as a witness to a Catholic Baptism.



Christian witnesses shall bring a copy of their baptismal certificate.

**Steps to get your baby Baptized:** Baptism Classes: To have your child baptized, you must be a registered parishioner of one of our Parishes. If you are not registered, please do so as soon as possible. Baptism classes should be attended even before the child is born.

**Who needs to attend Baptism Classes?** - Parents and Godparents. If Godparents live in another parish, they can attend classes in their own parish and bring a letter stating that they have attended classes there.

**Parents:** We need:

- The Child's birth certificate or hospital record.
- Parents, if married, supply a copy of your Church marriage certificate.

**Godparents:** They are to help the parents of the child in their Christian duties; also be faith role models to their godchild.

what could this be? Yes - it is Baptism! Through Baptism we become one with God – He comes to live within us – all three Persons of the Most Holy Trinity. The only difference between us and Jesus is that we are adopted and He is the natural and only begotten Son of the Father. Through Baptism we become filled with sanctifying grace and from that moment on we are able to communicate with our heavenly Father. Therefore we need to talk with Him, to find out what He has planned for us to accomplish in this world.

**But there is some fine print**, if you will, which we need to read – what is it? Through Baptism we ought to take on the mind of God and start to act God-like as well. As God gives the gift of Himself, we ought to give ourselves to others. We are now sent into the world to connect with all peoples whom we meet; it is actually your Father who sends people into your path so that they might encounter Christ who is now alive in you! The reason? - so that we all become one in Christ Jesus our Lord, and through Him, one with our heavenly Father.

**Baptism is a Commandment**  
Matthew 2:18-20  
Acts 10:47-48

**Baptism makes us one with Christ in His death and resurrection**  
Rom 6:3-4

**Baptism has a communal aspect** – it enriches the faith community with new brothers and sisters. For this reason there cannot be a “private” Baptism – there is NO such thing. Out of necessity we often have a whole bunch of Baptisms on a Sunday afternoon; but ordinarily, it ought to be celebrated with the whole faith community present – and it should be done during Mass. Actually, Baptism is the first step towards Holy Communion, which is nothing but total oneness with Christ even in His Body and Blood! This is the source and summit of our joy as Catholics – physical and spiritual communion with God – even here on earth! Who would want to miss that? – only a fool!!!

Through Baptism we are able to “know” our Father and we receive the gifts of FAITH, HOPE and CHARITY in seed-form. An un-baptized person can understand with his mind some simple facts about our faith – but he does not have the assurance of faith, which we have received. This is a gift, as are the Gifts of the Holy Spirit. And because we have received these gifts, we are now equipped to lead others to Christ – this is a mandate, not just a suggestion (Mt 28:18-20). Each Christian has to follow Christ's mandate and spread the Gospel in word and in deed.

At Baptism there occurs also the **taking away of Original Sin**. What sin can a

baby have committed you may ask? It is not a personal sin that we are talking about here – it is the sin of our First Parents. God gave us a lot of gifts when He created us. But because Adam & Eve could not “handle” all these gifts, they sinned and chose their own way, God took a few gifts away. The result is: Original Sin, which is a lack of the fullness of our original gifts; what happened:

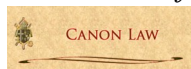


- ◇ our intellect was darkened;
- ◇ our will was weakened;
- ◇ suffering and death entered the world.

**Through the gift of Baptism we receive God’s gifts again and are able to:**

- ◇ “know” things of God as well as: we can come to study and understand God’s creation and God’s will for creation;
- ◇ our will to love God is strengthened;
- ◇ and suffering and death have now a purpose – it becomes salvific (= it has the power to bring salvation).

**These are very special gifts** – so there is no reason to delay the Baptism. Actually, baptismal classes should be taken while mom still carries the child within her womb, so that when baby arrives, it can be baptized ASAP – which parent would knowingly withhold such heavenly gifts from another human being, especially the fruit of their love - their baby? That would be cruel as well as being disobedient towards our Father. Christ's mandate is still in our minds “*Go and make disciples of all nations, baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit*” - and this mission starts right in our own family.



**Directives regarding the Baptism of Infants** (Code of Canon Law) Baptism is the gateway to all the other Sacraments. Through Baptism men are freed from sins, reborn as children of God, configured to Christ by an indelible character, and incorporated within the Church (Code of Canon Law 849). To have a child baptized, there is a need to prepare the parents who seek Baptism for their infant through Baptism classes (Canon 851 § 2). Godparents will also have to attend Baptism classes. If a godparent is from another parish and has not attended our classes, he/she will have to attend classes in their respective parishes and bring a letter from that parish, stating that he/she is a registered practicing parishion-



er there, (s)he attended classes there and is allowed to be a godparent. The letter has to be submitted in advance.

**Choosing a name for the child:** parents and godparents should choose one that is not alien to a Christian sense; pastors are to see to it that a proper name be given (Canon 855). If this cannot be avoided, at least one name should be chosen that bears a Christian resemblance (like a middle name). Choosing a saint's name assures that your child has an intercessor in heaven.



you named me  
WHAT!?

**Baptism should be administered on Sundays**, if possible during Easter, and the ordinary place is a Church or Chapel (Codes 856, 857). Baptism is not a “private affair,” rather it is a communal celebration. Individual Baptisms are allowed only in an emergency.

**The ordinary minister** is a bishop, priest or deacon, but in an emergency (and only in an emergency) any person with the right intention can baptize another person (Code 861, 738 § 2). In case of such a baptism, that person who has received this special baptism, will need to have “the form” of this baptism supplied by the Church’s minister as soon as possible.

**Parents** are reminded that it is their obligation to see to it that their infants are baptized within the first weeks; they should seek instruction even before the birth of their child (Code 867).

**To have the child admitted to Baptism**, the parents - at least one of them has to give consent; there



must also be hope that the child is brought up in the Catholic religion - **if such a hope is lacking, the Baptism is to be postponed indefinitely**. The parents must have a sincere intention in raising the child in a Catholic environment (Code 868). Godparents must be designated by the parents (or the child’s legal guardian), have completed their 16th year of age, be themselves baptized, be confirmed and received first Holy Communion. Godparents must be free from canonical impediments and live a life worthy of a godparent. If the godparent is married, he/she must be married in the Church. A person who lives with a live-in partner is not suitable for this task; neither is a person who has intimate relations outside