

Baptism of Infants at St. Pius X

When Should I Have My Baby Baptized?

The Church teaches that all babies born into Catholic families should be baptized as soon as possible after birth (Canon 867). This is because of Christ's teaching on the fundamental importance of baptism. If there is any danger of death the baby must be baptized immediately, and anyone can baptize.

Registration

If you are not currently registered and have decided to commit to the ongoing support of the St. Pius X parish community and its activities, please call the church office to make an appointment to meet with one of the priests to register. Please note that having received Sacraments in the parish (Baptism, First Holy Communion, Confirmation, and/or Holy Matrimony) or having parents who are still registered members of the parish does not necessarily mean that you are registered yourselves. Each registered individual or family has met with one of the priests on staff and has filled out a parish census card. Active, registered parishioners are the building blocks – the *living stones*, as St. Paul says – of our parish. We count on them for their presence at Mass every Sunday and on Holy Days of obligation, for their involvement and participation in the different organizations, committees, and ministries sponsored by the parish, and for their financial support of our parish family and of the larger community.



Baptism

Parents who wish to have their child baptized here at St. Pius X must be registered and active parishioners (see *Registration* above). Before making arrangements for a reception, party, etc., please make sure the date you are considering having your child baptized is available. With a few exceptions (e.g. the season of Lent), the Sacrament of Baptism is celebrated on the **second and fourth Sunday of the month at 1:30 p.m.** In order to give more personal attention to each family and child, we try not to have more than 4 or 5 children baptized on any given Sunday. Please note that *the celebration of the Sacrament of Baptism does not fulfill one's obligation to attend Mass on Sunday*. You, your family, your child's godparents, and your guests are all invited and encouraged to attend the Noon Mass on the day of the baptism. Attending Mass together is a great way to strengthen a family's bonds with one another, with your child, and with the Universal Church, which rejoices with you on the day your child is baptized and becomes a member of the Body of Christ. It is also an outward sign of the commitment that you as parents are making on behalf of your child. On a practical note, there is plenty of time between the Noon Mass and the Baptism at 1:30pm to gather with family or friends, feed the baby at the last minute, and, if necessary, change a diaper! (There is a "baby changing" station downstairs should the need arise.)

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ON HEARING THIS, THEY WERE
BAPTIZED IN THE NAME OF
THE LORD JESUS.

ACTS 19:5. NRSV

Baptism is only the beginning of your child's life of faith in the Church. As parents you are promising in the sight of God to teach and to pass on the Catholic faith to your son or daughter. Long before your child is aware of what's going on at Mass or ever sets foot in a faith formation classroom, you are teaching him or her not only what to believe as a Catholic but also how to live out and practice the Faith. Thank you for taking seriously the obligation that is yours as parents to bring your children to Mass every week, to share with them your faith journey, and to teach and lead by your good example. Please know that *the parish community is here to help you carry out your duties and responsibilities as Christian parents.*

At the beginning of every month (typically the first Tuesday at 7 p.m.), there is a **Baptismal Preparation Session** that lasts for about an hour and is conducted by the priest who will be celebrating the Sacrament of Baptism and a married couple from the parish. The purpose of the preparation session is to review with you the meaning and significance of Baptism as well as to cover more practical matters pertaining to the actual ceremony. It is also a wonderful opportunity to meet other parents and to share your experiences with each other. Though not required, sponsors (godparents) are also invited and encouraged to attend with the parents in order to deepen their understanding and appreciation of their own role as godparents.

Sponsors for Baptism (Godparents)

Sponsors for baptism, or godparents, also have a special role to play in supporting parents in their efforts to pass on the Faith to their children and raise them as good Catholic Christians. To this end, the Church requires that sponsors for baptism be men and women of faith who are active and practicing Catholics and whom you consider to be good role models in the Faith. In accordance with the Code of Canon Law, "one godparent, male or female, is sufficient; but there may be two, one of each sex" (c. 873). Additionally, the **prospective godparent must meet the following criteria** (c. 874):

1. Be appointed by the parents, be suitable for this role, and *have the intention of fulfilling it.*
2. Not be the father or mother of the child.
3. Be at least 16 years of age.
4. Be a Catholic who has been *confirmed* and received the *Eucharist* and who *lives a life of faith* befitting the role to be undertaken.
5. If married, their marriage must be a *sacramental* one (i.e. they were married in a Catholic church by a priest or deacon, or they later had their marriage convalidated, or "blessed," by the Church). It logically follows from this that if they are unmarried, then they are not co-habiting with a boyfriend or girlfriend.

Additionally, as long as there is one person who meets the above criteria, a baptized non-Catholic Christian may serve as a Christian witness. However, a Catholic who is unable to obtain a sponsor letter/certificate is *not* eligible to serve as a Christian witness.

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Parents sometimes would like to choose people as godparents for their child simply because they are “good friends” or “nice people” or “very spiritual.” In and of themselves, however, such reasons are insufficient *due to the very specific and particular role of the godparent*, which is to be a good Christian role model and to help parents to bring up their child in the Catholic Faith. To avoid hurt feelings, anger, embarrassment, awkwardness, etc., please make sure beforehand that your intended godparents meet the above requirements and are able to fulfill the role you are asking them to take on for the sake of your child.

Those who have been asked to be sponsors (godparents) must provide a letter or sponsor certificate *from the parish where they are currently registered and actively participating in the sacramental and spiritual life of the Church attesting to the fact that they meet all of the requirements for godparents*. Letters/sponsor certificates, together with a copy of the child’s birth certificate, should be received in the parish office by the time of the scheduled baptism preparation class. Incomplete paperwork will result in postponement of the Baptism.



For Further Information

Contact the Friary Office at 860-347-4441 or office@saintpius.org