

# St. John the Baptist Catholic Church

## The Importance of Baptism

Congratulations! Whether you are an adult studying for your own Baptism or you are preparing for the Baptism of your child, you take an extremely important step in you and your family's spiritual life. Baptism is necessary for salvation. Our Lord Jesus Christ instituted Baptism as the means of removing original sin from our souls, of being born again and incorporated into His Mystical Body, and of becoming members of His Church. There is nothing else more important for you right now than to ensure that you and your family members are baptized.

## What Are the Requirements for Catholic Baptisms?

Baptism is available for every last human being on earth. Our Lord desires the salvation of all mankind and He established Baptism as the means for our salvation. As such, it is necessary for salvation. In order to ensure that everyone who desires Baptism understands its importance, there are certain requirements for Baptisms.

## What Are the Requirements for Infant Baptisms?

1. Infant baptism is for children from birth and before their 7th birthday.
2. All children who are baptized must have at least one godparent. See below for more information
3. The parents must intend to raise the child in the Catholic Faith
4. Infants must be generally baptized in the parish that at least one of their parent's attend. For Baptisms at a different church, shrine, or oratory, a permission letter from your pastor is needed
5. The child's birth certificate is required for presentation to the parish
6. The parent's marriage certificate should be presented to the parish. However, even for parents married outside of the Church, Baptism is not to be denied to the infant. If you are currently married outside of the Church, this is an ideal time to have your marriage blessed to rectify this. Contact the office and make an appointment with the priest.
7. Each parent must also attend a Baptism class offered by the parish they attend or at St. John the Baptist.

## What Are the Requirements for Non-Infant Child Baptisms?

Children who have reached the age of 7 years, can no longer be baptized as infants. The Rite of Baptism is the same for everyone, but the process differs slightly. These children, since they have the knowledge of right and wrong, must generally take an [OCIC \(Order of Christian Initiation of Children\)](#) class to understand what the Church teaches.

## What Are the Requirements to Serve As A Godparent?

All baptisms (infants, older children, or adults) require a godparent. Being a godparent is both a great honor and a serious responsibility. For that reason, the Church has put several laws in place regarding who may rightfully serve as a godparent.

1. Godparents must be baptized, have attained the use of reason, and have the intention of fulfilling their role as a godfather or a godmother.
2. A godparent must be a confirmed Catholic and have received their First Holy Communion

3. A godparent must be Catholic. A godparent may not be protestant or any other denomination than Catholic. A person who is not a baptized Catholic must first convert to Catholicism through the [Order of Christian Initiation for Adults](#) in order to become Catholic.
4. A godparent must be actively practicing the Catholic Faith. What does that mean? A godparent must live a life in conformity with the teachings of the Church including weekly attendance at Mass, rejection of artificial contraception and abortion, and a godparent must not support politicians who promote and support abortion, et cetera.
5. Godparents cannot be the father, mother, or spouse of the person to be baptized.
6. The godparent must, either in person or through proxy, physically hold or touch the one baptized, or receive him immediately after baptism from the sacred font or from the hands of the minister.
7. The godparent must be at least sixteen years of age and have the sacraments of initiation.
8. The godparent must know the rudiments of the faith. They must intend to help teach the godchild the Catholic Faith.
9. The godparent must not be married outside of the Church, unless they have since had their marriage recognized in the Church. However, marriage is not a requirement. A single Catholic may serve as a godparent, assuming all other requirements here are met, of course.
10. The godparent must attend a Baptism Class offered by their parish or at St. John the Baptist. A certificate of completion for the class at the other parish must be presented.

## How Many Godparents Are Required?

Only one godparent is required. Two godparents are permitted but if you choose two, they must be of the opposite sex with one serving as the godmother and one as the godfather. They do not have to be married to each other.

## Do Godparents Have to Be Catholic?

Yes. While it is not possible for a non-Catholic to serve as a godparent, a non-Catholic who is a baptized Christian in a protestant denomination may serve as a Christian witness to the Baptism, but the godparent to the Baptism must be Catholic and meet the above requirements since a godparent is above all responsible for the spiritual upbringing of the child. A non-Catholic could not fulfill this requirement. A non-baptized person may not serve as a godparent or as a Christian witness.

## Do Godparents Have to Be Present At The Baptism?

Godparents are often from out-of-town. If the godparent is unable to be present on the day of the Baptism, he or she can be represented by proxy. A proxy can be a family member, a friend or a parishioner who will stand in for the official godparent on the day of the baptism. However, even in such cases, the actual godparent must still meet the above requirements including taking a godparent preparation class.

## Do Godparents Have to Take A Baptism Class?

Yes, any godparent must take a Baptism Class.

## What Are the Requirements for Catholic Adult Baptisms?

Adults who have not yet received the Sacrament of Baptism must go through instruction in the Catholic Faith in order to receive Baptism. This will often take the form of [OCIA \(The Order of Christian Initiation of Adults\)](#). These classes ordinarily begin around September of each year and end at the Easter Vigil when the adult is baptized, receives our Lord's true Body and Blood in Holy Communion, and receives the Sacrament of Confirmation.