

# Baptism Booklet - St. Benedict Church

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# Baptism Team Members



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BAPTISM ADMINISTRATOR

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# Pastor's Message to Parents



We are delighted that you are seeking Baptism for your child and we, your parish community, share in the joy of this celebration with you.

Baptism begins the initiation process into the fullness of the Catholic faith. It is an ancient Catholic rite that for many is almost an automatic reflex. Even parents whose practice of the faith is not strong will think of having their child baptized. Or grandparents will pressure parents to have their grandchild baptized.

Because readiness for Baptism is often assumed, we are in danger of taking it for granted or 'doing it' for social, cultural, or family reasons.

As pastor, I would like to reflect with you about the meaning of all this.

1. When you got married in the Catholic Church, you made a promise to raise as good Christians the children whom God will give you.
2. Now at the Baptism of your child, be it your first or your fourth, is a time of grace; and an ideal time for you to review and renew what you have already committed on the day of your own Baptism, what you have renewed on your Confirmation and what you have promised on the day of your Catholic marriage--to live your faith and to raise your children in that same faith.

I share these reflections with you, in part to challenge you, but even more because you and your child are important to God. Your child is eligible for baptism at this time because of you. I support and affirm you in your desire to pass on our faith to your child. St. Benedict pastoral staff is here to help you in this responsibility.

To assist you in the preparations of this joyful sacrament, please:

- *read through this booklet,*
- *complete the Baptism Registration Form and Parents' Reflecting Faith Questionnaire*
- *return the completed Registration Form and Reflection on Faith for Parent's Questionnaire to the parish office.*

After this material is received by the office, you will be contacted by myself or Deacon Peter to set up an appointment to discuss our faith and give details leading up to your child's baptism.

May this time of preparation for your child's baptism be a grace-filled time for you and your family -- a time of renewal, refreshment, and new life in the Spirit.

You are in my prayers.

Reverend Sean McEwen SDB  
Pastor

# Baptismal Catechesis

## What happens at Baptism?

**+A person (your child) dies with Christ to rise with Him as a new creation.**

*We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.* Romans 6:4

**+A baptized person is “born again.”**

*Jesus said, "Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again. Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit." Jn 3:3-5*

Water definitely has the ability to kill life. Water also has the ability to give life. In the baptismal waters the life of sin and evil is destroyed, and a new life of grace begins.

**+A baptized person (your child) becomes an adopted son or daughter of God Almighty.**

*In Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. If you belong to Christ, then you are heirs according to the promise.* Galatians 3:26-27;29

As parents, for sure, you want to give the very best to your child. **In baptizing your son or daughter you are giving him or her the very best.** He or she becomes an adopted son or daughter of God Almighty, and a co-heir to God's entire kingdom.

*If we are children, then we are heirs -- heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ.* Romans 8:17

Baptism is not a mere ceremony or family social event. **Baptism is a radical moment that changes the eternal destiny of the person (your child).**

*For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God.* Ephesians 2:8

## From our Catholic Catechism:

**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 and daughters of God; we become members of Christ, are incorporated into the Church, and made sharers in her mission.

## The Rite of Baptism

The rite of baptism can be divided into four parts:

1. The Welcome
2. Scripture readings and prayer
3. Baptism
4. Closing prayers and blessing

## The Welcome

The minister clarifies the reason you and others are gathered in the sacred place of the church. He welcomes you and your family and asks the name you have given to your child, a name that will be respected for all eternity. Then, the minister will ask for clarification from you: *What do you ask of God's Church for your child?* Your answer: "Baptism."

The minister will then speak to you about your duties and responsibilities as Catholic Christian parents in raising your child in the Catholic faith. You will be asked: *Are you able and willing to accept your responsibility?*

For the celebration to continue you must answer "yes."

We know that words can be cheap. "Shades of truth" are common. Almighty God, however, considers words important. He instructs: "Say 'yes' when you mean 'yes' and 'no' when you mean 'no.' Mt 5:37

God spoke the world and all life into existence. He said the word and it happened. God only speaks truth. He expects us, His created image, to only speak truth as well.

The Lord is not forcing you to say "yes" at your child's baptism. But, if you do, the Lord will hold you accountable for the "yes" you have spoken.

The "welcome" ends with a simple yet very meaningful gesture: the minister will trace a cross on your child's forehead, claiming your child *for Christ*. Then, the minister will invite you and the godparents to do the same.

## The Word of God (Scripture & Prayer)

The Catholic Church teaches that God is the author of Sacred Scripture. The Bible is the Word of God. All our Catholic teachings are based on the Word of God and cannot be in contradiction to God's revealed Word. By listening to God's Word, we receive instruction from God Himself.

After a selection from Holy Scripture is read, the minister will expound on it for your instruction with a short homily. Next, the Christian community will pray for the child about to be baptized, and for his or her family to be given the spiritual strength to faithfully hand on the Catholic faith to the child.

Finally, in a *prayer of exorcism*, the minister will pray to free your child of any evil spirit and influence, and cleanse your child from original sin, that your child may become a temple of God's glory.

The minister anoints the child on the breast, tracing a cross with the Oil of Catechumens, or the oil of salvation in Christ, and he prays for the child to have strength "in the power of Christ our Savior."

## Baptism

This central moment of the sacrament has several parts:

1. *Blessing of the water*
2. *Renewal of Baptism Promises*
3. *Profession of Faith*
4. *The Baptism, Anointing, Clothing, and Candle-lighting*

## Blessing of the Water



The celebrant asks that the power of the Holy Spirit fill the waters, so that the child may become a new creation, modeled on the death and resurrection of Jesus. In this prayer, we recall the waters of Creation, the Flood, the Red Sea, the Jordan, and the water which flowed from Christ's wounded side on the Cross. The baptismal font is the descendant of them all. It is the womb of the Church, from which your child is reborn in Christ and becomes a member of God's holy family. For these reasons, the font has a prominent place close to the altar and pulpit

## Renewal of Parents' Baptismal Promises

The priest asks you three times to reject Satan, his temptations, and evil. These are realities in the spiritual life and influence our world.

## The Profession of Faith

The minister asks you three questions. They are the heart of the Catholic faith:

1. *Do you believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth?*
2. *Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary, was crucified, died, and was buried, rose from the dead and is now seated at the right hand of the Father?*
3. *Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and life everlasting?*

These are the Baptismal vows which you renew for yourself and make for your child. The rejection of sin and the profession of the faith which you proclaim publicly. Answering these questions aloud before God and the church renews the promises once made for you in Baptism.

## The Baptism

You have brought your child to the place where the Catholic community worships. You have heard the Word of God. You have made a public declaration of faith.



Now, the minister asks:

*Is it your desire that your child be baptized in the faith of the Church which we have all professed with you?*

With your 'YES', the minister pours water over the child praying:

*I baptize you in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.*

Your child is now a child of God, born again in the life of the Spirit, and a member of the Body of Christ, the Church.

## The Anointing

The priest *anoints* the child with perfumed oil, called chrism. This same oil is used to anoint priests and even royalty. Jesus was anointed priest, prophet, king. A baptized person shares the same priesthood, prophetic, and royal ministry as Jesus Christ.

## The Clothing

The white garment worn at baptism signifies the baptized person's Christian dignity as being born again in the Spirit and being a member of the Body of Christ. The minister prays that the newly baptized person will keep his or her dignity unstained throughout his or her earthly life.

## Candle-lighting

The newly baptized person receives a candle which is lit from the Easter candle, or Paschal candle, or simply the Christ candle.

Jesus is the Light of the world. He is the light of truth, goodness, and grace. The baptized person is to bear the Light, who is Jesus, into the world, for truly this person is now a child of the Light.



## Closing Prayers and Blessing

The minister invites the assembly to pray the only prayer that Jesus taught His disciples, the Lord's Prayer. This prayer contains all we need to pray for, and in the order, we should pray for them. The Lord's prayer is our prayer as Christians, as sons and daughters of God.

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.



# How do I Choose a Baptism Sponsor?

Have you ever wondered why some people have very involved sponsors while others don't even know theirs? Perhaps part of the problem is that many sponsors were chosen for the wrong reasons, or because those same people don't really know what they're supposed to do!

Too often parents want to honour a special friend, repay a favour, or encourage a nonrelative to have a closer relationship with their child. While all of these motives are well intentioned, they are not ideal. If you want to be happy about your decision, consider the following.

## The Role of Sponsors

The sponsors play a special role not just in the celebration of Baptism, but especially in the faith-life of the child. It is an honour to be chosen as sponsor, but there is much more to the role than just being honoured. The sponsor is someone who acts as mentor, a "spiritual" parent, a "companion on the journey" of becoming a more committed and responsible Catholic Christian.

## Requirement in order to Fulfill Role of Sponsor

To be this mentor for your child in the best possible way, the sponsor needs to be:

1. at least sixteen (16) years of age
2. a confirmed Catholic
3. a practicing Catholic:
  - Registered in a Parish
  - Weekly participation in the Sunday Eucharist
  - Regular celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation
  - **MARITAL STATUS** in accordance with the Catholic Church
4. Ready to commit to accept the privileges and responsibilities of a sponsor
5. It is most preferable that there be **TWO** sponsors: one man and one woman and that they both be practicing ROMAN CATHOLICS. (Canon 873)
6. The sponsor must not be the father or mother of the one to be baptized since the parents already have a privileged role in raising the child in the faith.
7. Though possible, grandparents ought not be a sponsor, for they already have a role in the child's faith upbringing as a grandparent.

The role is an important one to be taken seriously. Take your time to make this choice in a meaningful way.



## Christian Witness

1. The Christian Witness is a provision for non-Catholics.
2. One Christian Witness is allowed only if there is one baptized sponsor (Canon 874).
3. A Christian Witness is a baptized Christian and a member of a non-Catholic ecclesial community (e.g. Anglican, Presbyterian, etc.).
4. A Christian Witness is a witness to the Baptism, **not a sponsor**.
5. It is not necessary to have a Christian witness.
6. A Roman Catholic **cannot** be a Christian Witness.
7. If there is only one sponsor, that person must be a **CONFIRMED ROMAN CATHOLIC**.
8. No child may be baptized without a sponsor.

The task of choosing a sponsor for your child should be done with care, and with right intentions. It takes a community of faithful Christians to raise and pass on our faith to the next generation.

# Some Questions People Ask about Baptism

## 1. **Can our baby be baptized if we're not married? Not married in the Church?**

Your baby's Baptism and your marriage are two separate issues. Your marital status may be discussed during your Baptism interview, to encourage you to get married (or validate your marriage in the Church) if this is appropriate. However, as long as you are committed to raising your child as a Catholic, he/she may celebrate the Sacrament of Baptism and be welcomed into the Church.

## 2. **Can our baby be baptized if we're not practicing Catholics?**

Baptism is more than a rite of passage for an infant, or a washing away of original sin. Baptism is a sharing in the life of the risen Christ. Baptism is also the first step of initiation into the Christian community. During the Rite of Baptism, parents promise to raise their child IN THE PRACTICE OF THE FAITH. Parents who are not practicing members of the community may be asked to *delay* the Baptism of their child until they have re-established that connection.

## 3. **Can our child be baptized in a parish if we do not live within the parish boundaries?**

Baptism, like all of the sacraments, is a celebration of a living relationship with God and with the local believing community, the parish. The sacraments are celebrations of our Church and, as such, are **normally celebrated** in the **parish where the family resides or is registered and usually worships**.

## 4. **How do we arrange to have our child baptized in a parish other than the one where we normally worship?**

If, for a good reason (for example, so extended family may attend), parents wish to have their child baptized in another parish, they need to contact the Parish office to ask if the Pastor is willing to baptize their child.

A **letter of permission** to have the baby baptized elsewhere must be obtained from the Pastor of the parish where the family usually worships.

## **5. What must I do to register my baby for baptism?**

To register your child for baptism, complete the following:

- Read through this booklet
- Complete the Baptism Registration Form, and Parents' Reflecting Faith Questionnaire.
- Return them to the parish office.
- Parish Office to contact parents to book a date for an INTERVIEW.
- After your interview, a date for the BAPTISM may be selected.

## **6. How many sponsors are required?**

The child may have only one or two godparents. If two godparents are chosen, one is to be a man and the other a woman. (Canon 873)

## **7. Can a Roman Catholic who is not confirmed be a sponsor or at least a Christian Witness?**

The Christian Witness is a provision for non-Catholics. The requirement to be a sponsor is that they must be confirmed. See Requirement in order to Fulfil Role of Sponsor.

## **8. Can a person of the Orthodox faith be a sponsor?**

A member of the Eastern Orthodox Church may be a sponsor together with a Catholic.

## **9. How much do I give for a baptism?**

The church does not attach a price for a sacrament. However, just like in your family, love is not enough. The bills have to be paid. A free-will offering from you is appropriate. It shows your gratitude to the Church.

It also reflects your responsible stewardship and participation in the shared expenses of running the church. So, an appropriate offering would be whatever is realistic for you. It should reflect your family's financial possibility. The usual offering is \$50.

## **10. May a child be "rebaptized" if he/she was baptized in a hospital, etc. in an emergency situation?**

A person may be baptized only once. However, parents should bring their child to complete the welcoming ceremonies (which are part of the Baptismal Rite) in their own parish.

# Preparing for the Day of Baptism

Once the Baptism date is set, the following matters will need some attention:

## 1. **BE PRAYERFULLY PREPARED**

Reflect on your answer to the question at the Welcome ceremony: ~ WHAT DO YOU ASK OF GOD'S CHURCH FOR YOUR CHILD? Also, be ready to make the PROFESSION OF FAITH and the promise of raising your child in the practice of the Catholic faith. Perhaps it is appropriate for you to approach the Sacrament of Reconciliation before the day of your child's baptism.

## 2. **WHITE GARMENT**

It is preferable that your baby be dressed in a white, loose-fitting garment for the Baptism: WHITE because traditionally, this is a sign of purity in the newly-baptized and LOOSE-FITTING SO that your child may be easily anointed on the chest.

## 3. **ARRIVING ON TIME**

Baptisms are celebrated **every first and last Sunday of the month** after the last mass:

**SEPTEMBER – JUNE                      2:00 PM                      -                      JULY – AUGUST                      12:30 PM**

A suggestion is to attend the last scheduled Sunday Mass and stay for the Baptism. This alleviates parking problems and ensures you and your family are on time. If you are not attending the last Mass, plan to be in the church **15 MINUTES** prior to the start time. Parents and sponsors are to be seated in the front pews. Other family members and guests are to sit in the pews behind all the parents and sponsors.

## 4. **PICTURES AND VIDEOS**

Baptism is sacred. In order that reverence and full respect be given throughout the celebration, please note: PICTURE-TAKING AND VIDEO-TAPING ARE PROHIBITED DURING THE BAPTISM CEREMONY. OPPORTUNITIES FOR PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEOGRAPHY ARE POSSIBLE **AFTER** THE BAPTISM. Kindly share this information with your family and guests in advance of the Baptism day.

# BAPTISM REGISTRATION FORM

## ST. BENEDICT PARISH

Please print CLEARLY. Kindly return the following to the parish office as soon as possible.

**All three items listed below must be submitted at the same time for the registration to be processed.**

1. Registration Form
2. Photocopy of child's BIRTH certificate
3. ORIGINAL BAPTISM CERTIFICATE of one Roman Catholic Parent.  
Child must be living with Roman Catholic parent.  
*Include TRANSLATION of baptism certificate if it is not in English.*

### CHILD'S INFORMATION

Full legal name of child as it appears on the official birth certificate

First Name		Middle Name(s)		Last Name		Circle: Male Female
Date of Birth	Year	Month	Day	City of Birth	Country of Birth	

### PARENT'S INFORMATION

**MOTHER (FULL LEGAL NAME & MAIDEN NAME)**

First Name		Middle Name(s)		Last Name		Maiden Name last name before married	
Cell Phone				Email			
PRESENT ADDRESS	Street			City	Apt #	Postal Code	
RELIGION	<input type="checkbox"/> Roman Catholic			<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____		<input type="checkbox"/> None	
<input type="checkbox"/> I am a parent of or have legal custody of the child.							

**FATHER (FULL LEGAL NAME)**

First Name		Middle Name(s)		Last Name		
Cell Phone				Email		
PRESENT ADDRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> Same as Mother's					
IF ADDRESS IS DIFFERENT THAN MOTHER	Street		City	Apt #	Postal Code	
RELIGION	<input type="checkbox"/> Roman Catholic		<input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____		<input type="checkbox"/> None	
<input type="checkbox"/> I am a parent of or have legal custody of the child.						

PARISH	Name of church you currently attend	
	Are you a registered parishioner of St. Benedict Church?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

## GODPARENT'S INFORMATION

### Eligibility of Godparent(s)

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

The following are the requirements in order for a Catholic to be a godparent (**canon 874 §1**):

- at least 16 years of age
- he/she has been fully initiated in the Catholic Church (received Baptism, Holy Communion, and Confirmation)
- in good standing with the Catholic Church: live a life of faith which befits the role to be undertaken;
- not under canonical penalty
- not the father or mother of the one to be baptized

### GODPARENT (FULL LEGAL NAME)

First Name	Middle Name(s)	Last Name	Age	
Current Parish		City		
Cell Phone		Email		
PRESENT ADDRESS	Street	City	Apt #	Postal Code
<input type="checkbox"/> Fulfills the requirements of canon 874 §1.				

### GODPARENT (FULL LEGAL NAME)

First Name	Middle Name(s)	Last Name	Age	
Current Parish		City		
Cell Phone		Email		
PRESENT ADDRESS	Street	City	Apt #	Postal Code
<input type="checkbox"/> Fulfills the requirements of canon 874 §1.				

## CHRISTIAN WITNESS' INFORMATION

### Eligibility of Christian Witness

A Christian Witness for a child's baptism must be a validly baptized Christian of a non-Catholic Church (canon 874 §2)

A Christian Witness may only participate together with a Catholic sponsor (canon 874 §2)

### CHRISTIAN WITNESS (FULL LEGAL NAME)

First Name	Middle Name(s)	Last Name		
Denomination				
Cell Phone		Email		
PRESENT ADDRESS	Street	City	Apt #	Postal Code
<input type="checkbox"/> Fulfills the requirements of canon 874 §2.				

## DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that the information on this form (Pages 1 & 2) is true and accurate.

Name (PLEASE PRINT):

Signature

Date

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY.

St. Benedict Church  
2194 Kipling Avenue  
Etobicoke, ON M9W 4K9

**BAPTISM: REFLECTIONS ON FAITH FOR PARENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE** 416-743-3830

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After reading the Baptism booklet, please answer the following questions. The questionnaire provides discussion topics during your interview. **Kindly bring your completed questionnaire to the parish with your completed Baptism Registration form.**

1. What spiritual changes will happen to your child at baptism? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. How is having your child baptized giving him/her the very best? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Why is baptism the basis of the whole Christian Life? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Why is your 'yes' to the responsibilities of catholic parents so important? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. In the renewal of your baptismal vows, you are asked six questions. Will there be any hesitancy on your part to say 'yes' to each question? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

6. After being baptized, your child will be anointed with chrism. In what ministries will your child share with Jesus Christ? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7. What is the symbolism in presenting a newly baptized person with a candle lit from the Paschal Candle? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

8. How many times can a person be baptized? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

9. What are the requirements for a sponsor or godparent? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

10. How will being baptized and living our Catholic faith make a difference in your child's life as he/she grows towards maturity? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_