

BAPTISM GUIDELINES

Congratulations on having your child baptized. In order for the baptism to occur:

1. We must have a completed baptismal application form. This can be done over the phone with the parish secretary *or at baptismal class*.
2. If you are completing the baptismal application form yourself, it can be brought to St. Joseph's office or mailed to us at 251 E. Main St. Dallastown, PA 17343 or it can be put in an envelope marked for the parish office and placed in the collection on Sunday *or turned in at baptismal class*.
3. Parents must attend a baptism instruction class to have their first baby baptized. If they have previously attended class they do not need to attend a new class.
4. If the parents of the child to be baptized are not members of our parish we need a letter of permission from the pastor of their Catholic parish.
5. In order to have a child baptized the parents or legal guardians must state that they wish to have the child baptized and that they will raise the child in the Catholic faith. If there is doubt that the child will be raised in the Catholic faith baptism may be delayed until the pastor has an assurance that the child will be raised in the faith.
6. You will not need a birth certificate, marriage certificate, or adoption decree, unless the pastor specifically requires it. This would be highly exceptional.

Godparents: In order to be a godparent (also called sponsor):

1. There must be one official godparent. If there are two godparents they must be of different genders.
2. Must be a baptized Catholic who has received Confirmation.
3. Must be confirmed.
4. Must be at least 16 years of age or older.
5. Must not be the parents of the child.
6. Must be living a life in accordance with the Catholic faith.
7. If they are in a marriage, the marriage must be recognized by the Catholic Church. This means they must have been married by a Catholic priest or deacon or received an official dispensation from the diocese to be married elsewhere, unless they become Catholic after their wedding. In no case can someone whose marriage is not recognized by the church be a sponsor.
8. If the person is not married they cannot be living with someone else in a sexual relationship.
9. A person, who has renounced the faith or otherwise joined another church officially, may never be a godparent nor can they be a Christian witness.
10. If there is one official Catholic godparent, the other person may be an official Christian witness to the baptism.
11. The official Christian witness must be a believing, active member of a Protestant church and must have been baptized.
12. A godparent who is an active member of this parish shall not be required to provide any additional paperwork whatsoever. If there is a question about whether a godparent is active in this parish that will be decided by the pastor. No other paperwork is required.
13. **A godparent(s) who is an active member of another parish must have a letter or form signed by the pastor of his/her parish and stamped with the parish seal.**
14. **The godparent(s) will need an updated copy of their baptismal certificate from the parish that they were baptized.**
15. A Christian witness must provide a letter from his/her church stating that they are an active member and have been baptized. No other paperwork is required.

Please do not ask anyone to be a godparents or a Christian witness until you talk this matter over with someone from the parish: Deacon Dan, Fr. Weiss or one of the church secretaries.