

Congratulations! We believe that every child is a precious gift of God. It is truly wonderful that you wish to share your faith with your child, for Jesus Himself said: "Let the children come to me." As you begin the difficult task of bringing up your child in the Catholic Church, you undoubtedly have many questions and concerns. We would like to share with you the rich depth and beauty of what it means to be a Catholic parent. Below are a few steps to help you begin the planning your child's Baptism.

We invite you to read carefully the following information which describes in part the perspective and teaching of the Catholic Church in regard to the celebration of Baptism. After having read and reflected upon this information, if you have any questions, or if you are prepared to formally inquire about the possibility of celebrating the Sacrament of Baptism here, please contact the Parish office at **618-498-3416**

Step 1: Reflect on the importance of faith in your life.

In preparing for your child's Baptism, you should ask yourselves some questions: "What place does God have in our lives?" "What place does the Church have in our lives?" "Are we striving to practice our faith?" "What sort of faith do we want for our children?" "Where do we intend to go to church?"

Your answers to these questions should directly affect where and when you choose to celebrate your child's Baptism. For a Catholic, the desire to have a child baptized should indicate an acceptance of the teaching of Jesus Christ as handed on to us by the Church. The Church urges all Catholics to practice their faith in a particular parish family.

Step 2: Make a decision about where you are in your faith, and where you want to be... and ACT on it!

For those who accept God's invitation, faith promises Eternal Life! During the Baptism ceremony the parents are asked to affirm their faith. The desire of parents to have a child baptized is a witness to their love for the child. It should also give witness to their acceptance and living of the teaching of Jesus Christ as handed on to us by the Church. We will urge you to participate in Mass each week at your parish, and to lead your child to Jesus by word and example.

Step 3: Choose a Christian name for your child

The Church does not want your child's name to be inappropriate for a Christian. It is best if the child's first or middle name is shared by someone famous for Christian faith and goodness. Choosing a saint's name gives your child a hero to imitate, and a helper in prayer.

Step 4: Choose good godparents.

Your child must have at least one godparent, who is at least 16 years old, and a fully-initiated (confirmed) and practicing Catholic in good standing. We ask that the godparents obtain a letter from their pastor attesting to these things. A godparent should be chosen because he/she is someone who will pray for your child, and who can help you to teach your child to be a good Catholic by word and example. If there are to be two godparents, one must be a man, and the other a woman.

Step 5: Contact the Church

If you feel ready to accept the responsibility of raising your child in the Catholic Faith, contact the parish church where you worship to become a registered member and to inquire about Baptism Preparation classes.

What Do We Do Now?

- If you are a registered and practicing member of Holy Ghost, please call to schedule your baptismal preparation class.
- If you are a registered and practicing member of another parish, contact your pastor first. It may be possible, with proper delegation and preparation, to have your child baptized here at Holy Ghost.
- If you have not been a part of a parish and are not registered anywhere, please feel free to contact us. Even if it's best to delay your child's baptism for a time, we would like to share with you our Faith!