

ST. FRANCIS XAVIER PARISH

10 Points the Parents Should Know for Their Child's Baptism



1. To contact the pastor to arrange for the date, time and language for their child's Baptism even before the child is born. The date and time of Baptism should be confirmed after the child is born. (see footnote 1)
2. To choose a godparent for the child. It is preferable that a man is the boy's godfather and a woman is the girl's godmother. (see footnote 2)
3. To choose the baptismal name for their child. (see footnote 3)
4. To prepare a white garment: The church can support the garment, but it is desirable that the family provide the garment).
5. The parish will provide the candle. If the parents wish to have a very beautiful candle, they can do so.
6. To review the catholic catechism on the sacraments, especially the sacrament of Baptism. This catechism includes the role of parents and godparents. (see the booklet prepared by SFX church)
7. After the birth of the child, arrange a date for the preparation day. On the day the preparation day, the parents, godparents and the child should come together. The preparation day consists of:
 - To review the catechism of the Church on the sacraments, especially the sacrament of Baptism.
 - To practice the rite of Baptism.
 - To pray together for the child
 - To go to confession (applied to godparents and Catholic parent). This is a high recommendation.
8. The parents and godparents are encouraged to pray for their child so that he/she may be ready and peaceful to receive the sacrament of Baptism.
9. The parents should get a Baptismal application form from the parish, fill it out and request the godparent to contact his/her/their pastor(s) to certify that he/she/they is/are the parishioner(s) of his parish.
10. On the day of Baptism, at the end of the Mass of Baptism, it is highly recommended that the parents and the godparent(s) to bring the child to the statue of Our Lady to entrust the child into the hands of Mary and ask Mary to take care of his/her soul throughout the journey of faith.

FOOTNOTES

Footnote 1

The Church's regulation: *"Parents are obliged to see that their infants are baptized within the first few weeks. As soon as possible after the birth, indeed even before it, they are to approach the parish priest to ask for the sacrament for their child, and to be themselves duly prepared for it."* (Can. 867 §1)

Footnote 2

TO QUALIFY AS A GODPARENT

Not everyone qualifies to be a godparent. The Catholic Church provides a detailed guideline that must be obeyed. "To be admitted to undertake the office of sponsor, a person must:" *(Canon 874.1)*

1. "be appointed by the candidate for baptism, or by the parents or whoever stands in their place, or failing these, by the parish priest or the minister; to be appointed the person must be suitable for this role and have the intention of fulfilling it;" (Canon 874.1.1)
2. "be not less than sixteen years of age, unless a different age has been stipulated by the diocesan Bishop, or unless the parish priest or the minister considers that there is a just reason for an exception to be made;" (Canon 874.1.2)
3. "be a catholic who has been confirmed and has received the blessed Eucharist, and who lives a life of faith which befits the role to be undertaken;" (Canon 874.1.3)
4. "not labour under a canonical penalty, whether imposed or declared;" (Canon 874.1.4)
5. "not be either the father or the mother of the person to be baptized." (Canon 874.1.5)
6. "A baptized person who belongs to a non-catholic ecclesial community may be admitted only in company with a catholic sponsor, and then simply as a witness to the baptism." (Canon 874.2)

DISQUALIFYING AS A GODPARENT

What follows is a list of personal characteristics that disqualify a person as a godparent:

1. the person has no intention of fulfilling his obligations as a godparent.
2. the person is younger than the age that has been stipulated by the diocesan Bishop, usually age 16.
3. the person is not a Catholic.
4. the person has not received the Sacrament of Baptism in the Catholic faith.
5. the person has not received the Sacrament of Confirmation in the Catholic faith.
6. the person has not received the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist in the Catholic faith.
7. the person is not living his faith in accordance with the teachings of the Catholic Church. (Example: The person has not been at Mass for 2, 5 or 10 years. The person employs birth control methods.)
8. the person belongs to a religious Order (preventing him/her from making this commitment).
9. the person is the spouse of the one seeking Baptism.
10. the person is a biological or adoptive father or mother of the child.
11. the person has incurred an official excommunication or "latae sententiae," by the very commission of the offense. (Example: involved in one or more abortions.)
12. the person is a member of a condemned society.
13. the person is a public sinner. (Example: Prostitution, living common-law.)
14. the person is a heretic. "Heresy is the obstinate post- baptismal denial of some truth which must be believed with divine and catholic faith, or it is likewise an obstinate doubt concerning the same." (C.C.C. # 2089)
15. the person belongs to a schism. "Schism is the refusal of submission to the Roman Pontiff or of communion with the members of the Church subject to him." (C.C.C. # 2089)
16. the person is involved in a mix-marriage and believes his/her children should choose their own religion when they grow up.
17. the person believes that all religions are equal or that other religions are equal to the Catholic Church.
18. the person is involved in an invalid marriage. (Example: Justice of the Peace, marriage outside the Church.)
19. the person is not registered with a parish, not belonging to any specific faith community.

Footnote 3

The Church does not require that the child be given a saint's name. But, for the sake of the child, it is highly recommended that parents better choose a baptismal name for their child. Any name present in the liturgical calendar of the Church can be chosen. The parents are to know the feast day, the story and the spirituality of the saint so that later their child can honour the saint, especially on the feast day, pray through the saint's intercessions and learn from the saint how to be holy.

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