

Questions you may have

What is Baptism?

"Baptism is the basis of the whole Christian life, the gateway to life in the Spirit." (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*) It is the first of three Sacraments of Initiation, the other two being Confirmation and the Holy Eucharist. Through Baptism, as with the other six Sacraments, we encounter the Living Christ in his passage from death to new life. By this encounter, we are freed from the power of sin and death, become members of Christ's Body, the Church, and so rise to new life and to a new way of living.

When should we have our baby baptized?

We encourage parents to present their children for Baptism as soon as is reasonably possible after their birth. Therefore, it is a good idea to contact the parish prior to the baby's birth so that Baptism can be scheduled in a timely fashion. However, we also realize that situations in life don't always allow for Baptism to happen shortly after the birth of a child, and we will welcome children or adults of any age who want to be baptized. Baptisms are primarily celebrated on scheduled Sunday afternoons or, if necessary, as scheduling permits.

Who can be godparents?

Godparents should be faithful people who are baptized and confirmed in the Catholic Church. Church law requires that at least one godparent is a full member of the Catholic Church. It is possible for the second godparent to be a member of another Christian Church. If you have questions regarding godparents, please speak to one of the priests or deacon at St John's. When choosing godparents, it is important to consider the responsibility of a godparent, namely, people who will support the parents in bringing this child up in the Catholic Faith and who will be a good role model for this child.

The Day of the Baptism

Please plan to arrive at least 15 minutes before the time the service is supposed to begin. Let the priest know you have arrived. St John's will provide a white garment (bib) and the Baptism candle.

Is a white dress or suit required?

No. A white garment symbolizes that your child has become a new creation in Christ in the waters of Baptism. Most families have a garment (dress or suit) that they have chosen for their child.

Can we use cameras and videos at Baptism?

Cameras and videos are allowed. However, the people taking photographs during the Baptism are asked to be courteous and not obscure the view of others. Please refrain from taking additional family photos until after the service has ended. The priest will be available after the ceremony for additional pictures.

What is the usual donation for a Baptism?

Payment is not required to receive a Sacrament. If you choose, you may make a donation to the parish. The usual donation is \$ 75-100. A check may be made payable to 'St John's' with "Baptism" written on the memo line. The check can mailed to St John's at 10431 Twin Rivers Road, Columbia, MD 21044.