

## **Church of the Visitation Policy for Baptisms**

Registration for a baptism must be done by the parent(s) of the child in person. We do not accept applications over the phone. Registration must be done at least one month in advance.

Preference is given to families that are registered at this parish. For those who are not, we request a letter of permission from their home parish. After having attended the pre-baptismal preparation, Baptisms are scheduled at 11:00 a.m. on the Second or Fourth Saturday of the month (in English). Baptism in Spanish is available upon advance request. Dates may be flexible depending on church availability.

### **Requirements**

A copy of the child's birth certificate is required because the Baptismal Certificate constitutes a legal document.

At least one of the child's parents must be a baptized and practicing Catholic.

It is not required that the parents be married in the Church, although a future Church marriage is suggested to give a good example of true Christian life to the child.

The Godparents (one male and/or one female) must be practicing Catholics over the age of 16 who have received the Sacraments of Baptism, First Communion, and Confirmation (must provide proof). If married, it must be in a Catholic Church (not just civil ceremony). The two godparents do not have to be married to one another. A Godparent Affidavit must be completed and signed by both the prospective godparent and the pastor of their parish.

### **Preparation**

Both parents and godparents are obliged to participate in a Baptismal Preparation class at least one week before the baptism is to take place. This is to ensure that those involved know something of the meaning of the Sacrament of Baptism. This baptismal session consists in a discussion regarding faith in the Catholic Church, the Creed, the Sacraments, and the symbols that are used during the Rite of Baptism, such as the holy oils of anointing, the water, the candle, etc. Children over the age of six years must take catechism (CCD; Confraternity of Christian Doctrine) classes in preparation for their First Communion before they may be baptized.

The parents or godparents may attend a Baptismal Preparation class at a parish other than Church of the Visitation. In this event, a letter or other document from that parish stating that the parents or godparents have attended their Baptismal Preparation class must be provided to Church of the Visitation.\*

Although there is no charge for the Sacrament of Baptism, we do request a minimum donation of \$100.00 to cover the preparation class and to support the ministries of the church.\* This donation is made at the time the child is registered for the baptism. During the ceremony, a candle and a symbolic "baptismal vestment" are provided to the child.

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\*For those who wish to attend the Baptismal Preparation class at Church of the Visitation in order to baptize their child or be a godparent at another parish, we request a donation of \$20 per person or \$35 per couple. Church of the Visitation will provide a letter certifying their attendance in the Baptismal Preparation class.