

Guidelines and Requirements for Infant Baptism

Our Lady Star of the Sea Church, Santa Cruz, CA

“Holy Baptism is the basis of the whole Christian life, the gateway to life in the Spirit, and the door which gives access to the other sacraments. Through Baptism we are freed from sin and reborn as sons of God; we become members of Christ, are incorporated into the Church and made sharers in her mission” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church* par. 1213).

As parents, you have been entrusted with the special role of nurturing the spiritual life of your children, and baptism marks the beginning of this life of grace.

Requirements for parents:

- The child must be **under** seven years of age **at the time of their baptism.**
- A copy of the child's birth certificate and an offering of \$75 to be registered for baptism.
- Complete a baptism class at the parish. Classes are usually offered every third Thursday of the month (check with the parish office to be sure), are good for two years and will count for any other baptisms which take place during this time. The class may be taken at another parish, but a certificate of completion of the baptismal class or a letter from the pastor must be turned in to our parish office.

Requirements for godparents:

- There may be one or two godparents. Godparents must be Catholic, in good standing with the Church, at least sixteen years of age and are not a parent to the child who is to be baptized.
- Godparents may be married or single. If they are only civilly married or are cohabitating they must be in the process of getting married in the Church. Couples not married in the Church must have a date reserved at a parish for a Church wedding and have paid the deposit. If the couple is to be married at another parish, a letter is needed from the pastor indicating they are free to marry in the Church, that a date has been reserved for the wedding and the deposit made.
- Godparents must be fully initiated into the Church (having received Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Communion) and provide certificates for these three sacraments. Married couples must provide a copy of their marriage certificate as well.
- There must be at least one godparent who meets the above requirements. Those who do not meet the requirements to be a godparent can stand in as a Christian witness along with the godparent, but they will not be included in the baptismal register. They will be listed on the certificate as a Christian witness.
- Complete a baptism class at the parish. See “Requirements for parents” above for more information.

Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age. (Matt 28:19-20)