



Baptism of Children at St. Dominic

Dear Parents seeking Baptism for your Child,

We are so happy that you want your child to be baptized, and we are glad to be of service to you during this event and in preparation for it. The following information will be helpful for you in preparation for the joyous occasion of your child's Baptism.

Things required:

1. Date Chosen: We normally celebrate Baptisms here at St. Dominic on Sunday afternoons. You can be in contact with one of our priests and deacons to find a date that works for you and the church. We encourage you to choose the earliest date that works well for you and your family.
2. Meeting: Arrange a time to meet with the priest or deacon who will baptize your child by contacting the parish office. The meeting, which includes a review of the sacrament of Baptism, will last under an hour. Both parents are expected to be present for the meeting, unless some good reason prevents this. Godparents are welcome to come but are not required to do so. During this meeting, besides taking down basic information, we will speak with you about the significance of Baptism, your responsibilities as parents, helpful resources, and answer any questions or concerns you might have.
3. Godparents: The role of the Godparents is to assist and support the parents in their important responsibility as the primary educators of their children in the faith, through prayer, example, and instruction. Godparents must be (a) Catholics who have received Confirmation and First Holy Communion, (b) at least 16 years old, (c) in good standing in the Church [e.g., not married outside the Church], (d) practicing the faith [regularly going to Sunday Mass and living lives that conform to the teaching and practice of the Catholic faith]. You may choose one person to serve as a Godparent; if you choose two Godparents, they must be a man and a woman. If the Godparent is not able to be present during the Baptism, a proxy may be designated beforehand to stand in his/her place. The responsibility of the Godparent—it must be stressed—is lifelong. The responsibility after the Baptism, therefore, is much greater than before or during the Baptism. A baptized person who does not meet the requirements of a Godparent may be chosen as a Christian Witness. However, one person who meets the requirements of a Godparent must be chosen.
4. Sponsor Certificate: The Godparents will need to contact their parish office and obtain a letter signed by their pastor testifying that they meet the requirements mentioned above. There is a standard form that each parish uses in this regard, called a *sponsor certificate*. These letters should be mailed or given to the priest or deacon (or dropped off at the parish office) as soon as possible before the Baptism.
5. Donation: There is no fee for the Sacraments. However, it is fitting to donate to the church on this occasion. We suggest an free-will offering of \$100 to help support the church.

We, the Pastoral Staff at St. Dominic, look forward to meeting with you, to baptizing your child, and to answering any questions or concerns you might have. Please don't hesitate to contact us at 202-554-7863.