

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Q. 1. Why should I prepare for my Child's baptism?**

Baptism is ESSENTIAL for receiving and living out God's gift of salvation (John 3: 5). This Sacrament is God's offer of friendship to human beings, which is sealed and lived as a faith-based covenantal relationship with God and the community of God's friends, the Church. As parents, you will be entering into this covenantal friendship with God on behalf of your child. The Baptism Preparation Program (BPP) is therefore to help you develop a deeper appreciation of God's gift of the Sacrament of Baptism as friendship, as well as the commitment you are making to raise your baptized child in the Catholic Faith, and enable you to celebrate and live out the baptismal rite in a more meaningful and engaged way.

### **Q. 2 How do I get my Child baptized in any of the parishes in the Hamilton-Catholic Pastoral Region?**

Parents are to schedule an initial visit with clergy or staff and attend the baptism preparation program before a date for the baptism can be scheduled (except in extreme, life and death circumstances).

### **Q. 3 Do I need to be a registered member of the Hamilton-Catholic Pastoral Region to have my child baptized in one of the parishes?**

NO! However, in order to baptize your child at any of our beloved three parishes, parents must complete the Baptism preparation process (the Initial Visit and 2 Classes).

### **Q. 4. When should I call the parish office to schedule my initial visit for baptism preparation?**

As early as possible in the pregnancy. It also saves parents the challenges of struggling to make time for the meetings once the child is born.

### **Q. 5 Are both parents required to attend the initial meeting and the 2 classes?**

The initial visit is part of the Baptism preparation process and therefore both Catholic parents (if they have custody of the child) are required to attend the initial visit. The primary purpose of the initial visit is not only to register for the baptism preparation process, but also to determine the parents' intention to raise the child in the Catholic faith, to discuss the parents' own friendship with Christ and the Catholic Church, and to answer any remaining questions or concerns that parents might have. It is also highly encouraged that both parents attend the two classes after the initial meeting.

### **Q. 6. Are godparents/sponsors required to attend baptismal preparation classes?**

We highly recommend and strongly encourage that the godparent / sponsor attend classes if they live in the area; but this is not required. If godparents will not attend the preparation class we still need a godparent form with the parish seal from their home parish.

### **Q. 7. How much does it cost to baptize my child?**

The Church does not charge for the sacramental preparation and celebration.

**Q. 8 *Do parents and godparents need to attend a preparation program again when another child is to be baptized?***

If parents have completed Baptism preparation classes in the past and then are blessed with another child, then the parents may not need to attend the program again. This will be determined at your Initial Visit with our clergy. Therefore, you will need to attend an Initial Visit prior to scheduling the Baptismal Rite and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Class of the BPP to share faith with other parents preparing for baptism. Call the parish office to know when the classes are scheduled.

**Q. 9 *Can a non-Catholic Christian be a godparent / sponsor?***

No. Only a practicing Catholic who meets the qualifications can be a godparent or sponsor. However, a non-Catholic, baptized Christian who participates in the Baptism and accepts responsibility for helping raise the child to live a Christian life can participate in the Rite of Baptism as a "Christian Witness". Note: A Christian who was baptized and confirmed Catholic and now practices in another Christian tradition can neither be a godparent /sponsor nor a Christian Witness. The church requires at least one godparent who is a practicing, confirmed Catholic age 16 or older.

**Q. 10 *Can a brother or sister be a godparent / sponsor?***

Brothers or sisters of a child to be baptized may indeed be godparents / sponsors providing that they have completed their 16th year of life, be Confirmed Catholic and have the aptitude and intention of fulfilling this function, and not be bound by any canonical penalty (i.e., such as married outside the Catholic Church).

**Q. 11 *If the godparents are not validly married in the Catholic Church, can they be godparents?***

The chosen godparent(s) does not need to be a married person. However, if the chosen godparent *is* married (whether to another Catholic or to a non-Catholic) then they must be validly married in the Catholic Church in order to be chosen as a godparent.

**Q. 12. *If the parents are not validly married in the Catholic Church, can the child be baptized?***

There is nothing that prevents a child born to parents who are not validly married in the Catholic Church from being baptized. The Catholic Church welcomes with open arms your decision to baptize your child in the faith. As such, you may wish to discuss having your marriage convalidated (recognized) by the Catholic Church, please contact **Fr. Robert Muhlenkamp** at [muhlenkampr@stpeterinchains.org](mailto:muhlenkampr@stpeterinchains.org) or 513-863-3938 ex 305

**Q. 13. *If the parents are not married, can the child be baptized?***

Nothing prevents a child born to parents who are not married from being baptized within the Catholic church provided that the parent(s) of that child is/are properly disposed, has/have been appropriately prepared, understand(s) the responsibilities that come with having the child baptized and is/are willing to fulfill the commitment undertaken to raise the child in the rich principles of the Catholic faith. Also, at any time, if you would like to discuss preparing for marriage, please contact **Fr. Robert Muhlenkamp** at 513-863-3938 ex 305.