# INTRODUCTION

The birth of a child is one of the most powerful signs of God's presence in our world; it is an event that generates boundless love, joy and hope.

When a child is born, the lives of husband and wife will never be the same again because now they are called to share their lives as parents- as FAMILY.

Whether the child is their first or fourth the presence of each new life is a time for parents to pause to celebrate-in FAITH-the great significance of both their desire to have their child welcomed into the Christian family-the Church.

The clergy and parishioners of St. Catherine of Genoa Church believe it is our obligation to reach out to parents during this very special time and provide support and assistance in making the most of a grace-filled and God centered moment in a family's history-the Baptism of a child.

# PRE BAPTISM REQUIREMENTS

Infant baptism includes children from birth until their 7th birthday.

We do not deny Baptism to a child if the parents are unmarried or not married in the Catholic Church. However, there may be reason to postpone Baptism if parents are not practicing the Faith, or have no intention of living a Catholic life.

At least one of the parents must attend church at St. Catherine's.

At least one parent must meet with the priest at least 2 weeks prior to the planned baptism to complete the baptismal information sheet and to schedule the Baptism. **Please call ahead to assure the priest is available. The Birth Certificate needs to be brought to the meeting.**

Persons who are registered in another parish, and wish to have their child baptized at St. Catherine's for a just cause, MUST have the permission of their pastor and must attend a Baptism Preparation class either at St. Catherine's or any Catholic parish. Proof of attendance is required.

## Godparents (sponsors)

A child may have one or two godparents (sponsors). These are their requirements: 1) at least 16 years of age; 2) Confirmed and practicing the Catholic Faith; 3) living in harmony with the Faith and a good role model for the one being baptized. You may choose a non-Catholic (but baptized Christian) as a Christian witness, as long as you also have a Catholic sponsor who fits the above requirements. Parents cannot be their own child's godparents. Godparents should attend the baptism preparation class.

If the Godparents are from another parish a letter needs to be provided for the Catholic Godparents from the pastor or priest of their parish.

### Parents Baptism Preparation Class

All parents, whether Catholic or non-Catholic, married or unmarried, are required to attend an evening conference. It is desirable to have the Godparents attend this class. Some of the dimensions of Baptism will be explored in the class:

The Dimensions of
Faith, Community and Celebration

The classes in Spanish are held the 4th Thursday of the month. Classes in English are arranged with the Pastor.

# THE BAPTISMAL CEREMONY

- All parents may invite as many relatives and friends to the Baptismal Ceremony as they wish.
- Baptisms are on the first weekend of the month. In Spanish at 2:00pm and in English at 3:00pm.
- Parents and Godparents have an active part in the ceremony
- A Baptismal Candle will be presented to the parents during the ceremony unless one is brought by the family.
- A Baptismal Record (certificate) can be obtained by calling the Rectory office.

# BAPTISMAL ETIQUETTE

- Please be on time, since there are other families participating in the ceremony along with your own. Please try to be in the church at least 15 minutes early. We will start on time!
- Photographs may be taken during the ceremony.
- Since the Church is a sacred place loud talking and other distracting forms of behavior are out of order.
- All cell phones and beepers should be turned off when you are in the church. They detract from the sacredness of the Sacrament.
- Parents and/or Godparents may give a donation to the church, St. Catherine of Genoa, on the occasion of the Baptism in a spirit of thanksgiving. If a donation is given it should be done after the service.

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