



Saint Cecilia Church – Fox Chase

Transforming lives through faith inspired relationships.

Congratulations on the gift of your child. St. Cecilia is blessed to walk with you at this time of joy as you bring your child into the Church through baptism. God rejoices in your choice and promises to walk with you always! Please use this outline to help you complete the **Belonging: Baptism in the Family of God** Course. It may feel like this course will be a “waste of time”, but we believe otherwise. It is an investment in your child’s eternal life and an investment in your role as a parent helping the child one day reach heaven! Please make notes so that you can have a fruitful conversation with the deacon or priest who is assisting you prepare for the day of baptism.

#1 WHAT IS IN A NAME?

1. Names have meaning. There is a reason why you gave your child her or his name
2. QUESTIONS: Why did you chose the name of your child? Why did your parents choose your name? What was your confirmation name? Why did you choose it?

#2 REAL RELATIONSHIP

1. Life is about relationships – they make life better. That is what God wants for us.
2. You want your child to have great relationships in life – including a real relationship with a real God
3. QUESTIONS: What are three joyful moments in your family story? What are three difficult moments in your family story? What are three unique parts of your child’s story (so far)? What are three hopes you have for your child’s future?

#3 LIAR, LUNATIC OR LORD

1. You are offered a review of different religions in the world
2. Catechesis on Christianity: where does Christianity come from and why is it “the right” choice for you and your child?
3. The baptism ceremony is a choice for Jesus Christ!
4. QUESTIONS: What are some key elements of your faith life so far? Have you decided to follow Jesus Christ as your Lord?

#4 Child of God

1. The truth is that your human child is very different than an animal (even though you may love the pet a great deal).
2. If we are to become children of God through baptism, then things in life have to change. Jesus makes our becoming a child of God possible. It is the Holy Spirit who makes things happen in reality. Through baptism, the Holy Spirit makes us a child of God – really and truly!
3. Father Schmitz talks about the creation of Pinocchio – they were not father and son until the “puppet” became “a real boy”. There was an adoption. We are created by God by through Baptism we are adopted as his child!
4. QUESTION: If in five years your child asks “What is baptism?” and “Why did you have me baptized?” what will you answer?

#5 Real Change

1. God wants to surround us with his grace, but do we allow God “access”? Do we allow God “into” our life?
2. We believe that every human being is a beloved creature of God and we share qualities with God: we have a mind that thinks, a will to choose, we are made for love and life, we are good (in fact, we are very good). Death and suffering happen when things get “in the way” of what we share with God. Often, this is the sin we choose. Other times, it is the brokenness of a world that is fallen (Original Sin or Original Wound which every human inherits).
3. Baptism seeks to heal the Original Wound; your baby is not “totally depraved” but she or he is wounded and Baptism will heal that. Baptism gives God access to the wounds to begin healing that continues through a life of faith (and the other Sacraments, especially the Eucharist).
4. Father Mike speaks about the role of Super Heroes and their role in “saving” people. They have powers but they are vulnerable and are unchanged. As Catholics, we believe Baptism literally changes us. Father Mike holds up Steve Rogers and Captain America: *everything special in him came from a bottle*. In us, everything that makes us special comes from the grace of God! Baptism begins a work of transformation in you and in your child.
5. QUESTIONS:
 - a. What is one gift you want your child to have for the rest of their life?
 - b. It is likely that some of the things Father Mike spoke about was more theology than you have consumed in a while. As you think about the Catholic Faith, what are questions about Church Teaching that you have and would like to learn more about?

#6 Your Family

1. When spouses commit to one another, they commit to their family as well. The relationship is real and has responsibilities (maybe even with raw sewage).
2. Our yes to Jesus in Baptism commits us to the Church (His Family) as well and this also comes with responsibilities. You will always have a Church Family – anywhere in the world!
3. Getting “connected” at a Parish can be tough. Know you belong, it is your family. It is God’s family.
4. QUESTION: What does “being an active part of Saint Cecilia Church” look like for you as a family?

#7 The Rite of Baptism

1. WASHING: the Jewish people had many rituals of washing; we recall the washing at Baptism with holy water each time we enter and leave the Church; the Blessing of Water reveals how God has used water to save us throughout history.
2. DYING AND RISING: Words in the Rite of Baptism speak of dying and rising again and again; you will speak the name of your child because this is a personal moment as you ask for your child to be baptized into the dying and rising of Jesus; your child is “marked” with the sign of the Cross as we claim them for Jesus; the Rite of Exorcism beautifully casts out anything that is not of God.
3. CLOTHED IN CHRIST: this means your child receives a new identity in Christ that is nourished by the Liturgy of the Word (the Scriptures) and the Prayers of Intercession (as we ask God for his help); you will lead your child through Renouncing Sin (Repentance) and Profession of Faith (I believe...); at the moment of Baptism (as water is poured and words spoken) the life of your child changes forever! The white garment they wear is an outward sign of her or his new identity in Christ (in heaven, the saints are wearing white robes).
4. RECEIVED INTO THE COMMUNITY: we always come to Jesus with others; your child is anointed with Sacred Chrism – just as Christ was anointed, they too are anointed as “another Christ”; your child takes on a new role as a Priest, Prophet and King or Queen; you will be given a Baptismal Candle that comes from the Easter Candle with a challenge: keep the light of Christ burning brightly within the child! The community prays the Lord’s prayer together with the newly baptized – all of God’s Family praying as one.
5. QUESTION: What questions do you have about the celebration of Baptism or godparents as you prepare?