

## INFANT BAPTISM PLANNING CHECKLIST

Below is a step-by-step checklist for planning infant baptism:

- ◆ Arrange an interview with the priest baptism coordinator:
  - \* During the interview you will make a reservation for the baptism preparation class.
  - \* Both parents should be present, even if one is not Catholic.
- ◆ Attend a baptismal preparation class:
  - \* Offered virtually on the 2nd Wednesday of the month at 7:00 pm.
  - \* Both parents must attend.
  - \* The godparents must attend.
  - \* Please do not bring very young children to the class.
- ◆ Turn in the signed godparent eligibility certificate(s).
- ◆ Make the parish donation:
  - \* \$100 per child of registered parishioners (non-refundable)
  - \* \$150 per child for non-parishioners (non-refundable).
  - \* \$300 for private baptisms (baptisms outside the usually scheduled times). If the baptism is canceled, \$150 is non-refundable.
  - \* A gift for the priest/deacon is not required; however, if you wish to give a gift to the priest/deacon, please place it in a separate envelope.
- ◆ Schedule the Baptism
  - \* Scheduling takes place after all requirements have been fulfilled the parish donation has been received.
- ◆ Celebrate Baptism:
  - \* The parish provides candles for baptism, but you may bring your own.
  - \* Your child should be dressed in white garments.
  - \* Baptisms are at 11 am on the 3rd Saturday of the month.
  - \* Please arrive 15 minutes early.

## BAPTISM REGISTER (RECORDS)

Each person baptized in this parish has a record in the parish baptismal register. This register has spaces for other sacraments: first communion, confirmation, marriage, and holy orders. Whenever a baptismal certificate is needed, it is extracted from this register. If you would like to request a copy of a baptismal certificate, please complete the Baptismal Certificate Request Form online at

[stmaryslg.org/request-baptism-certificate](http://stmaryslg.org/request-baptism-certificate)



219 Bean Avenue, Los Gatos, California 95030

• (T) 408.354.3726 • [www.stmaryslg.org](http://www.stmaryslg.org)

ST. MARY OF THE IMMACULATE  
CONCEPTION PARISH  
(LOS GATOS, CA)



## Welcome!

The staff and community of St. Mary warmly welcome you as you prepare for your child's baptism. We encourage every parent to reflect on the importance of the sacrament of baptism, and we want to assist you in this process. For this purpose, priests and members of the parish will guide you through the formal process. Before setting the date of baptism, we ask that you read through this pamphlet and follow the process as presented. We would like to thank you in advance for your cooperation. We hope that your child's baptism will be an experience of renewal and fulfillment for your family and the entire Christian community.

If you are interested in having your child baptized or have any questions about the baptism process, please email **Vanessa Lleverino** - [vlleverino@stmaryslg.org](mailto:vlleverino@stmaryslg.org).

# MEANING OF BAPTISM

**Baptism is a sacrament of faith.** The faith required for the sacrament of baptism is not necessarily perfect and mature faith. For the candidate of baptism, it is a beginning and a call to develop and grow after baptism.

There are various effects of the Sacrament of Baptism. The different effects of the Sacrament of Baptism are signified by the elements of the rites of the sacrament.

† The pouring of or immersion in water symbolizes death to sin, purification, renewal, and regeneration. Thus, the two principal effects of baptism are purification from sins and new birth in the Holy Spirit. Baptism purifies from all sins (including original sin) and makes the newly baptized persons new creatures and adopted children of God. They become partakers of the divine nature, members of Christ, coheirs, and temples of the Holy Spirit.

† Smearing oil on the newly baptized persons makes them “anointed ones.” We are chosen and anointed at baptism to be like Christ who was anointed a priest, prophet, and king.

† In baptism, the newly baptized person becomes a new person with Christ. The white garment is a symbol of transformation.

† The lighted candle received at baptism symbolizes Christ who is the light of the world.

Baptism makes us members of the Body of Christ, the Church. Baptism incorporates us into the Church. From the baptismal font is born the one People of God of the New Covenant, which transcends all the limitations of races, nations, cultures, and sexes: *"For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body"* (1 Cor 12: 13).

The Sacrament of Baptism is administered under two forms in the Catholic Church.

1. Infant baptism is for children **under seven years old**,
2. For **older children and adults**, the *Order of Christian Initiation of Adults* (OCIA) is used.

The Church uses the OCIA form of baptism even for a seven-year-old child because the child can understand good, evil, and what is happening at baptism.

## Child's Age

The Church encourages that children should be baptized shortly after birth. Based on their age, there are two different processes of baptism of children. There is infant baptism for children who are six years or younger.

Children who are seven or older, go through the full Christian initiation process, which entails catechetical preparation for reception of the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Communion at Easter.

If your child is seven years or older, please contact our Catechetical Office at (408)354-3726 X123 for more information on the next steps.

## Godparents

A godparent together with the parents of a child has the responsibility of presenting a child on the day of the Baptism. A godparent also helps the baptized person to live a Christian life of faith and witness. Consequently, the law of the Church requires that godparents must be practicing Catholics (Canons 872 – 874) with the following qualities:

- have the ability and intention of fulfilling the responsibility of a godparent;
- have completed the sixteenth year of age;
- have received First Holy Communion and Confirmation;
- have been leading a life of faith in keeping with the godparent's responsibility (attending Mass regularly and not living in an immoral situation);
- have been married in the Catholic Church (if the godparents are a couple);
- are not the fathers or mothers of the children to be baptized.

***Note that those who are no longer practicing the Catholic faith are not eligible for the role of godparent.***

A candidate for godparent must present a document signed by his/her pastor certifying that he/she has met all of the qualifications listed above. If his/her parish does not provide such a document, a form from St. Mary may be substituted, with the signature of the proper pastor.

Only one godparent, either male or female, is required. If two godparents are chosen, one must be male and the other female.

Godparents cannot be changed after baptism. Your choice is a lifetime commitment.

If a person chosen to be godparent cannot be physically present at the Baptism, a proxy may participate in the baptism. There are no requirements for a proxy.

A baptized Christian who belongs to a different Christian denomination may serve as a Christian witness along with a qualified Catholic godparent.

## When Are Baptisms Celebrated at St. Mary

Baptisms are regularly scheduled for the 3rd Saturday of every month at 11 am. More than one family may celebrate baptism at this time. We encourage multiple families to celebrate baptism together as a sign that all who are baptized are part of the one family of God.

If a family wishes to have a private baptism (a baptism outside the usually scheduled time), separate arrangements with a priest or deacon must be made, and scheduling depends on his availability and the availability of the church.

Families wishing to have a private baptism are welcome to invite a visiting priest or deacon to perform the baptism. A visiting priest or deacon who does not have the authority to minister in the Diocese of San Jose must present the usual testimonial letter from his bishop or religious superior. Families using the services of a visiting priest or deacon should give him a gift to show their appreciation; this gift is in addition to the St. Mary parish donation.

## Baptisms for Visitors

Visitors are those who are not registered parishioners, do not live in our parish boundaries, and do not worship regularly at St. Mary. Visitors are welcome to arrange a celebration of baptism in our parish. Visitors must complete the baptism preparation process in their own parish and provide a letter from their own pastor verifying the completion of that process. Note that even if a celebration of baptism is arranged for visitors, godparent candidates must still present certificates of eligibility, as described above, and parents are asked to give the parish donation.