

Baptism Ministry

Maggy Barnfield 1983-1987

In the 1980's, a formal program was put in place to help respond to the many requests to receive the sacrament of baptism.

The program was a means of communicating with and welcoming new 'families' to the parish and also serving the well-established parishioners in a meaningful way.



A small group of dedicated parishioners was formed into a preparation team with the support of the pastor at-the-time, Fr. Paul Crucian.

When a request for baptism was received, the information was passed to the Baptism Team leader who would determine if it was a simple or complicated request e.g., from a parishioner, someone from out of town or from a different church or denomination. Any complications were dealt with by the pastor and then a baptism team member would be allocated to the requestor and contact would be established.

It was an opportunity for a friendly and welcoming approach to someone who may not be comfortable with church matters.

An informal home visit was arranged by the team member; a non-threatening, face-to-face meeting with a representative from the church.

The rite of baptism was explained and any questions answered. A small white, felt stole, to be used as a 'white garment' during the ceremony, was left at the home and could be decorated if the 'family' wished.

A polaroid photograph of the 'family' was taken for display at the church after the day of baptism for the benefit of the parishioners. (Today, digital photos are taken at the ceremony and displayed on the sanctuary screen during the Prayers of the Faithful at Mass)

On the day of baptism (usually a specified Sunday in the month) the team member would be at the church to welcome the 'family' and to lead them through the procedure, to proclaim the readings and to assist the priest /deacon if necessary.

Long term relationships and involvement in the church would quite often develop and it was rewarding to later see a new volunteer or a new RCIA member as a result of the baptism team's efforts.