



709 FRANKLIN STREET
CLARKSVILLE, TENNESSEE 37040-3347
Phone 931-645-6275

BAPTISM GUIDE FOR PARENTS

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Matthew 28:18-20

Congratulations on the birth of your child! Now is the time for your child's baptism, which is the foundation of Christian life. It is a new birth by water and the Holy Spirit where a child becomes an adopted child of God. The parish clergy and staff at Immaculate Conception are happy to help you to prepare for your child's baptism and we look forward to celebrating the baptism with you. This Baptism Handbook will guide you through the preparation process, including a checklist comprising of all the steps in the process.

Baptism is a Sacrament

The Sacrament of Baptism is the foundation upon which all the other sacraments are built. Baptism washes away original sin and at baptism the Holy Trinity comes to dwell in the inmost depths of the child's soul, which is called sanctifying grace. This Sacrament of Initiation makes someone a member of the Body of Christ, the Church, and therefore enables him or her to receive the graces of all the other sacraments. Baptism is more than just water and words: the sacrament begins the child's connection to the Church and so fittingly takes place in a physical church, with a priest or deacon representing Jesus Christ initiating the child into the life of the children of God, along with other members of the faithful who likewise gather to give thanks to God for His gifts to the child. The Church teaches that infants are to be baptized in the parish church of their parents as soon as possible after their birth. As parents, you have shared the gift of life with your child. In Baptism you bring them to a spiritual rebirth that makes them a Catholic Christian and grants them the gift of eternal life in Christ.

Who May Be Baptized at Immaculate Conception Church?

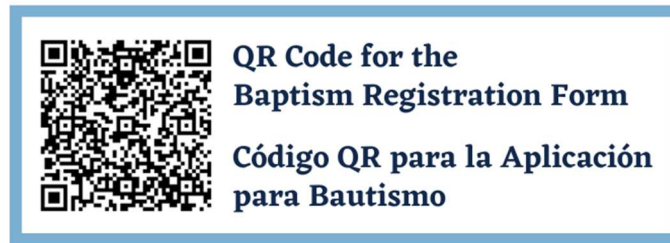
Parishioners of the Immaculate Conception may have their children baptized here. A parishioner is someone(s) who is registered at the parish. If you are not a parishioner, you may have a baptism here with the written permission of your parish.

Baptism Age

Baptism usually takes place within the first months of birth. However, children may receive infant baptism where their parents make a profession of faith for them up through the age of 7. Older children must be properly prepared for baptism through sacramental preparation. Please contact the parish office if you have a child older than 7 in which you are requesting baptism. Adults are normally baptized at the Easter Vigil.

Steps in Preparation for Baptism

1. Complete Registration form online here -



2. Or visit our website here - www.immaconception.org, then click on “Church”, then “Baptism” download, print, and fill out application and email the Baptism Application form to the parish office Sacramental Records Clerk at icassistant@immaconception.org. You can also drop it off at the Church Office.

3. If the parents are parishioners and are not already registered at the parish, they can register here -



4. If the parents are not parishioners, they must obtain written permission from their parish for the baptism to be celebrated at Immaculate Conception Church. The letter must include the child's name, parent(s) name(s), church seal and signature of pastor or delegate.
5. Contact the godparent(s) to submit the following documents to our Sacramental Clerk:
 - a. **Sponsor Certificate/Letter of suitability** from his or her parish. Complete all their parish requirements to obtain this document.
 - b. **Certificate showing that they have received the sacrament of Confirmation.** The Catholic Godparent must be at least 16 years old and have received the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and First Holy Eucharist.
 - c. If married, **Certificate of marriage in the catholic church.** The Godparent must be married according to the regulations of the Catholic Church (one cannot be divorced and

remarried unless any prior marriages have been validly annulled by a competent ecclesial authority).

- d. If single, the Godparent must not be living as if they were married, cohabitating or living in a relationship that may be considered a marriage.
6. Both parents and godparents must schedule and attend a baptismal preparation class if they have not already attended one in the past 3 years at ICC.
7. Watch episodes **1-3 of Reborn: You, Your Child, and the Heart of Baptism** on **Formed** before you attend the baptism preparation class. You can sign up for **Formed** at **Formged.org** and search for Immaculate Conception in Clarksville, TN when setting up a free account through the parish.

Scheduling a Baptism

Normally, we celebrate infant baptisms on Sundays after the 8:00 a.m. Sunday Mass. We usually begin around 9:15 a.m. Ideally the above registration steps are completed before the child is born. In that case, a tentative date may be set based on the child's due date. The date is set with the parish office once the child is born, at least two weeks in advance. If the child is already born, the date can be scheduled for any time in the future after the proper paperwork is submitted. Infants should be baptized as soon as possible.

If requesting a day other than Sunday, or not a standard scheduled Mass time, you must contact the church office to schedule the use of the facilities. The following utilities charges will be required prior to scheduling your baptism with the church office. Scheduling will depend on the availability of Priest/Deacon celebrating the baptism.

Mass with Baptism:

Main Church - \$400 + \$250 Deposit (if you follow the usage agreement, you will get your deposit back)
Chapel - \$300 + \$250 Deposit (if you follow the usage agreement, you will get your deposit back)

Baptism without Mass:

Main Church - \$200 + \$250 Deposit (if you follow the usage agreement, you will get your deposit back)
Chapel - \$150 + \$250 Deposit (if you follow the usage agreement, you will get your deposit back)

Baptism Preparation Class

The purpose of the baptism preparation class is to help the parents and godparents lay a strong foundation for their child's upbringing in the Catholic faith. Our goal is to help you understand what baptism is and how to raise your child as a Catholic. Parents and godparents are required to attend one baptismal preparation class unless they have already attended a baptismal preparation class in the last 3 years at ICC. Godparents may attend a baptismal preparation class elsewhere and provide ICC with the necessary documents. There is no difference in the baptismal preparation class for parents and godparents.

Baptismal Name

Choosing a baptismal name is an important decision for the parents. Choosing a Christian name, the name of a Saint or a noble Biblical figure, ensures the child a patron in the communion of saints who will intercede in heaven for the child. If the first name of the child is not Christian, then we encourage parents to choose a middle name that is Christian.

Godparents

The parents need to choose at least one godparent for the baptism, although you may choose both a godmother and godfather. The parents and godparents present an infant for baptism and help the newly baptized lead a Christian life and fulfill faithfully the call to holiness in the life of the Church.

Requirements for Godparents

1. Must be a practicing Catholic who lives the Faith and can help guide the child in living the Faith.
2. Be at least 16 years old.
3. Received the sacraments of Baptism, Communion, and Confirmation .
4. Cannot be the parent of the child to be baptized.
5. Attend a baptism preparation class, if you have not already attended one.
6. Submit a Letter of Suitability/Sponsor Certificate and a **certificate of Confirmation**.
7. If married, Must be married in the Catholic Church, and must submit a **Catholic Marriage Certificate**.

Paperwork for Godparents

- Note of Endorsement: Godparents must sign a declaration that they meet the requirements to serve as a godparent and have it endorsed by their current parish.
- Certificate of Confirmation: Godparents must contact the parishes where they were confirmed, and request recently issued certificates of confirmation. Please provide hard copies.

Troubleshooting Paperwork for Godparents

The parents need to notify the godparents to obtain the above two required documents from their parish. This process may take a few weeks or longer so please notify the godparents **ASAP**. The parish at which the godparents were baptized should have a record of all the Sacraments that their godparent received. If not, the godparents may have to contact the parishes where they were confirmed.

On the Day of Baptism

We encourage the family to attend the 8:00 am Sunday Mass, after which the baptism will take place. We encourage that the child to be baptized wear white and their collar should be able to be loosed for the anointing with the oil of catechumens on the upper part of the chest.

Baptism Donation

Although not required, it is customary for parents and/or family members to make a voluntary stipend to support the ministry of the parish. These offerings are generally given to the celebrant of the baptism.

Baptism Preparation Checklist

- ☐ Complete and return the **Baptism Request Form** to the parish office.
- ☐ Watch episodes **1-3 of Reborn: You, Your Child, and the Heart of Baptism.**
- ☐ If parishioners at ICC, make sure you are registered.
- ☐ If not parishioners at ICC, make sure to obtain written permission from current parish to celebrate baptism here.
- ☐ For godparents, submit Note of Endorsement and recent certificate(s) noting that they have received the sacrament of Confirmation (and Marriage in the church, if married).
- ☐ Schedule baptism with the church office.
- ☐ Parents schedule and attend a **Baptismal Preparation Class**.
- ☐ Godparents schedule and attend a **Baptismal Preparation Class** or attend a session elsewhere.



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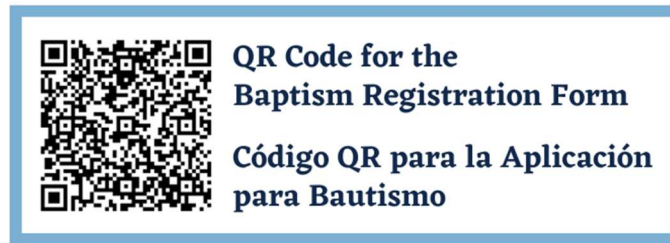
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