

You have expressed an interest in the Baptism of your child...

BAPTISM is a celebration where the **Church Community** initiates a new member who will join with it in faith, in prayer, and who will share in its mission of spreading Jesus' way in our world.

It is not a right but is something for which people *ask*. The beginning of the ceremony underlines this with the question:

"What do you *ask* of God's church for your child"

Once people have asked to be initiated into the Church Community, the Church then wants to ensure that those people **understand the promise** they are making to the *Community*, to *their child* and to *themselves*.

In Infant Baptism, the next thing we ask of the parent(s) is:

"You have asked to have your child(ren) baptised. In doing so, *you are accepting the responsibility* of training them in the *practice of the faith*. It will be *your duty* to bring them up to keep God's commandments as Christ taught us, by loving God and our neighbour. Do you clearly understand what you are undertaking?"

(What does "*practice of the faith*" mean to you??)

The preparation material is to help you understand what the *promise and commitment* is that *you are making* in asking for the Church to celebrate the Baptism of your child.

**"The Christian Community
welcomes you with great joy..."**

So why have our child baptised?

What will happen to our children if they are not baptised?

Will they still get into a Catholic school?

These are some of the concerns parents have, even if they do not attend Church. The Church no longer teaches that only baptised people, or people who go to Church, go to heaven. We believe that God's grace is beyond such activities.

Further, Catholic schools accept a broad range of Christian and non-Christian religions and there are many unbaptised children in Catholic schools.

So why have our child baptised?

It makes sense if you are intending to be a part of the regular, worshipping life of the Church with your children. **Christianity is a way of life – not a brand name.**

Why would you commit your child to something you don't really believe in for yourself? If your child is baptised, you will be committing yourself to living a Christian way of life (which naturally includes participating in

the worshipping life of a Church community) for the entire time you have responsibility for your child's care and development.

If your children are not baptised then, the opportunity still lies open later in life where they may choose to be a part of the Church and take responsibility for their own on-going faith life.

The Church has a process for Adult Baptisms which happens every year.

Some history... In a time

when whole families became Christians, Baptism of infants occurred on the basis of their parents' lived Christian life in the community. Because of the parent's faith, the child was baptised on the basis of this on-going support and example. At this time, the infant was fully initiated with adults through the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist celebrated together.

Once, there was a belief, that only the baptised went to heaven and so parents rushed to have their child baptised "just in case".

So why have our child baptised?

**“Faith” is
a VERB!!**

A JOURNEY of faith

HOW does Faith Grow??

IMITATION

.... For your child from his/her birth until he/she is about 7 years old, YOU are GOD! Everything you do, everything you say, wherever you put your values and time is teaching him/her what is IMPORTANT—What you believe in.

If your child is to learn how to pray—they must see/hear YOU pray; if your child is to know about Jesus—they must hear and see your relationship with Jesus; if your child is to learn how to worship— they must see/experience you worshipping at Mass with the community.

**“To believe” is
to
“be in LOVE!”**

Your child wants to know stories about who we (the community) are, who are our heroes, how do we belong? It's a time when they discover that what they believe in is not exclusive to their own family, but other people also believe in similar things.

QUESTIONS???

Your child is an adolescent—”OK that’s what my parents/my church/ other adults believe BUT what do I believe??”

This leads to questions, arguments, challenges to parents/authorities. Important for parents to answer honestly and gently challenge the child in their own statements/arguments.

STORIES

As your child grows to about 11-12 years, others have a growing influence on their faith growth—Teachers, Friends, their School etc. It’s important for the values of these people to at least complement yours.

I believe in...

Your child, now an adult, has come to a relationship where Christ and His ways are the centre and the origin of all his/her values/actions/decisions.

and...

The journey continues over and over, deeper and deeper in communion with God & God’s People.

So why have our child baptised?

What do I need to bring for the Church's Celebration of Baptism??

Godparents: (At least one—maximum: TWO) Often people choose family or friends. It's important to think seriously about the Christian example the Godparent(s) give because they represent the Church Community who, on the Baptism of your child, share in responsibility for his/her faith development. They must renew their Baptismal Promises during the Ceremony and answer the question:

“Are you ready to help these parents (this parent) in their duty as Christian Parent(s)?” to which they respond: *“I am”* or *“We are”*.

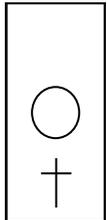
Godparents need to be: **1)** Fully initiated into the Christian Church (Baptised, Confirmed and Celebrating Eucharist) and live a life consistent with faith and their role; **2)** Mature enough (16yrs or older) to understand the commitment they are making; **3)** Be Catholics (although one may be from another Christian Denomination who can be a Christian Witness).

A Baptismal candle This candle is given to your child with the command: *“Receive the Light of Christ!”* You, as parents, are reminded that this light is entrusted to you to be kept burning brightly and by your example help your child always to walk as a Child of the Light with Christ's light burning brightly in his/her heart.

Ideally, the candle should be **white**, decorated with some **Christian symbol** e.g. a Cross and large enough to withstand our summer heat, stand on it's own, and to be used over and over again on the anniversaries of his/her Baptism.



A Baptismal Garment This belongs to your Child — it's not a hand-me-down. It is put on your child during the ceremony with the words *“See in this white garment the outward sign of your Christian dignity ... bring it unstained into ... heaven.”* Your child can come to the ceremony dressed in any colour (preferably not white) and at the appropriate time, this garment is put over all other clothes. It can be as simple as a white rectangular cloth with a large hole in the centre for your child's head and decorated simply with a cross. See the example



So why have our child baptised?

From the Baptism Ceremony.. **"...you are accepting the responsibility of training him/her in the practice of the faith."**

What are some ways I/we can do this??

Baptism is the beginning of a life-long growth in faith and in the church community. There are **many things we can do** to continue to nurture our children in the faith from a very young age.

There are many different people or organisations that have an influence in your child's life: e.g. immediate family, extended family, friends, church community, school community, other groups within the community, governments.



We know that children, particularly learn from the behaviour modelled by their parents. If parents are living their faith actively in their everyday lives, there will be a natural progression within the lives of their children.

Some examples... of things we can do to help grow our children's faith are:



Parents kiss their children goodnight every night. You might also like to place the **sign of the cross** on their head and say something like "God bless you".

More over the page....

So why have our child baptised?

From the Baptism Ceremony..

"...you are accepting the responsibility of training him/her in the practice of the faith." – Cont'd

Some families establish a pattern of saying prayers at bedtime from a very young age. It is a wonderful way to look back over the day and say, "Thankyou" to God for what has happened, to pray for the people we love, and to acknowledge the things we didn't quite get right (and would like to work on). Little children love an opportunity to pray for people they love, pets, sunshine, mud puddles, and all sorts of other things.



Continue to remind your child about their baptism.

Celebrate the **anniversary of their baptism** each year. You could light their baptism candle, say a prayer thanking God for them and asking God to continue to care for them and guide them throughout their lives.



Children love photographs. Bring out the photos of their baptism. Remind them about what happened at the baptism, why they were baptised and **what it means**. Remind them about who was there and how you celebrated afterwards.

A constant reminder and an essential way of living out of our baptism is by **being an active part of the church community**. Becoming a regular part of the worshipping community quickly becomes a part of the rhythm of life. Children very quickly feel that they belong and are encouraged to participate in a variety of ways as they grow up. Being a part of the community from the start is a wonderful foundation for faith development, and the community provides friendship and support – a second family.



Music can be soothing, enlivening and lots of fun.

When your child is little see if you can find a gentle song of faith to sing as a lullaby.

So why have our child baptised?

**Some of our Community's Prayers
(Pray these or other prayers...
Marvel at how your children
"absorb" them!)**

THE LORD'S PRAYER:

Our Father,
who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name, thy
kingdom come,
thy will be done on earth
as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily
bread;
and forgive us our tres-
passes
as we forgive those who
trespass against us;
and lead us not into temp-
tation,
but deliver us from evil.

THE "GLORY BE".

Glory be to the Father,
and to the Son, and to
the Holy Spirit
As it was in the
beginning, is now, and
ever shall be, world
without end. Amen.

THE "HAIL MARY".

Hail Mary, full of
grace, the Lord is with
you. Blessed are you
among women and
blessed is the fruit of
your womb, Jesus.

Holy Mary, Mother of
God, pray for us sin-
ners, now and at the
hour of our death.
Amen.



So why have our child baptised?

Our Lady, Queen of Apostles Catholic Church

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If you can't make your own, Baptismal Candles and Baptismal Garments can be bought from:



Parish Religious Goods Store
Outside our Church,
Before and after Weekend Masses which are: Sat 6pm, Sun 7am, 9am,

Christian Supplies,
12 Railway Terrace
Milton.....4064
Ph..3367 2909

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