

Dear Parents,

Thank you for your inquiry concerning the baptism of your child. Since this is such an important event in your child's life and also in the lives of your whole family, we want you to have a joyful experience both during the preparation period of this sacrament and the actual conferring of it. To help accomplish this, it is important that you adhere to the important directions listed below.

1. Families are asked to be/become registered parishioners of Saint Mary Church. Please check to see if you are registered at the parish office. This should be done as soon as possible.

2. It is **MANDATORY** that **BOTH** parents attend the Pre-Baptism class and we **ENCOURAGE GODPARENTS** to also attend. Once the good news of your pregnancy has been confirmed and the due day is established, it is time to begin this process.

IMPORTANT

3. Choosing the date of your child's baptism can be done when you have chosen your child's godparents and their letters of **RECOMMENDATIONS [SPONSOR FORMS] FROM THE GODPARENTS' PARISHES** have been given to Saint Mary. Please make sure that your child's name appears on the sponsor form. A baptism **DATE CAN ONLY BE SET** if the necessary paperwork is submitted to the parish. Guidelines for Letters of Recommendation are on the back of this letter.

We look forward to meeting **YOU** and your **SPONSOR** at the Pre-Baptism class. Until then, we ask the Lord to abundantly bless you in your vital role as guardians of the new life that has been entrusted to you.

God's Blessing,

The Church of Saint Mary

SPONSORS [GODPARENTS] REQUIREMENTS

Sponsors assist the parents in their responsibility and duty to raise their child in a Christian manner. They also represent the entire Christian community.

SPONSORS MUST [PLEASE READ: IMPORTANT!]

1. Be Baptized and Confirmed Roman Catholics who attend Mass weekly and receive the Eucharist.
2. Be about 16 years of age.
3. Not be one of the parents.
4. Lead a good, moral life in keeping with Church teaching and be a good role model for the child.
5. If married, had their marriage performed according to the rites of the Catholic Church.
6. Be a registered member of their own parish.
7. Cannot be a former Catholic.

SPONSOR CERTIFICATE

Sponsors are required to obtain an eligibility certificate ~~FROM THEIR OWN PARISH~~. Be sure that the baby's name also appears on the Sponsor form. Sponsors from Saint Mary must go to the rectory for approval. Please inform the secretary that you need a sponsor certificate when you arrive. Sponsors from other parishes must obtain a written form from their parish. We suggest the sponsors call their own rectory for more details. Some parishes have a time requirement before they will issue a certificate so do not delay in obtaining one.

If you have any questions concerning a potential sponsor's eligibility, call the rectory ~~BEFORE~~ asking him/her to be a sponsor! Please remember to bring these sponsor certificates with you on the day you attend the prep class in order to choose a date for your child's baptism.

CHRISTIAN WITNESS

As long as one sponsor is Roman Catholic, the other sponsor may be a non-Roman Catholic Christian. He or she must be ~~BAPTIZED~~ and fulfill the other requirement [2, 3 & 4] mentioned above. Since Canon [Church] Law required only ~~ONE~~ sponsor, and as a sign of our progress toward Christian unity, a non-Catholic ~~BAPTIZED CHRISTIAN~~ may serve as a Christian Witness.

A non-Christian [i.e. a non-baptized person: a member of the Jewish, Islamic or other faith] may ~~NOT~~ be a ~~Godparent~~, ~~Sponsor~~ or ~~Christian Witness~~. Since the sponsors renew their own baptismal vows during the Rite, it is ~~NOT~~ possible for a ~~Non-Christian~~ to serve as sponsor or Christian Witness. ~~former~~ Roman Catholics may not be a ~~Sponsor~~ or ~~Christian Witness~~.