

FAQ's for Baptizing a Child at St. Ann Parish 2024-2025

When are Baptisms held at St. Ann Parish?

- Baptisms for children ages 0 through 6 years are usually celebrated at Sunday Mass or Saturday Vigil.
- Baptism weekends are scheduled 4 times each year and listed in the bulletin.
- Families who cannot participate in a regularly scheduled Baptism weekend, can ask for special permission from the pastor for an alternate date. These baptisms, once approved, usually do not take place during a Mass, but immediately after a weekend liturgy.
- Families who belong to St. Ann's but who wish to have their child baptized out-of-state with their extended family, can do all the preparations here. St. Ann's will provide the documentation for the other parish.
- Unbaptized children who are 7 years old or older are required to participate in the full RCIA process which is a much longer preparation for the entire family.

Are there Parent classes to Attend?

- Baptism preparation for parents of young children is offered 4 times a year. The course is two sessions, held on 2 consecutive Sunday afternoons 1:00-2:15pm. The classes are listed in the bulletin.
- At least 1 parent must attend both sessions. Parents, godparents and grandparents are welcome. You may bring the baby. Godparents are NOT required to take a class. There is a \$35 materials fee per family.

What are the Parent requirements?

- Church Canon Law requires that there must be a "founded hope" that the child will be raised in a Catholic faith-filled home
- If this is lacking, parents have the right to call on the godparents and grandparents to help to provide faith support. If this is not available, baptism is not denied, but delayed.
- At least 1 parent should be a baptized Catholic. The parents are NOT required to be married to each other, or registered in the parish, or have completed the sacrament of Confirmation.
- If the parents are not officially registered here at St. Ann's, **AND** they do not live within the official St. Ann parish boundaries, they **MUST** get a letter from the pastor of the Catholic parish where they live. This letter must give St. Ann's permission to celebrate the baptism here. If the family is currently not active in any parish and wishes St. Ann's to become their home parish (no matter where they live in Central Virginia), they can simply register at St. Ann's and then a letter from another parish pastor is not necessary.

What are the Godparent requirements?

- The diocese requires at least 1 Catholic godparent who must sign an affidavit verifying that he/she is...
 - At least 16 yrs old
 - A current active, practicing Catholic who has completed the sacrament of Confirmation
 - If this godparent is married, the marriage must be officially recognized by the Catholic Church
 - The godparent cannot be the parent of the child to be baptized (grandparents are OK)
- You can have a 2nd godparent...
 - The 2nd godparent can be a Baptized Catholic (godparent) or Baptized Christian (Christian witness)
 - If the 2nd godparent is a Baptized Catholic, that person must also sign a Catholic godparent affidavit
 - If the 2nd godparent is a Baptized Christian (not a Catholic), they do not have to sign an affidavit.
 - The 2nd godparent does not have to be married to the 1st godparent, but **MUST** be the opposite sex (i.e. no 2 godmothers)

What are Proxy Godparents?

- If the official godparents cannot attend the baptism, they can select anyone to serve as substitute or proxies for the event
- You may also have as many "unofficial godparents" as you like. Only the first 2 will be listed in the official Church records and on the certificate.