

Please contact OLV rectory at 201-768-1706 to schedule your baby's baptism.

OLV offers a 45 minute baptism instruction (given by our deacons) for new parents in anticipation of your baby's baptism. Please contact the rectory to schedule.

Please have your child's godparents complete the Godparent Eligibility form at the end of this document – and have their parish priest (parish in which they are registered) sign and affix the parish embossed seal. The completed forms should be returned to OLV rectory as soon as possible. The certificate states that the individual is a practicing Catholic and eligible to serve as a Godparent. The child to be baptized must have one Godparent, but may have two. If you choose two, one must be a male and the other a female. The mother or father cannot be a Godparent to their child.

### **Who can be a Godparent?**

According to the Code of Canon Law the Godparent must:

1. Be a minimum of 16 years of age.
2. They must be a Roman Catholic who has received the Sacraments of Holy Eucharist and Confirmation.
3. If they are married, they are married according to the law of the Roman Catholic Church.
4. They must lead lives in harmony with the Catholic Faith and the role to be undertaken.

Here we should pause to clarify who qualifies as a Catholic Godparent. A Roman Catholic who is in an invalid marriage disqualifies themselves from being a Godparent. Moreover, if a person is Catholic but is antagonistic to the faith, i.e. has the attitude "I am a Catholic but", he/she would not be a good example and witness to the faith. Parents need to find good practicing Catholic Godparents. Sadly, this task can be very difficult in today's world.

The best place is to look for relatives, even grandparents, who have blood relationships with the Godchild and have kept the faith over the years. A Godparent should be a trustworthy witness of the faith who will help the Godchild attain eternal salvation.

### **Christian Witness**

Technically, only Roman Catholics can be Godparents. A Christian of another denomination, whether Orthodox or Protestant, however, may be a "Christian witness" to the baptism along with the Catholic Godparent. The reason for this distinction and restriction is that the Godparent not only is taking responsibility for the religious education and spiritual formation of the baptized person, but also is representing the Church, the community of Faith, into which the person is being baptized. A Christian who is not Catholic, although perhaps a very holy Christian, cannot fully attest to the beliefs of the Roman Catholic Church. A Roman Catholic may not be a "Christian Witness".

**Where in Scripture is the Divine origin and importance of Baptism found.** The following Scripture passages establish the Divine origin, and great importance, of the Sacrament of Baptism:

- "Jesus answered: Amen, amen I say to you, unless a man is born again of water and the Holy Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God." **John 3:5**
- "Do penance, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of your sins." **Acts 2:38**
- "And Jesus coming, spoke to them saying: All power is given to me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore; teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit." **Matthew 28:18-19**
- "And He said to them: Go into the whole world and preach the Gospel to every creature. He that believes and is baptized shall be saved; but he who does not believe shall be condemned" **Mark 16:15-16**