

Infant Baptism

at

St. Francis of Assisi
Catholic Church



St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church

2650 Parish View

Colorado Springs, CO 80919

719-599-5031

Office email: parish@stfranciscs.org

Welcome and congratulations on the arrival of your child! We are honored to work with you during this time and to help welcome your child into the Catholic Faith. The Sacrament of Baptism allows your child to participate in the Trinitarian life and carries very special and important responsibilities for you as a parent. We want to walk with you on this journey and help you prepare to guide your child in the Faith.

Jesus commanded the Apostles to *“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”* (Matthew 28:19). St Francis of Assisi Parish exists in order to help people encounter Christ and make disciples, and it is our prayer that through the baptism of your child, you will encounter Christ more deeply as you help your child become a disciple of Christ.

May God bless you!



What is Baptism?

Baptism is the “basis of the whole Christian life, the gateway to life in the Spirit, and the door which gives access to the other sacraments” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1213). Through baptism, our sins are washed away, and we receive the incredible gift of God’s life in our souls. Baptism is necessary for salvation, which is why it is important to baptize your child as soon as possible after birth.

What are my responsibilities as a parent?

As a parent, God has entrusted you with the task of helping your child get to heaven and given you the great privilege and responsibility of raising your child in the Catholic Faith. This means that you need to live out your Catholic Faith and be an example to your child by attending Sunday Mass every week and receiving the Sacraments of Confession and the Eucharist at least once per year. It also means that God entrusts you with teaching your child the truths and traditions of our Catholic Faith. We encourage you to join the Family Faith Formation program here at St Francis to help you and your child grow in knowledge of the Faith and love for Our Lord.

What are godparents?

According to Canon Law, a godparent will, “together with the parents, help the baptized to lead a Christian life in keeping with baptism and to fulfill faithfully the obligations inherent in it.” The godparent should be able to play an active part in your child’s life as a role model, helping your child to grow into a faith-filled and practicing Catholic.

How should I select a godparent?

A godparent has a serious responsibility and special role to play, and you should select someone who is able to fulfill those obligations. You should not select a godparent simply to honor a relative or friend; there are other ways to do that. Rather, you should select a faithfully Catholic godparent who lives out the Faith and can be a good example to your child.

According to Canon Law, if you have two godparents, you should have one male and one female; or you may choose to have just one godparent.

What are the essential criteria for someone to be a godparent?

According to Canon Law, godparents must

- Be over the age of 16
- Be a fully initiated Catholic (have received the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist) and be a practicing Catholic, living according to Church teaching
- Not be the mother or father of the person being baptized
- If married, they must have been married in the Church or had their marriage regularized within the Church. If single, they need to be living according to Church teaching (not living together outside of Catholic marriage or involved in a lifestyle contrary to Catholic morality).

How do I prepare for the Baptism of my child?

At St Francis, there are three components to baptism preparation:

1) Submit an Information Sheet for Baptism

Information sheets and a list of requirements are available by contacting the parish office. You will receive all the information required to prepare for and schedule your child's baptism.

2) Complete a Baptism Preparation Class

- a. We use the REBORN video-based course available on Formed.org. After watching the videos online, parents & godparents attend an on-site guided discussion at St Francis. Contact the parish office.
- b. Another option is to attend Baptism Preparation at another parish and send a completion certificate to the parish office.
- c. A third option is the CatholicBaptismPrep.com online Baptism Preparation course. The cost is \$75, which includes both the parents and godparents. Please allow several weeks to complete the class.

NOTE: If you completed a Baptism class, depending on how long ago, you may not need to take it again, but please provide a copy of the completion certificate.

3) Pick a date for the Baptism

Baptisms are usually celebrated by a priest or deacon after weekend Masses. In special circumstances, other arrangements may be made.

When can I schedule the Baptism?

Baptisms should be scheduled as soon as possible after the birth of your child. We are eager to help bring your child to this wonderful Sacrament. The parish office should receive all the necessary paperwork and class completion certificates for **BOTH** parents and godparents before finalizing the baptism date. We encourage you to plan ahead and allow time to complete the class and return the necessary paperwork. Please plan enough time to complete all requirements before making travel arrangements with family or the godparents.

FAQ

My child is over 7 years old. What do I need to do for him/her to be baptized?

Once a child has reached the age of reason (7), they must go through the Rite of Christian Initiation in order to be baptized. Please contact the parish office for more details if your child is over 7 and you would like him or her to be baptized.

My spouse and I weren't married in the Church and cannot receive Communion. Can our child be baptized?

Yes. The marital situation of the parents does not usually affect the child's baptism. However, you still have the obligation to raise your child as a Catholic, and your situation may make it more difficult. Well-formed godparents will be especially important. We encourage you to speak with one of our clergy to discuss the possibility of *convalidating* your marriage so you can fully participate in the Sacramental life of the Church with your child(ren).

FAQ

Can my non-Catholic or non-practicing friend/family member be a godparent?

To be a godparent, your friend or family member must be a practicing Catholic in good standing, so they can provide a good Catholic example to your child and help them grow in the Faith. However, a non-Catholic may be a witness at the baptism in the event that godparents cannot attend the baptism.

The godparents weren't married in the Church. Can they still be godparents?

Part of the responsibility of a godparent is being a living example of the Faith. If the godparents are not married in the Church or are otherwise not living according to Church teaching, they are unable to fulfill this role. If the people you have asked to be godparents are in this situation, we encourage them to speak with their parish priest about the possibility of *convalidating* their relationship.

I only know one person who can be a godparent. Is that a possibility?

Absolutely! We will just need the godparent's paperwork and a copy of their baptismal class completion certificate.

I don't know anyone who is able to be a godparent. Can my child still be baptized?

Yes! Please let us know if you are in this situation and we will assist you.

Are godparents the same as legal guardians?

No. Godparents, together with the parents, help encourage the spiritual and moral life of your child. They are not obliged to take custody of the child in the absence of the parents.

If you have any further questions, please contact the parish office at 719-599-5031 or parish@StFranciscs.org. We'll be happy to help!