

**ST MARK'S CHURCH
215 CRESCENT PARKWAY
SEA GIRT, NJ 08750
(732) 449-6364 – Ext. 100**

General Requirements for Administration of the Sacrament of Baptism

Baptism is the first sacrament we receive as Catholics. It welcomes us into God's family and the Church. During Baptism, a priest, deacon, or bishop pours water over the person's head and says, "I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and the Holy Spirit." This special moment washes away original sin and fills us with God's grace. It helps us begin a new life as followers of Jesus. Baptism is like a doorway that starts our faith journey and helps us grow closer to God.

Registration: Parents must be registered members of St. Mark's. If they are not registered parish members, they must obtain a Letter of Permission from their parish to baptize the baby here at St. Mark's.

For your child to participate, they must be 6 years old or younger. If your child is older than 6, they must be prepared to receive the sacrament and attend Religious Education classes. Please contact our director at (732) 449-6364 ext. 105.

Scheduling the Baptism: Baptisms are held on Sundays at 1:30 p.m. Parents are encouraged to attend the noon Sunday Mass. A baptism application and all required documents must be submitted to the church office. The baptism date will be set only after all documents have been received.

Documents: Submit a copy of your child's birth certificate.

Godparents: The child may have two godparents—one male and one female—or just one, who can be either male or female. The godmother or godfather agrees to support the child's growth in the Catholic faith. Please note that when choosing godparent(s), they must be practicing Catholics in good standing and provide a letter of eligibility to serve as godparent(s).

General Requirements Godparents:

- Godparents must be at least 16 years old.
- Godparents must have received all the initiation sacraments: Baptism, Eucharist, Confirmation, and practicing Catholics receiving Communion.
- Godparents can be single or married, but if they are married, it must be a valid Catholic marriage. If the person has a civil marriage or lives together, he or she cannot be a godparent.
- Godparents can be male or female for any candidate.
- Godparents cannot be parents or stepparents of the child.

Sponsorship Letter: Godparent(s) must get a sponsorship letter from their parish to qualify as sponsors. All Catholic parishes provide this letter, so even godparents from out of state or country need to submit this form from their Catholic church.

Baptism Class: Parents and Godparents are required to attend a preparation class with our Pastor before the Baptism. This class helps ensure that both parents and Godparents fully understand the significance of this sacrament. Please call the office to schedule an appointment.

Donation: We rely on your generosity to help sustain our parish. Regarding baptisms, we welcome any donation you choose to give in support of our Church family.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. How many godparents should there be?

Church law only requires you to have one godparent; however, it has traditionally been to have two.

2. What sex should the godparent be?

If you choose only one godparent, you can select either a male or a female. However, if you want to have two godparents, there must be one male and one female.

3. Can a non-Catholic serve as a godparent?

A baptized non-Catholic can serve as a Christian witness at a Catholic baptism, but only if there is also a Catholic godparent who meets all the Church's requirements. The Christian witness should be an active and practicing church community member. During the baptismal rite, the Christian witness may participate in the parts of the ceremony that suit their role, similar to the godparent.

4. What is the difference between a godparent and a witness?

Witness is a term mentioned explicitly in the Code of Canon Law. Canon Law defines a witness as a baptized person in a non-Catholic ecclesial community. A godparent is a confirmed, practicing Catholic in good standing with the Church.

5. Can someone serve as a godparent by proxy (stand-in) if the godparent cannot participate in the baptism ceremony?

If a godparent cannot attend the baptism ceremony, a proxy may stand for the absent godparent. The proxy's name will be recorded in the sacramental book alongside the name of the missing godparent.