

Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary



The Rite of Baptism

302 High St.

Hackettstown, NJ 07840

A Blessing for a Newly Baptized Infant

May you be spirited by the water's flow
And dazzle all in your shining Easter dress
May your life reflect the Christ candle glow
And the holy oil challenge you to your best

May you sleep peacefully in the Church's care
And awake with eager and laughing heart
Responding to God's offered love affair
Whatever the Lord wants you'll do your part

And the God who brought you to life in an act of love
And offers you life as a revelation of his love
Bless you and protect you with that love
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

Dear Parents,

It is with great joy that your parish community of Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary anticipates celebrating the Sacrament of Baptism for you and your dear child. As you begin to prepare for the celebration, I offer you my prayers and best wishes.

I am pleased to send this general information regarding the Rite of Baptism here at Assumption to you, so that on the actual day of the celebration, the Sacrament will be celebrated in accordance with the particular law of the Catholic Church and the traditions here at Assumption Parish.

These guidelines are not meant to be a series of "do's and don'ts", but rather an aid to ensure that each family who has approached Church of the Assumption may understand how we celebrate this important day when your child is born again, by water and the Spirit.

Begin to pray, as I know you already have, that your child, given to you by God, may have your own example of a faith-filled life as you practice the Catholic faith in which your child is about to be baptized.

*Sincerely yours in Christ
Rev. Leopoldo Salvania
Pastor*

CONTACTING THE PARISH

By now you should have gotten in touch with the parish office. If this has not yet been done, please call 908-852-3320 to begin the process for the Baptism of your child.

- In order to have your child baptized here at Church of the Assumption, you must be a registered member of the parish. If you have moved away and still wish to have your child baptized at our parish, you must get a letter of release from your current parish where you live.
- If your marriage was performed here at Church of the Assumption and you have not registered as a new family, you must do so. As a married couple, you will no longer be registered with your family.
- When you call into the office, initial information will be taken by the parish secretary. You will be asked if you are registered and verification will be made at that time. If you are not registered, you will be instructed to do so at that time by filling out a Census Form.
- Additional information will be given to you about the required pre-Baptismal class that is held for new parents, as well as for those parents who have never participated in a pre-Baptismal class before. These classes are normally held each month. It is recommended that this class be taken AFTER the birth of the baby.

GODPARENTS

One of the areas that may often cause confusion is the selection of godparents for the baby. Often those chosen are not able to fulfill this most important role because of their status as a member of the Catholic Church.

In order to avoid any misunderstanding:

1. Traditionally two godparents are chosen: one godfather and one godmother.
2. Traditionally, both godparents are Roman Catholics, who are at least 16 years of age. They must have received the Sacraments of Baptism, First Holy Communion and Confirmation.
3. If married, their marriage must be recognized by the Catholic Church.
4. At times one Catholic godparent and one baptized non-Catholic Christian may be used. The non-Catholic is considered by the Catholic Church as a “Christian Witness”, and this term will appear on the form given at the time of Baptism.
5. May a Catholic who has “left” the Catholic Church (or married outside the Catholic Church) be a “Christian Witness”? No, only a baptized non-Catholic Christian can be a “Witness” – not a “former Catholic”.
6. The “official” rule of the Catholic Church is that only ONE godparent needs to be used...If so, the godparent may be a man or a woman. When the traditional two godparents/witnesses are used...then both the man and woman must be used.

LETTERS OF ELIGIBILITY FOR GODPARENTS

This is another area where feelings can get hurt and questions may arise.

- In order to be eligible as a godparent, the Catholic godparents must obtain from the parish where they worship a letter attesting that they are REGISTERED AND PRACTICING CATHOLICS.
- If the godparents you choose are actively practicing their Catholic faith, they should be able to obtain these letters of eligibility without any problem.
- If you choose a non-Catholic to serve as a “Christian Witness, we need a copy of their baptism certificate.
- These LETTERS OF ELIGIBILITY MUST be submitted well in advance of the Baptism.
- We encourage you to consider carefully those you choose, so that you and your family are not hurt and disappointed or even angry with the Church.

DAY OF BAPTISM

1. Baptisms are normally held at 12noon on the first and third Sunday of the month in English and the second Sunday of the month in Spanish.
2. Since the celebration takes place in the Church, we expect all to respect the custom here at Church of the Assumption, by moderately taking pictures during ceremony. Pictures may be taken afterwards.
3. Often the family feels embarrassed by not providing the baby with their bottles, pacifiers, etc. Please don't feel embarrassed, have anything you will need ready to help the baby during this time.
4. It has been the tradition of the Church that an offering be given to the Church on the day of the Baptism. It is NOT a FEE for the Baptism, but a free-will offering to the Church. IT IS NOT FOR THE PRIEST OR THE DEACON

Just a reminder: We baptize children...we 'christen' ships!