

Dear Parent(s) or Expectant Parents:

Congratulations! This letter is being written for parents (and expectant parents) who wish to have their child baptized at St. Louis R.C. Church.

As a result of Vatican II, the General Council of the Church (1962-1965), the emphasis of the Sacrament of Baptism has changed. Baptism and all the Sacraments are celebrations of real life events. They are visible signs pointing out, declaring, proclaiming that something real exists beyond the celebration and is the cause of our celebration. Jesus is the cause for our celebrating the fact that God is our Creator and loves us beyond our wildest expectations. We celebrate because Jesus chose to die on the Cross, then rose from the dead to give us the gift of the Holy Spirit, the gift of Divine Life itself.

Baptism is the external sign celebrating the entrance of a person into the total Christian Community as well as into a specific parish family. Parents, Godparents, the rest of the family and parish family together say:

“We accept you and responsibility for you. We will be with you on your journey. We believe that by becoming a member of our Catholic Faith Community, you will have new life, because we promise to love you and care for you just as Jesus does. You are one of us, our relative as truly Jesus is.”

When Jesus died and rose from the dead, He promised that we would follow Him. He is not only our Brother, but also our Leader, showing us the way. Just as He died, was buried, and rose again to a new life, so we imitate His actions in Baptism. We plunge into the Paschal (Easter) mystery of His death and Resurrection passing over to a new life in a new community.

Even though the child does not realize this connection and the saving power of Jesus, the Parents, the God-parents and the Community should. (see Romans 6:3-4)

It follows, then, that if we are celebrating a reality, that reality should exist. The reality being celebrated at Baptism has to do with a real welcome into the family of God in the Christian community. Each one of us shares some responsibility for this new person. Baptism is a beginning, but it presumes there will be a continuation of what was celebrated.

THE REALITY THAT SHOULD EXIST IS; A PRACTICING CATHOLIC FAMILY LIFE TOGETHER WITH PARTICIPATION IN A CATHOLIC PARISH FAMILY.

PARENTS; Your responsibility ----

Do you belong to a Parish and actively participate?

Are you attending Mass (etc.) regularly for this child to have a sense of his/her belonging to a Christian family?

Do you cultivate and have a prayer life at home for this child to grow into?

Why are you presenting your child for Baptism?

GODPARENTS; Your responsibility ----

Are you practicing Roman Catholics (attend Mass and receive the Sacraments) and fully initiated into the Church through the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist?

If married, are you married in the Roman Catholic Church?

As representatives of the Catholic Faith Community, are you the best examples of Catholic Christian living you can be?

PARISH; Our responsibility ----

Provide the place where Catholic Christians meet to celebrate our Faith and our life together.

Provide the Sacraments and support for our members.

Provide opportunities in Faith Formation and Religious Education at all levels.

FORMAT FOR PARENT PRE-BAPTISM CLASSES

Attend 1 session – approximately 1 hour

Both parents are to be present for the session (if single parent, that parent attends the session)

Godparents may attend and are encouraged to do so.

Classes are for adults only – Please do not bring children to the session.

REGISTRATION for classes can be made by calling the Rectory Office.

ATTENDANCE is required before Baptism date can be scheduled.

SPONSORS (GODPARENTS) who are not parishioners are required to submit a Letter of Recommendation from their Pastor which verifies Sponsor requirements as stated below.

Parishioners of St. Louis who are asked to be Sponsors will be verified through Parish records.

Sponsors (Godparents) must meet the following requirements: (Canon Law 872,873,874)

- 1] Must have completed their 16th year
- 2] Be a Catholic having received the Sacraments of Holy Eucharist and Confirmation
- 3] Are practicing Roman Catholics e.g. – attend Mass weekly and receive Holy Communion
- 4] If married, are married in conformity to the laws of the Catholic Church
- 5] Two godparents: one male, one female (if two are not available, one godparent is acceptable)
- 6] A baptized person who belongs to a non-Catholic denomination may be a witness to Baptism along with a Catholic sponsor