

DIOCESE OF SALFORD

The Sacrament of Baptism



The Sacrament of Baptism is the primordial sacrament in the life of a Christian. It is the sacrament that incorporates the faithful into the body of Christ; the Church.

Baptism invites us to receive the grace that is offered in the other sacraments of the Church, especially by sharing in the Eucharist, that is the gift of God sharing Himself with us.

Every child (and adult) who is baptised becomes a part of God's family and should be encouraged and enabled to live out their Catholic faith.

The Parish of Our Lady and the English Martyrs, as part of the Diocese of Salford adheres to a diocesan policy of Baptism.

In this leaflet the diocesan policy and certain elements of the sacrament of baptism are explained.

“We are called to live our baptism every day, as new creatures, clothed in Christ.”

Pope Francis

DIOCESAN BAPTISM POLICY

The following policy is followed and has been adopted by every Parish in the Diocese, under the direction of Bishop John Arnold.

If Catholic parents are not regularly attending Sunday Mass they should be encouraged to do so.

Every Catholic is obliged to attend Mass every Sunday and Holy Day.

One parent must be a baptised member of the Catholic Church, to ensure that the child baptised is *brought up and educated* in the Catholic faith.

Baptism cannot be separated from the Eucharist (the Mass), therefore:

As an indication of the parent's willingness "to embrace the call to live as part of the Church" they will be required to attend Mass for at least 6 Sundays prior to the arrangement of a date for Baptism.

Each family must attend a Baptism preparation meeting with the Parish Priest.

If there is a *serious doubt* that the child will be brought up in the Catholic faith, then the baptism of the child is to be deferred, until further catechesis takes place.

The deferment of the sacrament of baptism does not mean that the sacrament is being refused, but rather that the Catholic parents are being invited to further deepen their understanding of their faith, before the sacrament can be celebrated.

The baptism of the child should take place in the proper (home) parish of the parents.

However, if the parents practice their faith in a neighbouring parish an exception can be made, once *written permission* has been obtained from their own Parish Priest.

If you are from a neighbouring Parish but regularly practise your faith at the Parish of Our Lady and the English Martyrs, no permission for baptism is needed.

Who can be a Godparent and what is their role?

In the Catholic Church, only those who are baptised members of the Catholic Church are able to take on the responsibility of becoming a Godparent. Those who have been baptised outside the Catholic Church may undertake the role of "Christian Witness" to the baptism. A person who is not baptised *may not* be a Godparent.

The role of a Godparent is very important.

Each Godparent has the responsibility of assisting the Catholic parents in bringing their child up in the *practise of the Catholic faith*. Each Godparent will have to affirm their Catholic faith publicly during the Baptism rite.

The role of a Godparent is *religious* and therefore proper care should be made when choosing a Godparent for your child.

Do I need to provide anything?

The baby helps!

Seriously, you should either dress your child in white, or have a white baptism shawl (white blanket). This will be used during the Baptism rite.

Don't worry about what you need to say, Fr. Kieren will direct you throughout the celebration.

Do I need to invite everybody to the Church?

Please don't! You don't have to invite every Tom, Dick or Harry that you have met.

You know your family and friends well, please remember that the celebration is for your child, invite only those who will appreciate this wonderful celebration. Other friends and family members can join you for further celebrations afterwards.

How much does the Sacrament of Baptism cost?

It may come as a surprise but the sacrament doesn't actually cost anything!

The Sacrament of Baptism is a gift, a gift given to your child by God, through the Church.

Gifts are giving freely.

Saying that, you are welcome to make an optional donation to the Church.

If you would like to make a donation the minimum offering should be £20.