



The Church of St. Joseph In Greenwich Village

Baptism Handbook

“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. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Matthew 28:18-20

Congratulations on the birth of your child! Now is the time for your child's baptism, which is the foundation of the Christian life. It is a new birth where a child becomes an adopted child of God.

The friars at St. Joseph's are happy to help you to prepare for your child's baptism and we look forward to celebrating the baptism.

This Baptism Handbook will guide you through the preparation process, including a checklist comprising all the steps in the process on the back cover.

Baptism is a Sacrament

The Sacrament of Baptism is the foundation upon which all of the other sacraments are built. Baptism washes away original sin and at baptism the Holy Trinity comes to dwell in the inmost depths of the child's soul, which is called sanctifying grace. This Sacrament of Initiation makes someone a member of the Body of Christ and therefore enables him to receive the graces of all the other sacraments. Baptism is more than just water and words: the sacrament begins the child's connection to the Church and God, and so most fittingly takes place in a physical church building, with a priest or deacon representing Jesus Christ initiating the child into the life of the children of God, along with other members of the faithful who likewise gather to give thanks to God for his gifts to the child.

Who May Be Baptized at The Church of St. Joseph?

Parishioners may have their children baptized here. A parishioner is someone who is registered at St. Joseph's Church.

If you are not parishioner, you may have a baptism here with the written permission of your current pastor.

Baptism Age

Baptism should normally take place in the first month. However, children may receive infant baptism, where their parents make the profession of faith for them, up through age 6. Older children must be properly prepared for baptism. Contact to the director of religious education to begin a program of preparation. Adults are baptized at the Easter Vigil after completing RCIA.

Steps in Preparation for Baptism

1. Complete and email the [“Baptism Request Form”](#) to the parish secretary secretary@stjosephgv.nyc
2. If the parents are parishioners and have not already done so, then [register](#) at St. Joseph's.
3. If the parents are not parishioners, then they must obtain permission from their current pastor for the baptism to be at St. Joseph's.
4. Contact the godparent(s) about the following documents to submit to the parish ASAP:
 - a. Endorsed declarations for the godparents
 - b. Certificates of showing Confirmation for godparents

5. Both the parents and the godparents must schedule and attend the baptism preparation class if they have not already attended one.
6. Once all of the documents have been received a date may be scheduled for the baptism
7. Read the entire [Baptism Catechesis](#) before attending the Baptism Preparation Class at The Church of St. Joseph.

Scheduling a Baptism

We celebrate the Sacrament of Baptism on the 1st and 3rd Saturdays of each month at 1 PM.

To respect the personal nature of the sacrament, we limit baptisms to 2 families per Saturday, whose children will be baptized at the same ceremony.

If the child has been born, the date may be scheduled for anywhere from two weeks to three months after the paperwork arrives. Although, infants should be baptized as soon as possible.

Baptism Preparation Class

The purpose of the baptism preparation class is to help the parents and the godparents lay a strong foundation for their child's upbringing in the Catholic faith. Our goal is to help them understand what baptism is and how to raise the child as a Catholic.

The parents and godparents are required to attend **one** baptism preparation class that occurs on the 2nd and 4th Saturdays of each month at 1 PM for about 70 minutes, unless they have already attended a baptism preparation class.

You can [schedule the class](#) through our parish website.

There is no difference in the baptismal preparation class for the parents and godparents.

Before attending the Baptism Preparation Class at St. Joseph's, the parents and godparents must read the [Baptism Catechesis](#) that is on the parish website.

Baptismal Name

Choosing a baptismal name is an important decision for the parents. Choosing a Christian name, the name of a saint, ensures the child a patron in the communion of saints who will intercede in heaven on behalf of the child. If the first name of the child is not Christian, then we encourage the parents to choose a middle name that is Christian. The parents may choose a name that is used in different parts of the world, but it must not be offensive to Christians.

Godparents

The parents need to choose at least one godparent for the baptism, although you may chose both a godmother and godfather. The parents and godparents present an infant for baptism and help the newly baptized lead a Christian life and fulfill faithfully the obligations of baptism and the call to holiness.

Requirements for Godparents:

- Must be a practicing Catholic who lives the Faith and who can help guide the child in the Faith
- Be at least 16 years old
- Received the Sacrament of Confirmation
- Cannot be the parent of the child to be baptized

- Attend a baptism preparation class, if have not already attended one
- Submit both a Note of Endorsement and Certificate of Confirmation

Paperwork for Godparents

The godparents must submit two required documents:

- **Declaration with endorsement** – Godparents must sign declaration that they meet the requirements to serve as a godparent, and have it endorsed by their current parish priest. [Forms](#) may be found on our website. St. Joseph's parishioners must still complete the forms and should have one of the parish priests sign it after Mass.
- **Certificate of Confirmation for Godparents** – Godparents must contact the parishes where they were baptized, and request **recently issued** Certificates of Baptism *with notations* showing they have been Confirmed. Please provide the hardcopies.

Troubleshooting Paperwork for Godparents

The parents need to notify the godparents to obtain the above two required documents from their parish. This process may take a few weeks or longer so please notify the godparents ASAP.

The parish at which the godparents were baptized should have a record of all the Sacraments that the godparent received. If not, the godparents may have to contact the parishes where they were confirmed.

On the Day of the Baptism

Parents and godparents should arrive by 12:45. Everyone else should be in place by 12:55, so that we may begin on time. We generally caution against driving to the church, because parking can be difficult even on Saturday.

Children to be baptized should wear white, and their collar should be able to be loosened for the anointing with oil of catechumens, which is done on the upper part of the chest.

Baptism Donation

Though not required, it is customary for parents to make a voluntary donation in support of the ministry of the parish. These offerings are generally between \$100 to \$500.

Baptism Preparation Checklist

- Complete and return the baptism request form to the parish secretary.
- If parishioners of St. Joseph's, make sure registered at St. Joseph's.
- Or-*
- If not parishioners of St. Joseph's, obtain written permission from current pastor to hold baptism here.
- Submit **recent** Baptismal Certificate with *notations* showing they have been confirmed for each godparent.
- Submit declaration with endorsement for each godparent.
- Schedule baptism with friar.
- Parents attend baptism prep. class if haven't previously.
- Godparent(s) attend a baptism prep. class if haven't previously.

All paperwork must be submitted before any baptismal dates may be scheduled.