



Archdiocese of New Orleans

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January 13, 2013

Dear clergy, religious, and lay faithful of the Archdiocese of New Orleans:

PROMULGATION OF THE POLICY ON INFANT BAPTISM AS PARTICULAR LAW IN THE ARCHDIOCESE

The sacraments of the New Testament were instituted by Christ the Lord and entrusted to the Church. As actions of Christ and the Church, they are signs and means which express and strengthen the faith, render worship to God, and effect the sanctification of humanity. Among the sacraments, Baptism occupies the first place because it is the gateway to the other sacraments and is necessary for salvation.

While the proper manner of administering the sacrament of Baptism has been prescribed in the Code of Canon Law and in the approved liturgical books, varying practices and some pastoral issues have arisen in parishes throughout the Archdiocese regarding the administration of the sacrament of Baptism. In order to address the practices and issues that have arisen, the Pastoral Care and Practices Committee, led by Most Reverend Shelton J. Fabre, Auxiliary Bishop, was mandated to take a survey of the varying pastoral practices and issues across the parishes in the Archdiocese of New Orleans. The purpose of the survey was to come up with recommendations for uniform practices throughout the Archdiocese. A survey of the parishes was done through the ten deaneries in the Archdiocese. The results of the survey were then presented to the Presbyteral Council for discussions. The recommendations were discussed in several meetings by the members of the Presbyteral Council before they were finally passed unto me for approval. This Policy will help to standardize and bring uniformity to the administration of the sacrament of Baptism throughout the Archdiocese.

Ergo, I hereby promulgate the Policy on Infant Baptism as particular law for the Archdiocese of New Orleans. As particular law, this Policy is to be read and implemented in conjunction with the universal laws of the Church. The Policy takes effect on January 12, 2014, the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord. But although pastors may choose to implement the Policy in their parish before the aforementioned date, they must implement it by the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord in 2014.

I exhort all those on whom the execution of this policy depend and all the faithful to observe it with a sincere spirit and good will for the salvation of souls.

Wishing you God's blessings, I am

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Most Reverend Gregory M. Aymond
Archbishop of New Orleans

Given on this day:

The Feast of the Baptism of the Lord.