



## The Celebration of the Sacrament of Baptism of Infants St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic Church



### Basic Information

**Scheduling:** Baptisms are only scheduled during the weekend liturgies, as the first sacrament of initiation welcomes the child into the community of faith. Phone Nick Coffman through the Parish office to register and schedule a date/time

- Baptisms may be scheduled at the 5pm, 8:30am & 10:30am liturgies
- Baptisms are typically scheduled the 2<sup>nd</sup> full weekend of the month, with the exception of during the seasons of Advent and Lent, when no baptisms occur unless in the case of emergency
- If you are requesting baptism at our parish, but belong to another parish out of town (i.e. family lives in Billings), you must obtain written permission from your home parish's pastor for the baptism to occur at St. Thomas the Apostle, as this is an exception to the norm

**Baptismal Preparation Class Required:** Parents (and Godparents if at all possible) must attend a baptismal preparation class at St. Thomas the Apostle. Classes are typically scheduled the first Thursday of the Month; phone the office to register and confirm the upcoming class time

- If you have attended a class at another parish, you must take the class offered at our parish, as the information will be different and specific to the ritual that occurs here
- If you have had another child baptized at our parish, you do not need to repeat the class
- If you are joining us from another parish, in addition to having your home parish pastor's consent, you must also provide proof of completion of Baptismal preparation from your parish

**Parents:** Both parents must support their child in the learning and practice of the Catholic faith in an ongoing process as the child grows up

- Parents must be practicing Catholics, attend Mass each weekend and have a visible presence in the parish
- One or both parents must be Catholic

**Godparents:** Should be chosen with care, as per Canon Law they are responsible for the spiritual well-being of the child as well as assisting in bringing the child up in the practice of the Catholic faith

- Godparents must be either one male or one female or both a male and a female, but not two of the same gender. Selecting both a Godmother and Godfather is strongly encouraged
- Godparents must actively practice their faith in the Catholic Church and be fully initiated (having received the sacrament of Confirmation), being at least 16 years of age
- Godparents from another parish must complete the Godparent Permission form which is to be signed and sealed by the pastor of their home parish

### At the Celebration

- ✓ Parents, Godparents and child should arrive 30 minutes prior to Mass
- ✓ Child should be dressed in white, at least in a white top, if possible
- ✓ 2 pews will be reserved for you and your family; please let us know if you need more
- ✓ Parish staff will be at the church to greet you and run you through the ritual:
  - At the beginning of Mass, you and your family/friends will be invited forward to the Altar top step. You will receive a piece of paper for announcing your desire to Baptize your child in our parish community. Fr. Steve will trace the cross on the forehead, inviting you, parents, Godparents and often grandparents to do the same and he will anoint the top of the chest of your child. You are then seated to listen to the Sacred Scriptures and homily during the Liturgy of the Word.
  - The Baptism immediately follows the homily: Fr. Steve will invite you and the godparents behind the font (stand on the north side, facing the Altar). First we renew our baptismal faith, then Baptize, anoint with Sacred Chrism Oil, give the light of Christ in the candle (often to Godparents) to be kept burning bright, and then announce the newest member of our community. Return to your pews for the Universal Prayer
  - Parents, Godparents and the newly baptized child will bring forward the gifts at the preparation of the Altar, immediately following the Universal Prayer (aka: prayers of the faithful, general intercessions)