

Baptism Policy

St. Michael the Archangel Catholic Church

Crowley, LA

Infants are to be baptized according to the norms of the Rite of Baptism. Children of catechetical age and adults are to be initiated according to the principles of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA). The primary responsibility of raising a child in the faith rests with the parents. The parish is to provide preparation for the parents.

Parish Requirements:

Anyone who is a parishioner living within the geographical boundaries of the parish, or is a registered member on the parish census, is eligible to have their child/children baptized at St. Michael the Archangel Church. Any discussion regarding baptisms will only be had with the biological parents (adoptive parents included). Grandparents, friends, aunts, uncles, legal guardians, someone speaking on the parent's behalf, cannot schedule baptisms, or provide the staff with any personal information regarding the child or parents.

If this is the first child for either the mother or the father, both parents must attend a Baptism preparation course provided by the St. Michael Church before scheduling a Baptism. This class is not necessary if both parents have had other children baptized in the Catholic Faith.

Scheduling Baptisms:

Baptisms are celebrated on Saturdays after the 4:00 pm Mass, and on Sundays after the 10:30 a.m. Mass. There will be a rotating schedule of the clergy (the priests and deacons) that serve St. Michael Church. Baptisms are not to be celebrated outside of regular times and days. "Private" baptisms are not allowed, since they take away from the communal nature of the celebration of the Sacrament.

-- If a family would like a priest or deacon other than those assigned to St. Michael parish, a fee of \$50 is required for use of the church, and permission and all arrangements must be granted by the pastor. There will not be more than two (2) baptisms scheduled at a time. All parties (parents, godparents, grandparents, family, etc.) are expected and required to attend the liturgy (Mass) immediately before the baptism is to be celebrated. Out of respect to everyone's schedule, we will not wait for anyone to arrive later, or for someone who is "on their way." If someone wishes to be present for the baptism celebration, they must be present at Mass and then be with the family immediately following. If a parent or godparent is late or does not show up, the baptism will be rescheduled for another date.

Single Parents/Unwed Parents:

The consent of both biological (not legal guardians) parents must be obtained before the celebration of Baptism. In cases of a single parent, a written statement of consent to have the child baptized from the non-custodial parent must be provided to the pastor before scheduling a meeting with the pastor or scheduling the Baptism, unless the parental rights have been legally relinquished by the non-custodial parent (proof must be provided). In the event that a couple is not married, a copy of the child's original birth certificate must be obtained to state the biological father in the baptismal records.

Godparents:

For the grace of Baptism to unfold, the parents' help is important. So too is the role of the godfather and godmother, and so the sponsors must be firm believers, able and ready to help the newly baptized child on the road of the Christian life. Their task is a truly ecclesial function. The whole ecclesial community bears some responsibility for the development and safeguarding of the grace given in Baptism. (CCC 1255)

In infant baptism, the role of the Sponsor is together with the parents to present the child for baptism, and to help the child to live a Christian life befitting the baptized and faithfully to fulfill the duties inherent in baptism. (Canon Law #872)

One Sponsor, male or female, is sufficient; but there may be two, one of each sex. (Canon 873)

A Sponsor must be not less than sixteen years of age and must be a Confirmed Catholic in good standing with the Church, and who lives a life of faith which befits the role to be undertaken. (Canon 874)

A baptized person who belongs to a non-Catholic church community may be admitted as a Christian Witness, but only in company with the Catholic Sponsor. A Christian witness may not be less than 13 years of age, and may only serve as a Christian witness at the approval of the pastor.

**At least one godparent must be at least 16 years old, and a Confirmed and practicing Catholic. The other godparent may not be younger than 13 years old, and only with the pastor's approval.