



1618 TEXAS AVE. ▪ HOUSTON, TX 77001 ▪ 713-222-2289

Dear Parent,

Please read the following carefully and provide all information available to you. Baptism is no mere social convention, but the Sacrament in which Christ Himself purifies, justifies and sanctifies your child (cf. 1 Peter 1:23) so they may have the hope of eternal life. We rejoice with you in the birth of your child and look forward to welcoming them into the family of God and the communion of the Holy Catholic Church.

Attached, you will find *Godparent Guidelines*, the *Precepts of the Church* (either signed then scanned & emailed back or you may mail it), and a digital *Baptism Request Form* (must be filled out and returned, either by email or mail). Please read all items thoroughly and follow them scrupulously.

The role you play, as parent of the child to be baptized, is all-together important for their sanctity. You must have a firm commitment to the faith. There must be a founded hope that the infant will be brought up in the Catholic religion; if such hope is altogether lacking in evidence, the baptism is to be delayed according to the precepts of particular law (Canon 868 §2), and will not resume action until there has been an adjustment within the commitment of the parent.

Godparents represent the Church to both the parents & child, and should be chose accordingly. Godparent Guidelines, in brief:

- The Godparents, if married, must be so in on that is officially recognized as valid in the Catholic Church.
- It is not necessary to have two Godparents, but if so, there must be one male *and* one female.
- The Godparents must be at least 16 years of age.
- The chosen Godparents must be practicing Catholics in good standing with the Church (according to Her precepts) and have received the sacraments of Baptism, First Communion, and Confirmation.

***Please send a copy of the Official Birth Certificate as soon as possible once you receive it prior to the baptism.*** We realize this takes time after the birth of a baby to receive the official Birth Certificate, so the *Baptism Request Form* and its' information will be sufficient in the meantime. We are required to use the official Birth Certificate to prepare the Baptism Certificate; we will not be able to send you a copy of the Baptism Certificate until we receive that Birth Certificate.

Parents must to attend a Baptism Class within two years of baptizing their child, though this is not required if they have done so in the span of two year. We will require a copy of the Baptism Class Certificate to the Parish Office. Godparents may attend the class as well, but it is not required, though encouraged. **The Church of the Annunciation does not offer classes at this time.** A baptism *may* occur before the class is complete, but this is not encouraged, and it is with the understanding that you promise to attend the class. In addition, the Baptism Certificate will not be released until the certificate of completion of this class is received by our office.

Baptisms are usually performed at The Church of the Annunciation on Saturdays after the 8am Mass or after the 5:30pm Vigil Mass. All those in attendance for the baptism should arrive early and attend the 8am or 5:30pm Vigil Mass before the baptism. Please dress in appropriate Sunday attire, i.e. skirts past the knee, shoulders covered, caps removed, etc.

*If you are **not** a parishioner of Annunciation, you will need to obtain a letter from the pastor at the parish where you live granting permission for your child to be baptized at The Church of the Annunciation. **For non-parishioners there is a \$150 administrative fee for use of the church and a good will offering for the priest is always welcomed.*** Once the Baptism is approved to move forward at Annunciation, you may mail or drop off the fee at any time before the Baptism. Please mail to the following address:

The Church of the Annunciation  
P.O. Box 214  
Houston, TX 77001

For contributing parishioners who have been registered for two years or more, there is no administrative fee for use of the church, but a free will offering for the priest is suggested.

Again, congratulations on the birth of your child. We are joyous in welcoming them into the deep and loving relationship of God, our Father, and His Church.

Yours in Christ,



Fr. Paul Felix  
Pastor

#### PRE-BAPTISM LOGISTICAL PREPARATIONS CHECK-LIST:

- Read through the Baptism Letter & Godparent Guidelines.
- Read the Precepts of the Church and, to indicate your commitment, sign it.
- Fill out the Baptism Request Form.
- Email both the Precepts of the Church & Baptism Request Form back to Annunciation.
- Provide a copy of the Baptismal Certificate & Baptism Class Certificate or attendance notice to Annunciation.

# BAPTISMAL SPONSORS IN THE CODE OF CANON LAW

## CHAPTER IV : [BAPTISMAL] SPONSORS

- Can. 872 In so far as possible, a person being baptised is to be assigned a sponsor. In the case of an adult baptism, the sponsor's role is to assist the person in christian initiation. In the case of an infant baptism, the role is together with the parents to present the child for baptism, and to help it to live a christian life befitting the baptised and faithfully to fulfil the duties inherent in baptism.
- Can. 873 One sponsor, male or female, is sufficient; but there may be two, one of each sex.
- Can. 874 §1 To be admitted to undertake the office of sponsor, a person must:
  - 1° be appointed by the candidate for baptism, or by the parents or whoever stands in their place, or failing these, by the parish priest or the minister; to be appointed the person must be suitable for this role and have the intention of fulfilling it;
  - 2° be not less than sixteen years of age, unless a different age has been stipulated by the diocesan Bishop, or unless the parish priest or the minister considers that there is a just reason for an exception to be made;
  - 3° be a Catholic who has been confirmed and has received the blessed Eucharist, and who lives a life of faith which befits the role to be undertaken;
  - 4° not labour under a canonical penalty, whether imposed or declared;
  - 5° not be either the father or the mother of the person to be baptised.
- §2 A baptised person who belongs to a non-catholic ecclesial community may be admitted only in company with a catholic sponsor, and then simply as a witness to the baptism.

# THE PRECEPTS OF THE CHURCH

Dear Parents,

In presenting your child(ren) for Baptism you must provide a firm basis for the Church to have certitude that you are committed to the Catholic Faith and that you will take seriously your responsibility to educate and bring him up in the practice of the Catholic religion. If that foundation is lacking the baptism is to be put off until the parents have manifested a stable commitment. (CIC) # 868 art.1.2

1. **To keep the hold day of the Lord's Resurrection:** to worship God by participating in the Mass every Sunday and Holy Day of Obligation; to avoid those activities that would hinder renewal of soul and body, e.g., needless work and business activities, unnecessary shopping, and so forth.
2. **To lead a sacramental life:** to receive Holy Communion frequently and the Sacrament of Penance regularly – (ideally once a month as a healthy practice)
  - a. minimally, to receive the sacrament of Reconciliation at least once a year (annual confession is obligatory only if serious sin is involved).
  - b. minimally, to receive Holy Communion at least once a year, between the first Sunday of Lent and Trinity Sunday.
3. **To study Catholic teaching** in preparation for the Sacrament of Confirmation, to be confirmed, and then to continue to study and advance the cause of Christ.
4. **To observe the marriage laws of the Church:** to give religious training (by example and word) to one's children; to use parish schools and religious education programs.
5. **To strengthen and support the Church:** Support, through giving time, talent and treasure, one's own parish community and parish priests; the worldwide Church and the Holy Father.
6. **To do penance:** including abstaining from meat and fasting from food on the appointed days.
7. **To join in the missionary spirit and apostolate of the Church.** To transmit the Faith to all people everywhere.

*Please note (CIC) #855 "Parents, Sponsors, and the Pastor are to see that a name foreign to a Christian mentality is not given."*

By my signature, I commit to the obligations of practicing the Catholic Religion and keeping the Precepts of the Church.

Father's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Mother's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_