

Sacrament of Baptism

WHAT IS BAPTISM?

“Holy Baptism is the basis of the whole Christian life, the gateway to life in the Spirit, and the door which gives access to the other sacraments. Through Baptism, we are freed from sin and reborn as children of God; we become members of Christ, are incorporated into the Church and made sharers in her mission: Baptism is a sacrament of regeneration through water in the word.” (Catechism 1213) Through baptism, we become part of the community of God’s people, spanning all times and places, called to holy lives of prayer and service.

At Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish (SHJ), the sacrament of Baptism is celebrated communally, in the context of the Sunday Eucharist. It is celebrated during Mass to highlight the connection between Baptism and Eucharist, between the parish community and its newest member as well as his/her family.

BAPTISM OF YOUNG CHILDREN (0-6 years)

We celebrate baptisms of young children monthly at one of our weekend Masses (Saturday at 5:30pm, Sunday at 9:00am, 11:00am, 5:30pm). Parents/guardians are asked to participate in a Baptism Preparation Seminar to update their understanding of baptism, the important responsibilities of Christian parenting, and to learn more about the many ways our parish support families. The seminar takes place every month. At this seminar, we will, in a prayerful setting, review the practical details for the actual celebration.

Parents are encouraged to contact the parish while still awaiting the birth of their child. To schedule an initial interview, please contact the parish office at 206-284-4680.

COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Who is eligible?

If you live within the parish boundaries (roughly Mercer to Pike, Western to Boren Avenue) or have made SHJ your home (as demonstrated by parish involvement and regular Mass attendance), you are welcome to have your child (or yourself!) baptized here. Or if you are personally connected with a registered parishioner (i.e., grandparents)

If the family lives outside the area or is a member of another parish, a letter must be received from their own parish granting permission for the Baptism and verifying that the parents have participated in the parish’s Baptism preparation class.

Who can be a godparent?

Church law requires that there is at least one godparent for the child. Godparents need to be active, practicing, and confirmed Catholics who are at least 16 years old. Godparents need to submit written proof of registration and attendance of the baptism preparation class from their parish.

Can a non-Catholic be a godparent?

No, only a Catholic can be a godparent because they are asked to promise to help support raising the child in the Catholic faith. A non-Catholic Christian can witness the baptism as long as there is one Catholic godparent. A non-baptized person cannot be a godparent or witness.

What if the godparents cannot come to the actual celebration?

You can have a proxy stand in for the godparent(s). Please let our office know so we can record the name of the proxy on the certificate.

Can I schedule a private Baptism?

No, unless there is an exceptional pastoral circumstance. Personal occasions such as birthdays or family visits are not considered a pastoral exception. Baptism celebrates the initiation of the child into the parish community; it is thus very important that the community is present at the time of the celebration.

GODPARENTS

- If you are a godparent for a child being baptized at SHJ, the child's parents will be in contact with you about the requirements
- If you are a godparent for a child being baptized at another parish, read on! Many parishes require documentation for some aspect of your faith life. This tends to vary from parish to parish and from diocese to diocese.

Catholic godparents should be active Catholics, Confirmed, and updated on the sacraments of baptism.

The parish which you're baptized in has the full record of your sacramental life. Contact them for a copy of your sacramental records. If you are baptized at SHJ, contact our office at 206-284-4680.

If you are an active registered member of SHJ, you will be in our system (you get mailings from us). If you have never gotten around to register but are active in the parish, contact our office for the registration form.

If you need to attend a Baptism Preparation class, you are welcome to attend. You are welcome if you are registered at SHJ or not. Contact our office for dates and times.

BAPTISM PREPARATION CLASSES

Parents and godparents are required to take the Baptism Preparation Class. If the class is taken at Sacred Heart, there are required readings before the class. The literature can be purchased at the parish office (Mondays through Fridays, 9:00am to 4:30pm). The costs (payable in cash or check only) are:

- for Parents: \$10
- for Godparents: \$5 (per Godparent)

You will then be registered for the class upon purchase of the literature.