

St. Mark's Catholic Church

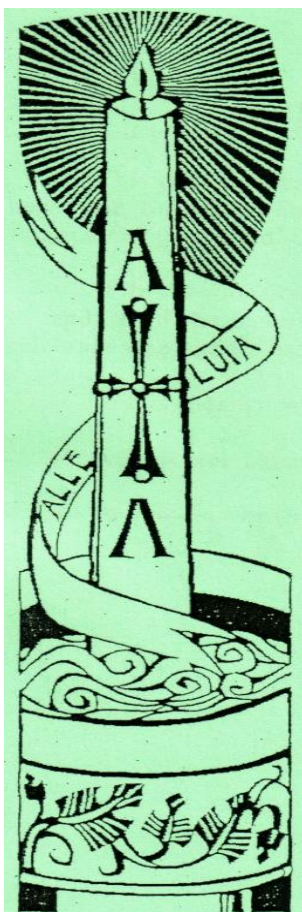
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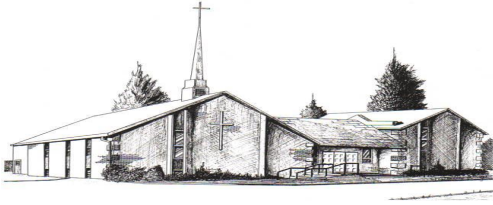


Claimed for Christ

**"My dear children, the Christian community
welcomes you with great joy.
In its name I claim you
for Christ our Savior by the sign of his cross."
*Rite of Baptism for Children***

**Baptism Preparation Resource
Archdiocese of Toronto**

Edition April. 2023



St. Mark's Catholic Church

345 Glad Park Avenue, Stouffville, Ontario L4A 1E4
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Dear Parents,

Congratulations! We welcome you to St. Mark's Pre-Baptismal Program!

The Lord has blessed you and the parish community with a beautiful gift - your child - the visible sign of your love for each other. You have played an important part in God's plan of creation, and with Him have given life to your child who will soon become a new member of His family, through the sacrament of baptism.

It is the duty of the priest to prepare families for the baptism of their children and to help them in the task of Christian formation which they have undertaken.

The rite of baptism for children puts emphasis on the role of parents in baptism, and on the preparation that should be a part of the celebration of this sacrament. The Introduction to the Rite states:

"...it is of great importance for the baptism that parents moved by their own faith, and other members of the community, should prepare to take part in the rite with understanding..."

As parents, we prepare long and well for the arrival of our children. Now we need to prepare ourselves to help our children for the new life in Christ they will lead as children of God - the lifelong commitment of Catholic Christians.

This package has been prepared to provide you with the information needed to begin the formal or immediate preparation for the celebration of the sacrament of baptism for your child.

We ask that *you take the time to read all the materials before you make any other preparations* to celebrate your child's baptism.

Continued over

The baptism preparation process at our parish includes the following:

► ***Please read through the baptism kit. This includes the following:***

- ❑ A welcome letter outlining the baptismal preparation program.
- ❑ Guidelines for the sacrament of baptism at St. Mark's
- ❑ Requirements to be godparents
- ❑ Godparents for life -- to be given to the godparent(s)
- ❑ Baptismal sponsor letters (sponsor 1 and sponsor 2)
- ❑ Frequently asked questions from parents
- ❑ Belonging to a parish community
- ❑ A case to think about before baptism
- ❑ **A baptismal request registration form**

► After prayer and discussion, if you feel ready to begin the preparation, **please return** the ***Baptismal Request Registration Form*** **only** to the parish office. When completed by the godparent(s) **return** the **Baptismal Sponsor Letter(s)** to the office as soon as possible. The remainder of the package is yours to keep for your information.

► After returning the forms, you will be contacted by a member of the pastoral team to help to register you for a baptismal preparation session.

We hope that the following guidelines for the sacrament of baptism in the Parish of St. Mark will be helpful to you as you prepare your child on this special occasion.

We, the Parish community of St. Mark's, look forward to joining you on this journey of preparation. Preparing for the celebration of a sacrament is a time of joy and anticipation in the life of the church and in the life of the family. And we pray for you that God will bless you and your family as you continue to grow in faith.

God Bless,

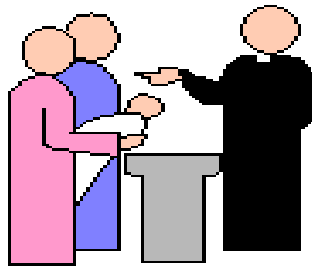
Fr. Tad Walczyk, Pastor

Deacon Wayne McCulloch

Deacon Gordon Lee



GUIDELINES



FOR THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

Steps To Prepare For Baptism

- i. **Register in the parish:** *Parents of the child to be baptized must either be living within the parish boundary or be registered members, if living outside the boundaries of St. Mark's Parish.* By asking for baptism, parents are asking to have their children initiated into a community of which they are a part, for the request presumes that the parents are active and participating members of the community. **Therefore, it is expected that parents are open to the renewal of their faith and worship of God each Sunday. If the family live outside the parish they need to have been registered, practicing and supporting the church for at least 6 months before presenting a child for baptism.** If you are not registered, you may do so by picking up a parish registration form (available in the foyer of the church) or by visiting the parish website <https://stmarksst.archtoronto.org/> to register online.
- ii. Baptism is the first sacrament of initiation; Confirmation and Eucharist are the other two. Baptism leads the newly-baptized person to the Table of the Lord.
- iii. Weekly participation in the Sunday Eucharist is a sign that a person is disposed to celebrating the sacrament of baptism and being open to the wonder and grace of God. *If you have been away from the weekly Sunday Eucharist, this is a wonderful time to return to the worship of God. It is Jesus who desires to nourish and feed us each Sunday at the Table of the Word of God and the Table of the Eucharist with His Body and Blood.*
- iv. **Celebration of baptism:** The Parish community of St. Mark's celebrates the sacrament of baptism for children **TWICE A MONTH ON THE SECOND SUNDAY OF THE MONTH AT 1:00 pm AND ON THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF THE MONTH either at 1:00 pm or 3:00 pm.** However, due to special circumstances this schedule may vary. As a general rule, we do not schedule private baptisms except in cases of emergency.
- v. The single baptism preparation session is approximately 1 hour, held via Zoom or physically meet in the Church. – usually **IN THE EVENING, HOWEVER TIMES CAN BE ACCOMODATED TO MEET INDIVIDUAL NEED.** **Both parents are required to attend this session.** A date for the baptism preparation class will be assigned after you submit the baptismal request registration form to the office. The date of the baptism will be determined after the baptismal preparation session. Please pick up the "Starting Point" book from the office prior to your baptismal session, donation of \$10.00.
- vi. So that you can fully focus on this preparation class, we ask that you make every effort to arrange babysitting for your children that evening.

vii. **Selecting Godparents and the Church requirements for Roman Catholic Godparents** (Please see the attached sheet, “The Role of Godparents”).

viii. **Pictures at the Baptism:** Photographs and video are permitted at the baptism ceremony. These are excellent means of sharing the memory of this joyous and special day with your child as they grow in age and faith. They will also turn out to be a good teaching tool. Please be sure to follow the instructions of the Celebrant to ensure that you will be getting the best pictures and not interfering with the ceremony.

ix. **Clothing and Candle:** A white robe or gown has been the traditional custom. The clothing should be worn loose enough at the neck to allow anointing of the child's breast. If a hat is worn, it should be easily removed. The parish will provide a decorated candle. After the ceremony it will be yours to keep as a reminder of this joyous milestone. The candle can be burned on Baptismal anniversaries and when the child receives other Sacraments in the future.

x. **Family Donation:** There is no fee for any sacrament or service from the Church. On the occasion of a baptism, assuming that God has blessed you with employment and the means and you have been supporting your parish over the year prior to the baptism, the **suggested offering** for the running and the maintenance of the church and to help pay down our large debt following the expansion of the Church, would be something in the range of between \$100 and \$200. If you have not been supporting the Church prior to this, we encourage you to consider offering at least \$200. However, basically be generous and offer what you can afford in thanksgiving to God both for the gift of your child and now for the gift of His Divine Life to your child through the sacrament of baptism by His Church. Your offering to St. Mark's Church should be placed in the envelope provided with the “Starting Point” book (please provide your name on the envelope) and give to the celebrant immediately after the celebration when you receive the baptism certificate. Cheques should be made **payable to St. Mark's Church.**

xi. **Baptismal Record and Certificate:** The baptism will be recorded in the permanent records of St. Mark Parish from the information you provide. Therefore please print legibly and be sure of the accuracy of information and the spelling of names. A certificate will be presented to you following the baptism ceremony. Later, whenever a new certificate might be needed, it can be prepared from the parish record.

xii. **You are encouraged to invite relatives and friends to share your joy and welcome your child into our Christian community. Please advise if your number of guests will exceed 75.**

Pope John Paul II calls the family a domestic Church. The Christian home where the child begins to experience life is part of a collection of families called the Church. At Baptism the parents and sponsors along with the whole Christian community take upon themselves the responsibility to make the Church and the world a place that will offer the newly Baptized the love and support needed to grow to full Christian adulthood.

