St. Raphael Catholic Church
1376 Snell Isle Boulevard NE ◆ St. Petersburg, Florida 33704
Phone: 727.821.7989 ◆ Fax: 727.896.9619 ◆ Email: info@st-raphaels.com

# Infant Baptisms at St. Raphael Catholic Church

Congratulations on the birth of your child! Baptism is the first sacrament of initiation that leads to full membership in the Church. Our young people's faith is a seed that must be nurtured by their parents. In the baptismal rite itself, parents are asked if they are prepared to raise their child in the faith; the celebrant reminds them that they are "the first and best teachers in the ways of faith." Accordingly, our Baptism Preparation Program offers parents an opportunity to reassess their own faith, as well as reviewing their responsibility to educate their children in the faith.

### Steps to take to have a child baptized:

- ❑ Fill out the Baptismal Information Form and turn it in to the Parish Office. The Baptismal Information Form is available in this packet.
- ❑ Attend the Baptism Preparation Class. If you have attended in the last five years, you do not need to take the class again, please complete the section on the baptism information form.
- ❑ Choose your child's Godparents. ***Please see page 2 for Godparent requirements.***
- ❑ Turn in Sponsor Letter(s) for Godparents.

## Frequently Asked Questions:

### What if my child is not an infant?

For children younger than seven years of age, the process and requirements are the same. Depending on the understanding and maturity of your child, this might be a wonderful opportunity for them to share in the preparation for the Sacrament.
If your child is seven or older, please contact the parish office at (727) 821-7989, to determine the best pathway that leads your child to the Sacrament of Baptism – and the other Sacraments.

### Do we have to be registered members of St. Raphael Parish?

It is presumed that you are practicing your faith and registered in a Catholic parish. If you are called to worship here at St. Raphael Parish and have a desire to be a part of our parish faith community, then you are welcome to register with us. Parish Registration Forms are available on the website, in the Church Narthex, and in the Parish Office.
Non-parishioners who wish to have their child baptized at St. Raphael's will need to obtain a letter of permission and delegation from the Pastor of their home parish.

### When can I set a date for the Baptism?

Once you have submitted your Baptism Information Form you can tentatively choose a date for the Baptism. The parish office will contact you to confirm your Baptism date.

### When are Baptisms held?

Baptisms are celebrated on Sunday at 12:30am *except during Lent.* Other dates may also be blocked out due to Parish events.

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## When is the Baptism Preparation Class held?

Baptism Preparation Classes are held once a month. Available class dates are on the Baptism information page of the website.

## Do I need to register for the Baptism Preparation Class, or can I just show up?

Pre-registration is required. Call the Parish Office for registration information.

## How many Baptisms take place each Sunday?

Baptism is meant to be celebrated as a community to show support for all. No more than two families are scheduled for each Baptism.

## What is the role of the godparents/sponsors?

Godparents need to be actively involved in the Catholic tradition because they serve as models and guides to the child and the parents. They, along with the priest and the parents, welcome the child to the community and signify that welcome by marking the child with the sign of the cross. The godparents promise to support the parents in raising the child in the practice of the Catholic faith.

## What are the requirements to be a godparent?

In order to be a Catholic godparent, a person must be…

- At least 16 years of age
- A practicing Catholic who is Baptized and Confirmed and have received First Holy Communion
- If married, the marriage is Sacramentally blessed by the Catholic Church
- Someone other than the parents of the child to be Baptized
- Leading a life in harmony with the Catholic faith and the role they are about to assume. Attending Mass regularly.
- We ask each of the Catholic godparents for a letter from their parish stating that they are member of that parish and eligible to be a godparent.

## How many godparents may I have?

It is required that there be at least one godparent. It is customary to have two godparents – in this case one must be female and the other male. The Church does not make any provisions for more than two.

## Do both godparents have to be Catholic?

Yes, a godparent, by definition, is Catholic – thus all godparents are Catholic. But only one godparent is required. Baptized, participating Christians of other faiths may serve as a "Christian Witness" and be so designated in the Baptismal Register. If you choose to do so, you may have one Christian Witness and one Godparent. In this case one must be female and the other male. Non-Christians may not serve either as Godparents or Christian Witnesses, but are always welcome to participate in the celebration.

## Is there a fee to have my child baptized?

There are no fees for the preparation program, or for the ceremony. However, it is traditional to offer a stipend to the priest/deacon who performs the Baptism.

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## Baptismal Information

Return this form to the Parish Office as soon as possible.

Name of Child as it is on Birth Certificate: First / Middle / Last _____

Gender _____

Street Address _____

City / State / Zip _____

Mom Phone # _____ Mom Email _____

Dad Phone # _____ Dad Email _____

Birthplace City / State _____

Date of Birth _____ First Child? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Father's Name _____ Religion _____
First / Middle / Last As it appears on child's birth certificate

Mother's Name _____ Religion _____
First / Middle / Last As it appears on child's birth certificate

Mother's Maiden Name _____

Are parents of the child married? ☐ Yes ☐ No Married by Catholic Priest or Deacon? ☐ Yes ☐ No

What Church are You Currently Attending? _____

Godfather _____ Religion _____

Name of Godfather's Church and City/State _____

Godmother _____ Religion _____

Name of Godmother's Church and City/State _____

PROXY: If one of the Godparents cannot be present in person, a Proxy must be appointed.

Name of Proxy _____ Representing _____

Name of Proxy _____ Representing _____

Was the child privately Baptized? ☐ Yes ☐ No Date and Place _____

Was the child adopted? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Date of Baptismal Preparation Class you plan to attend _____

Baptisms are held on Sundays at 12:30pm except during Lent.

Preferred Baptism Date _____

Second Choice Date _____

Office Use Only:
❑ Recorded in Baptismal Register

Page-Line:_____