



# **The Church of St. Joseph In Greenwich Village**

## **Baptism Handbook**

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“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

*Matthew 28:18-20*

**Congratulations on the birth of your child!** Now is the time for your child's baptism, which is the foundation of the Christian life. It is a new birth where a child becomes an adopted child of God.

The friars at St. Joseph's are happy to help you to prepare for your child's baptism and we look forward to celebrating the baptism.

This Baptism Handbook will guide you through the preparation process, including a checklist comprising all the steps in the process on the back cover.

### **Baptism is a Sacrament**

The Sacrament of Baptism is the foundation upon which all of the other sacraments are built. Baptism washes away original sin and at baptism the Holy Trinity comes to dwell in the inmost depths of the child's soul, which is called sanctifying grace. This Sacrament of Initiation makes someone a member of the Body of Christ and therefore enables him to receive the graces of all the other sacraments. Baptism is more than just water and words: the sacrament begins the child's connection to the Church and God, and so most fittingly takes place in a physical church building, with a priest or deacon representing Jesus Christ initiating the child into the life of the children of God, along with other members of the faithful who likewise gather to give thanks to God for his gifts to the child.

## **Who May Be Baptized at The Church of St. Joseph?**

Parishioners may have their children baptized here. A parishioner is someone who is registered at St. Joseph's Church.

If you are not parishioner, you may have a baptism here with the written permission of your current pastor.

## **Steps in Preparation for Baptism**

1. Complete and email the [“Baptism Request Form”](#) to the parish secretary [secretary@stjosephgv.nyc](mailto:secretary@stjosephgv.nyc)
2. A friar will then contact you.
3. If the parents are parishioners and have not already done so, then [register](#) at St. Joseph’s.
4. If the parents are not parishioners, then they must obtain permission from their current pastor for the baptism to be at St. Joseph’s.
5. Contact the godparent(s) about the following documents to submit to the friar ASAP:
  - a. Notes of Endorsement for godparents
  - b. Certificates of Confirmation for godparents
6. Both the parents and the godparents must schedule and attend the baptism preparation class if they have not already attended one.
7. Read the entire [Baptism Catechesis webpage](#) before attending the Baptism Preparation Class at The Church of St. Joseph.
8. All documents must be submitted, at the latest, a week before the Baptism.

## **Scheduling a Baptism**

The parents should contact the parish at least **1 month in advance** of their desired baptism date.

You may tentatively schedule the baptism with the friar who contacts you once you submit the “Baptism Request Form.”

We celebrate the Sacrament of Baptism on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturdays of each month at 1 PM. A brief rehearsal will begin a few minutes before 1 PM, so please arrive early.

To respect the personal nature of the sacrament, we limit baptisms to 2 families per Saturday, whose children will be baptized at the same ceremony.

Adult Baptisms are normally celebrated at the Easter Vigil.

To inquire about having a baptism at The Church of St. Joseph, please call our parish secretary at (212) 741-1274 or email at [secretary@stjosephgv.nyc](mailto:secretary@stjosephgv.nyc)

## **Baptism Preparation Class**

The purpose of the baptism preparation class is to help the parents and the godparents lay a strong foundation for their child’s upbringing in the Catholic faith. Our goal is to help them understand what baptism is and how to raise the child as a Catholic.

The parents and godparents are required to attend **one** baptism preparation class that occurs on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Saturdays of

each month at 1 PM for about an hour, unless they have already attended a baptism preparation class.

Please schedule the class with the friar who contacts you.

There is no difference in the baptismal preparation class for the parents and godparents.

Before attending the Baptism Preparation Class at St. Joseph's, the parents and godparents must read the [Baptism Catechesis webpage](#) that is on the parish website.

### **Baptismal Name**

Choosing a baptismal name is an important decision for the parents. Choosing a Christian name, the name of a saint, ensures the child a patron in the communion of saints who will intercede in heaven on behalf of the child. If the first name of the child is not Christian, then we encourage the parents to choose a middle name that is Christian. The parents may choose a name that is used in different parts of the world, but it must not be offensive to Christians.

### **Godparents**

The parents need to choose at least one godparent for the baptism. The parents and godparents present an infant for baptism and help the newly baptized lead a Christian life and fulfill faithfully the obligations of baptism and the call to holiness.

## **Requirements for Godparents:**

- Must be a practicing Catholic who lives the Faith and who can help guide the child in the Faith
- Be at least 16 years old
- Received the Sacrament of Confirmation
- Cannot be the parent of the child to be baptized
- Attend a baptism preparation class, if have not already attended one
- Submit both a Note of Endorsement and Certificate of Confirmation

## **Paperwork for Godparents**

The godparents must submit two required documents:

- **Note of Endorsement** – Godparents must contact their current pastor to receive a written note of endorsement. This note states that they are current parishioners in good standing and suitable to be godparents.
- **Certificate of Confirmation for Godparents** – Godparents must contact the parishes where they were baptized and request recently issued Certificates of Confirmation. Please provide the hardcopies.

## **Troubleshooting Paperwork for Godparents**

The parents need to notify the godparents to obtain the above two required documents from their parish. This process may take a few weeks or longer so please notify the godparents ASAP.

The parish at which the godparents were baptized should have a record of all the Sacraments that the godparent received. If not, the godparents may have to contact the parishes where they were confirmed.

### **On the Day of the Baptism**

All will meet in the vestibule/narthex of the church and a friar will lead a brief rehearsal before 1 PM with the parents and godparents. Please arrive on time.

### **Baptism Donation**

Though not required, it is customary for parents to make a voluntary donation in support of the ministry of the parish. These offerings are generally between \$100 to \$500.

## **Baptism Preparation Checklist**

- Complete and return the baptism request form to the parish secretary.
  
- If parishioners of St. Joseph's, make sure registered at St. Joseph's.
- or-*
- If not parishioners of St. Joseph's, obtain written permission from current pastor to hold baptism here.
  
- Schedule baptism with friar.
  
- Parents attend baptism prep. class if haven't previously.
  
- Godparent(s) attend a baptism prep. class if haven't previously.
  
- Submit Certificate of Confirmation for each godparent.
  
- Submit Note of Endorsement for each godparent.

***All paperwork must be submitted a week before the day of the baptism.***