

Scheduling a baptism

Baptisms are typically celebrated during Sunday Mass, as well as on the first Sunday of the month after the 10:00 a.m. Mass.

Non-parishioners can request a baptism at Holy Cross Parish, in which case the family will need to obtain a letter of delegation from their home parish. The Church, due to the importance of baptism, suggests that the baptism take place soon after birth, certainly within the first year of the child's life.

Commitment of the parents

During the baptismal rite, parents ask the Church to baptize their child. The priest or deacon then claims the child for Christ by making the sign of the Cross on the child's forehead. This is an act of entrusting the child to God. Next, the parents publicly acknowledge their understanding that, in asking for their child to be baptized, they are accepting the responsibility of training the child in the practice of the faith. In this act, they publicly promise before God and His believing community that they will raise the child to keep God's commandments as Christ taught us.

These actions before God and the community of believers are immense, and must be made in earnest by participating in worship with the people of God on a regular basis.

If the parents are unable to make these promises, or if their actions give evidence that they do not intend to keep these promises, under church law the priest or deacon is obligated to delay the baptism.

If baptism is delayed, it is only until such time that the parents are ready to raise the child in the practice of the faith. The normal procedure, then, is to ask the parents to delay the baptism for three months, so as to allow them an opportunity to attend Mass and participate in the life of the community so they can make a true decision for their child.

Godparents

The mission of a godparent or sponsor is to present the child for baptism and help the baptized to lead a Christian life by fulfilling the obligations of baptism. A child must have one godparent who, according to church law, is a Catholic, at least 16 years of age, who has received the Sacrament of Confirmation, is not a parent of the child to be baptized, and who leads a moral life in harmony with the faith and the role of a godparent. The parents can choose a second godparent, but the child can have only one godfather and one godmother. This second godparent does not need to be Catholic, but should be someone who also lives his or her Christian faith.

A person who does not practice the faith and keep the commandments (for example, someone who does not attend Mass each Sunday) is not capable of being a sponsor, because that person is not practicing the faith. One of the godparents must receive from his or her Catholic pastor a certificate of eligibility, which certifies that the proposed godparent is a Confirmed, practicing Catholic and qualified to be a godparent. The godparent should talk to his or her pastor concerning this certificate as soon as you ask him or her to be a godparent. If parents are unable to find a qualified godparent from among their family and friends, Holy Cross Parish will be happy to provide one.

Requirements

Those who are seeking baptism for the first time at Holy Cross are required to attend a pre-baptismal class. If you are not a registered member of the parish, you are required in advance of the baptism to meet with a priest or deacon in order to join the parish.

A non-Catholic parent

A non-Catholic parent does not need to make the profession of faith during the baptism if he or she does not share the Catholic faith. However, this parent, in requesting baptism for the child, must give permission for the child to be instructed and raised in the faith of the Church in which the child is baptized.

Emergency Baptism

If your child experiences a life-threatening medical emergency before the scheduled time of baptism, you should call one of the Catholic chaplains at the hospital where the child has been admitted, or call a priest or deacon here at Holy Cross to do an emergency baptism.

Photos and videos

Photos and videos of the baptismal ceremony are permitted, but please remember that the primary purpose of being present at the baptism is to pray. For this reason, you are asked to be discreet in taking these important remembrances. You are asked not to block others from observing the ceremony and to not go beyond the first step of the sanctuary.

Donation:

It is customary for the family to present a financial gift to the parish according to their means, in order to foster the continued growth and work of the parish. Those who are financially able are asked to offer a gift of \$50. This contribution goes entirely to the parish. If the family would like to give a special gift to the priest or deacon, they may, but it is not expected that they do so.

For more information

To talk with a member of the parish pastoral team about a future baptism, please feel free to contact Father Jim, Father Brad, or Deacon George at 508-238-2235.

HOLY CROSS PARISH MISSION STATEMENT

Holy Cross Parish, a community centered in the Eucharist, is committed in faith and love of Jesus Christ to fulfill the profoundly human and spiritual needs of its parishioners and the larger community it serves. We seek to inspire all, through deeds and by example, to do the work of Christ: to make God known, loved, and served.

www.holycrosseaston.org

CELEBRATING THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM AT HOLY CROSS PARISH



Holy Baptism is the basis of the whole Christian 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 the sacrament of regeneration through water and in the word.”

Catechism of the Catholic Church