

A Family Catechesis Plan for...



# Baptism and Beyond

*St. Joseph Parish / Old Mission San Jose*

*43148 Mission Boulevard  
Fremont, CA*



Dear Parents of St Joseph Parish / Old Mission San Jose,

We welcome you to our parish Pre-Baptismal Process. The Lord has blessed you and our parish community with a beautiful gift – your child or children – the visible sign of your love for each other. You have played a very important part in God’s plan of creation, and with Him have given life to a new member of His family. What more beautiful way can we welcome your child into God’s family than through the Sacrament of Baptism!

Throughout the history of our Church, preparation for Baptism has extended from no preparation at all to years of instructions for catechumens. The Second Vatican Council separated the Rite of Baptism into two different rites for adults and for children. Consequently, the Rite for children calls for preparation on the part of the parents for the Baptism of their child.

Through our parish Baptismal preparation process we hope to deepen your understanding of the Sacrament of Baptism and make you ever more aware of the importance this Sacrament plays in your family life. It is through your marriage and within your family that you will introduce your children to Christ and Christian values. We will also begin to form a basic Christian Community with one another and develop a sense of celebration about your child’s Baptism.

As parents, you prepare long and well for the arrival of your baby. Now we need to prepare ourselves to help our children for the life they will lead as a child of God – the lifetime commitment of a Catholic Christian. We look forward to sharing with you in this important and joyful time of preparation.



## **STEPS TO PREPARE FOR BAPTISM**

You should start preparing for your child's Baptism about **two months** before the desired month of Baptism.

These are the steps that you we ask you to follow:

**Step 1: Contact the Parish Office (510)656-2364** to speak with and schedule a meeting with our Parochial Vicar.

**Step 2: Both parents are to attend the meeting with the priest/deacon.** This is an opportunity for the family to get to know one of the parish clergy. While at this pastoral meeting, the confidential Baptism registration Form will be completed.

**Step 3: Attend the Pre-Baptism Parent Gatherings.** These are two community-building experiences in which a team couple and the priest/deacon come together with the parents for faith sharing, discussion and prayer centered around topics relating to Baptism, Adult Faith Growth, Community, Parenting and Family Life. These sessions are usually offered on the first and second Sunday of each month from 2:00 to 3:30 pm. Families are encouraged to attend the 12:30 pm Mass before the gathering. We try to avoid three-day weekends. Child care for older children is provided if requested. During the second session, parents are introduced to the Celebration of Baptism details in the Mission.



**Step 4: Participate in the Rite of Welcoming.** This is held at the 12:30 pm Sunday Liturgy usually on the same date as your second Baptism Meeting. This is a brief Ritual in which the children who are to be baptized and their parents are welcomed into the larger parish community.

**Step 5: Celebration of Baptism 2:00 pm.** The venue for the Celebration is Old Mission San Jose. Because of space, we limit Baptisms in the Mission to six families. Early registration is advisable. You are encouraged to invite relatives and friends to share your joy and welcome your child into our Christian Community.



## GENERAL INFORMATION

### CLOTHING

Children receiving the Sacrament of Baptism need not be dressed in white but if not, they should have a white garment to be placed on them during the ceremony.

### PICTURES

Cameras are welcome but **pictures should not be taken during the ceremony** so as to respect the sacredness of the Baptismal Rite. Pictures may be taken before and after the ceremony. The priests/deacon are happy to take pictures with you and help in any way they can to make this event a real celebration.

### OFFERING

On the occasion of a Baptism, it is customary to give a donation of \$75. Checks are to be payable to "St. Joseph Parish"

### GODPARENT GUIDELINES

It is customary to have two godparents - one male and one female. The godparents must be **16 years of age or older, and be active, practicing Catholics**. However, you are only required to have **one godparent** for your child's Baptism. If you so choose to have one godparent, a second non-Catholic Christian can serve as a Christian witness to the Baptism.



## **GODPARENT GUIDELINES (cont.)**

If you select a godparent who lives a great distance away, they do not have to be present at the Baptism. You may have a proxy fill in for the official godparent.

More “godparents” may be included in the ceremony, but **only two names** (one male and female) will be officially placed in the Church’s Baptismal Register as godparents.

The godparents are encouraged to attend the first parent meeting to show support for their special responsibility as your child’s mentor in faith.

## **SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES**

If you do not presently live in our community and wish to have your child baptized here, **YOU MUST:**

- have a letter of permission from your Parish for this Baptism to take place here at St. Joseph Parish / Old Mission San Jose.
- participate in the Pre-Baptismal Process in your own Parish and bring a letter indicating you have participated.

## **BAPTISM DURING SUNDAY LITURGY**

If there are specific family circumstances, it is permitted to have the Celebration of Baptism during a Sunday Liturgy - Our Pastor will choose the specific Mass and the form of Baptism is by immersion only.



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