

COVID-19 REGULATIONS FOR THE CELEBRATION OF BAPTISM

We have been instructed that during the current lockdown baptism ceremonies may not take place in church except in cases of grave necessity.

If you would like to have your child baptised please telephone Fr Mark on 01257 460154 (a phone call is better than an e-mail) and we can let you know when the regulations change.

The following information may be helpful as you prepare for the baptism of your child.

Not all of it might apply while Covid-19 restrictions are in place.



Congratulations on becoming a parent. Bringing your child up to know that they are loved by God, and that He is always at their side, is one of the greatest gifts that you can give them. We are delighted that you have chosen to ask for baptism for your child in our parish.

Baptism is the first of the seven Sacraments that God has given us to strengthen us and to keep us close to Him on our journey through life.

Here are the answers to some commonly asked questions.

- To have your child baptised in our parishes one parent must be a baptised Roman Catholic and you must live within our parish boundary.
- If you and your partner are not members of the Catholic Church we can help you to join the Church yourself. It is possible for parents to be baptised together with their child. Joining the Church involves meeting with a member of our parish and learning about our Catholic Faith. It usually takes a few months to be prepared for baptism as an adult, or if you are already baptised as a member of another Christian denomination, to be received into the Catholic Church.
- During the baptism ceremony parents promise to hand on their Catholic faith to their child by their words and their example. They will be the first teachers of the faith to their child. We hope that this promise is made seriously by all our parents when they celebrate the baptism of their child.

Baptism is a special day of celebration for your family.

It is also a celebration for our Parish family.

We hope that you will come to Mass and take part in the life of our Catholic community.

Godparents

- When children are baptised they are often too young to commit to being Christians themselves so during the baptism ceremony the parents of the child promise to bring him or her up to know about Jesus and their faith. Godparents promise to help the parents carry out this duty in any way they can, largely by setting a good example of a Christian life for the children to follow.
- At least one of the Godparents must be a baptised Roman Catholic. All Godparents must be baptised Christians.
- There may be from one to four Godparents.
- It is currently difficult for many Godparents to attend a baptism ceremony. You may like to invite them to be a Godparent “*by proxy*”. Even though they might not be present at the ceremony someone who is able to attend can speak for them and they will still be registered as Godparents in our parish records.

When do baptisms take place?

- Baptisms are celebrated on Sunday at Midday
The service normally lasts about half an hour.
- Normally we ask both parents to attend a Baptism preparation course before we can give you a date for the baptism. This is not currently possible.
- You can choose the Sunday you have your child baptized after you have attended the baptism preparation course. Remember that some dates may already be booked.
- You will also be invited to a Presentation Mass when all the families preparing for Baptism are prayed for and blessed.
- Children who are over 7 years old must also have some preparation themselves with a parish helper. Please let us know if your child will be over 7 at the time of baptism.
- The baptism will normally be celebrated by Fr Mark or by Deacon Simon.

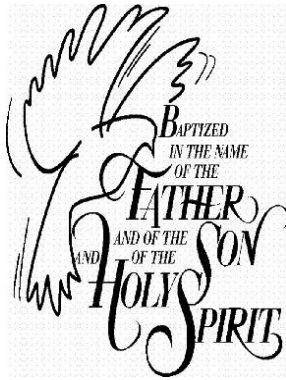


Is there a fee?

There is no fee. A basket will be left at the back of the Church for people attending the baptism to make a donation if they can. Please support your Church as generously as you can. We depend on what people give us to keep the Church going.

If you don't live in our parish we will need a letter of permission from the priest of the parish where you live before we are able to arrange a baptism in our church.

If you live in our parish but wish **to have your child baptised in another church** please talk to Fr Mark who can give you the letter of permission you will need.



Baptism is only the beginning.

- Please think about enrolling your child in our in our parish school where they will learn more about their faith and will be educated in a caring and Christian environment.
- Please bring your child to Mass so that they can grow up knowing that God loves them and that they are part of the Catholic family.
- Make sure that your home has a book of Bible stories that your child can look at as they learn to read. Teach them to say their prayers. A prayer book or children's bible is a great gift for a god-parent to buy for your child. Remember that your child will only think their faith is important if they see that reflected their home and in the lives of their parents.
- Baptism is only the beginning of a journey. It is the first of the Sacraments to be received. We hope that your child will also choose to make their First Confession, First Holy Communion and Confirmation in the years to come.

If you would like to know more about taking part in the Mass, learning about your faith, becoming a Catholic or getting married in Church please talk to Fr. Mark who will be very happy to answer your questions and help in any way he can.