

Children's Baptism FAQ and Checklist

Q: What is the process to get my child baptized at St. Nicholas & St. William Catholic Parish?

A: Great question! Here are the steps:

Step 1: Please complete the online Baptismal Registration Form as fully as possible.

Step 2: Once the registration form has been completed, please email a copy of your child's birth certificate to Lupe Butterbrodt at stnicholas@dsj.org or drop off/mail a copy to the parish office at 473 Lincoln Ave., Los Altos, CA 94022.

Step 3: Your registration form will be reviewed and, if needed, a member of the clergy will contact you to set up a face-to-face meeting. Parishioners come from many diverse backgrounds and the Sacrament of Baptism is a very important one for both the Church and the family. The clergy member will determine the best way to proceed from the face-to-face meeting.

Q: When can I schedule the baptism?

A: The parish performs baptism on the 2nd Saturdays of each month (except during Lent) or at any Sunday Mass. The time and date of your child's baptism will be determined in the face-to-face meeting. Please expect a one to two-month period of preparation.

Q: Do I have to attend a baptism class?

A: Yes, if you have not attended one of our baptism retreats recently, you will need to do so. The clergy member you meet with at the face-to-face meeting will determine the best preparation approach for you and your child.

Q: Do I need to choose Godparents? Who is allowed to be a Godparent?

A: The role of the godparent(s) is to join the parents in presenting the child for baptism, to assist the parents in passing the faith on to the child, and to assume the responsibility for bringing the child up in the faith, if something were to happen to the parents. This is not just an honorary role, but one of great significance and responsibility.

There are typically two godparents although only one is required. If there are two, one must be male and the other female.

At least one of the godparents must be:

- A practicing Catholic
- At least 16 years old
- Fully initiated (has received Baptism, Confirmation, and First Eucharist)

Q: How should the Godparents prepare for the Baptism?

A: Usually the Godparents will be asked to join the parents in any preparation sessions. If the godparents do not live within our parish boundaries or are not registered at our parish, then they must submit a letter of suitability from their normal parish. This letter should be emailed or mailed to Lupe Butterbrodt at stnicholas@dsj.org or 473 Lincoln Ave., Los Altos, CA 94022.

Q: Is Photography permitted at the Baptism?

Baptisms are not only a time of celebration, but more importantly a time of prayer. Photographs are permitted during the ceremony, but moderation is requested out of reverence for the Sacrament.

Q: How much does the Baptism cost?

A: There is no charge for receiving the Sacrament of Baptism, however, it is customary for parents or godparents to make a baptismal offering to the Parish. Please make checks payable to St. Nicholas or St. William and write the child's name on the memo line.

Q: Will I receive a certificate for my child?

A: After the Baptism, the priest or deacon will sign and date a ceremonial baptism certificate and give it to either a parent or godparent. Typically, the certificate is available immediately after the ceremony, but occasionally we will need to mail it to you.

Baptism Checklist

- Complete Baptismal Registration Form online
- Submit a copy of your child's birth certificate in person, by mail, or by email: stnicholas@dsj.org.
- Complete Family interview with a member of the parish clergy. He will contact you to schedule the interview once we receive your Registration Form.
- Choose godparent(s) for your child. A godparent must be a practicing Catholic, who is at least 16 years old and has been fully initiated (has received Baptism, Confirmation, and First Eucharist).
- Complete preparation process determined by the clergy member.
- Letter of suitability for Godparent(s) if they are not local or attending preparation at our parish.