

## Baptizing Your Baby

### Information About Infant Baptisms

St. Pius V Church  
7691 Orangethorpe Ave.  
Buena Park, California 90621  
(714) 522-2193

Congratulations on your child's upcoming baptism in the Catholic Church. On behalf of the St. Pius V parish community, please accept our support as you prepare for your child's baptism. We look forward to welcoming your child as a baptized member of our faith community. This brochure will aid in preparing for your child's baptism.

May God's blessings be with you,

Fr. Ted Olson  
Pastor

Note: This brochure discusses infant baptism at St. Pius V Church. For baptism of those in 1<sup>st</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grades, contact the Faith Formation Office, (714) 522-3971. Adults 18 years of age and older wanting to be baptized should come into the parish office and complete a registration form for adult Sacraments of Initiation.

## **Getting Started: Registration and Introductory Conference**

Having your child baptized at St. Pius V begins with completing an Infant Baptism Registration form in the parish office during regular business hours. You may also register in the parish if you have not already done so. To have your child baptized at St. Pius V, you must live within the boundaries of St. Pius V Parish, be registered in the parish or have a letter of permission from the parish in which you live.

The parents of a child to be baptized here at St. Pius V must attend an introductory conference with members of our parish baptism team. At the introductory conference, the baptism date is set and the parents and godparents are scheduled for a baptism preparation class. (Baptisms are held at St. Pius V most Sundays at 3:30 p.m., alternating from week to week between English and Spanish. There are no baptisms during Lent except for health emergencies. Baptism preparation classes are held most Wednesdays at 7:15 p.m.) The introductory conference also is a good opportunity to address specific questions about the baptism liturgy and to discuss parish faith formation programs for children.

Both the mother and father play important roles in raising and nurturing a child, including helping the child to grow and thrive in the Catholic Christian faith. For that reason, both the

mother and father of a child to be baptized here at St. Pius V are required to attend the introductory conference. If one or another of the parents will not be able to attend the introductory conference for some good reason, please contact Deacon Rey Marin (English) or Deacon José Luis Reynoso (Spanish) in our parish office at (714) 522-2193 as soon as possible – and, in any event, well in advance of the scheduled introductory conference date.

### **Requirements for Godparents**

Godparents are to help “the baptized person to lead a Christian life in keeping with baptism and to fulfill faithfully the obligations” of being a Christian (Code of Canon Law c. 872). Because godparents have this important role to play in their godchildren’s lives, each godparent must be –

1. 16 years of age or older,
2. A Catholic who has been baptized and received the Sacraments of Confirmation and First Eucharist,
3. Practicing the Catholic faith, including regular attendance at Sunday Mass (except in case of illness or other just cause),
4. If married, married in the Catholic Church (Code of Canon Law c. 874).

Although we encourage parents to surround their children with as many persons as possible who will provide good role

models of Catholic Christian living, there can be only one or two official godparents. If there are two godparents, one must be a godfather and one a godmother (not two godfathers or two godmothers) (Code of Canon Law c. 873). In some cultures there is a practice of naming others also to serve as “godparents.” Your baptismal coordinators will explain how and to what extent these unofficial godparents may play a role in your child’s baptismal liturgy.

### **Church Contribution in Honor of Your Child’s Baptism**

Because baptism and the other sacraments are gifts from Jesus Christ to his Church, we do not “charge a fee” for baptisms – the sacraments are not “for sale.” However, it is a part of our Christian tradition that as members of Christ’s Body, we contribute to the Church from our time, talent and treasure. Living a life of Christian stewardship means that we recognize that everything is a gift from God. Even when we earn money through our own work, reflection will remind us that our ability to earn that money - indeed life itself – is a gift from God. Your child’s baptism provides another opportunity to express your gratitude to God by contributing financially to your St. Pius V parish community and recommitting yourself to giving of your time and talent to the parish as well.

How much is the right amount? That will be different for everyone. Certainly you should consider what you have to give – how God has blessed you with financial means and personal gifts.

The more God has given to us, the more that is expected of us. Another factor to consider is the amount of money you will be spending in other ways for your child’s baptism. The more money you will be spending on the baptismal gown and the party following the baptism, for example, the greater should be your financial contribution to the Church.

### **Baptism Preparation Class**

Both parents and godparents are required to attend a baptism preparation class (which will be scheduled in the introductory conference). At the baptism preparation class, the baptism liturgy will be explained, responsibilities of the parents and godparents for the spiritual care of their children and godchildren will be discussed, and there will be further opportunity for questions. We hope you will arrange for a babysitter so that you can participate fully in the class.

Because godparents are expected to work with parents in nurturing the child in the Catholic Christian faith, we expect that parents and godparents ordinarily will attend the baptism preparation class together. If one or another of the parents or godparents will not be able to attend the baptism preparation class along with the others (for example, because a godparent lives far away in a different city or state), parents should discuss with the parish baptism team at the introductory conference how that person can complete the baptism preparation class requirement in some other way.

## **Preparations in Advance of the Baptism Liturgy**

***White Garment.*** You should bring your child to the church on the day of the baptism already dressed in a white garment. The white garment symbolizes that through baptism, your child will be clothed in the risen Christ. White garments can take many forms, from ornate, flowing baptismal gowns to ordinary white dresses and suits – it is a matter of personal taste what type of white garment you choose for your child. In any case, we recommend that you keep your child’s white garment as a remembrance of his or her baptism. Although parents sometimes like to have a separate bib-like garment for their child to wear after he or she is baptized, it is not necessary – the white clothes the child is already wearing will serve the symbolic purpose of the white garment. Also be aware that toward the beginning of the baptismal rite, your child’s chest will be anointed with the Oil of Catechumens; thus, it will be helpful if the garment can be loosened around the child’s throat to provide the priest or deacon access to his or her chest area.

***Baptismal Candle.*** Each child will be presented with a baptismal candle lit from the Easter candle after he or she is baptized (the godparents receive the candle on behalf of the child). The baptismal candle symbolizes that in baptism, your child will be enlightened by Christ and become a light for the world. We will provide baptismal candles for those who do not bring their own, although many parents like to choose and purchase their own baptismal candles at one of the Catholic gift shops or through one

of the Catholic supply companies on the internet. A baptismal candle also makes a nice gift from the godparents.

## **Day of the Baptism**

On the day of the baptism, parents and godparents should arrive at the church by 3 p.m. to check in with the baptism coordinator and to receive further instructions prior to the baptism liturgy.

The baptism coordinators also will be glad to show any members of your party who want to take photographs or videotape the baptism liturgy where they may stand to do so (generally in the choir loft adjacent to the baptismal font). Although we allow flash photography, we ask those taking photographs to be reverent and respectful of the liturgy and prayer. Video cameras are allowed, but without lights. Those being unduly obtrusive or disruptive in how they are taking photographs or videotaping will be instructed to stop and may be prohibited from taking any more photographs or doing any more videotaping until after the baptism liturgy.

## **Baptism Record and Certificate**

Following the baptism, our parish staff will record your child’s baptism in our parish baptism record. We will issue a baptism certificate and mail it to the address that you provided on the baptism registration form.

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If you have any questions about infant baptism at St. Pius V, please contact Deacon Rey Marin (English) in our parish office at (714) 522-2193.