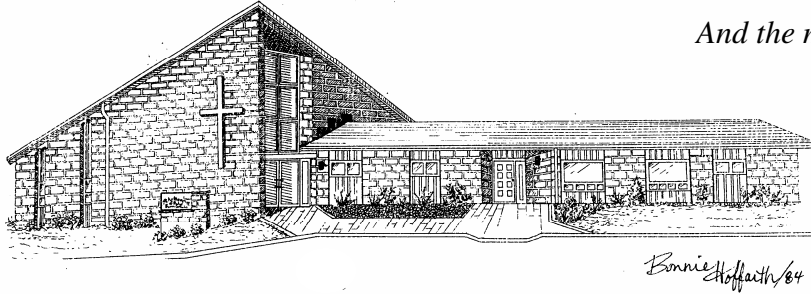


# *St. Anthony of Padua Church*

*And the mission Churches of Sacred Heart, Teeswater  
And St. Ann, Riversdale*



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## **BAPTISMAL INFORMATION**

Dear Parents,

Congratulations on your newest addition, a gift from God. We rejoice with you as you celebrate the birth of your child and we hope to be able to help you prepare for the baptism of your child into the Catholic Christian community.

Since baptism is the first sacrament that initiates us into the Church it is important that we take the time to reflect on our relationship with God and His Church. This is one of the most important decisions you will make for your child. As the church teaches, parents are the primary religious educators of their children. As the first teachers of your children in faith, it will be your duty to bring them up to keep God's commandments as Christ taught us. Baptism is a life-long commitment which will be nourished by you, reinforced by the believing community and celebrated in the Church. ***It should not be taken lightly.***

This booklet has been prepared to help you prepare for the special day of baptism. It is given to you so that you may read it thoroughly, and then begin the process of preparing yourselves and other family members for the baptism. Please keep in mind that though every effort has been made to cover the questions and concerns of the majority of persons, not every detail has been covered. If you have any questions or special concerns, please feel free to contact your parish priest. We want to help as much as we can.

May God bless you and give you the strength to grow in wisdom, age, and grace before God and His people. you prepare for the baptism of your child into the Catholic Christian community.

Throughout this document, there are reference notes in square brackets, ie: [c.783]. These refer to the Code of Canon Law.

## **Roles and Responsibilities:**

### ***Parents***

Parents who request baptism for their children must be prepared to profess their faith and be willing to undertake the duty of bringing their children up in the practice of the Catholic faith. They are to form their children in the spirit of faith, and encourage them to follow Christ more closely. Our faith community and your parish priests are here to aid you in your task of living and sharing your faith within your immediate family and the community in which you live. We could never be a replacement for you or your family. You are valuable to us, and we hope that we are valuable to you.

### ***Godparents***

The *Rite of Baptism* for children points out that the role of the parents is more important than that of the godparents. Nevertheless, as far as possible, each child to be baptized is to have a godparent. One godparent, male or female, is sufficient; but there may be two: one of each sex [c. 873]. When a Catholic godparent is not available a non-Catholic (baptized Christian) may act as sponsor - but at least one must be a baptized and confirmed Catholic [c. 874.2]. Together with the parents, godparents present the child for baptism, profess the Church's faith, and assist the parents in their responsibility to raise their children in the practice of the Christian faith [c. 872]

Godparents are encouraged to prepare for baptism by reflecting on their own faith, their life of prayer and Christian witness, and their ability to assist the parents of the child to be baptized. Whenever possible, they join the parents in preparation for the baptism.

Both parents and godparents exercise their responsibilities by their example of Christian living, family prayer, and their active participation in the celebration of the sacraments and in the life of the parish Community.

### ***Qualifications of Godparents:***

Only when godparents are people of firm faith and committed in love can they influence the child who is baptized to live the Christian life. Sponsors who are lax or careless in the practice of their faith are not prepared to take on such a responsibility. People who strive to be faithful to the Sunday Eucharist and the sacraments, who pray and try to live their beliefs in their daily lives, who work to bring the message of Christ into the community: these are ideal sponsors.

#### The Church requires that godparents be:

1. Mature enough to carry out their responsibility (16 years or older) [c. 874.1.2]
2. Confirmed members of the Church\*: They must be Catholics who are fully initiated by the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist, and who live lives consistent with the Christian faith and with the role to be undertaken. They must be free to carry out this office according to Church law. [c. 874.1.3, 874.1.4].
3. Not the Mother or Father of the child to be baptized. [c.874.1.5]

Note: Once baptism is celebrated, Godparents are forever. Choose your child's godparents carefully. A proxy may be used if the person chosen is unavailable (for a serious reason).

\* At the request of the parents, a baptized and believing Christian not belonging to the Catholic Church *may act as a Christian witness along with a Catholic Godparent*).

## **Questions and Answers**

The following are some of the most common questions we are asked by parents preparing for the baptism of their child.

### ***Should our child be given a Saint's name?***

Yes, your child is to be given a Christian baptismal name [c. 855]. This should not be difficult since many names are derived from Christian saints (such as Paula - "Paul") and others are "unknown saints" celebrated on All Saints Day (such as Donald).

***We were married outside of the Catholic Church (or living together), does this present a problem?***

The Church's major concern is that you are willing and able to raise your child in the practice of the faith [c. 868.2]. Your marriage situation will make that more difficult (though not necessarily impossible). If your marriage took place outside of the Catholic Church, or you are "living together," you should discuss the situation with your parish priest. Sometimes these situations can be dealt with fairly easily: at other times they are more complicated. At any rate, come on in and let's talk about it. The parish phone number (St. Anthony Parish) can be found on the front cover of this booklet.

***We haven't been coming to Mass for a long time now, will this cause any difficulty?***

When you bring your child for baptism, you are promising to raise him/her in the practice of the faith [c.868.2]. In fact, at the beginning of the baptismal liturgy you will be asked if you understand and are prepared to fulfil that duty. Unless you can respond affirmatively to that question, you should not, in good conscience, be bringing your child for Baptism.

Maybe you have grown a little lax in your faith in recent years. Why not use this occasion as a new beginning? Our Lord's forgiveness is always available to us in the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession). If you are unsure or nervous about confession - come into the confessional and tell the priest and he will help you through it. Many priests get nervous when they go to confession too! It's alright to be nervous. Our parish community is always happy to welcome you, no matter how "rusty" a Catholic you may be. In fact, why not get back on track this weekend:

*St. Anthony, Kincardine*

Vigil (Saturday), 5:00 p.m.. Sunday, 11:00 a.m.; Confession: Saturday, 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

*Sacred Heart Parish, Teeswater*

Sunday, 9:00 a.m. Confession: Sunday, 8:40 a.m. to 8:55 a.m.

*St. Ann, Riversdale* (24<sup>th</sup> of May weekend until Thanksgiving)

Saturday at 7:00 p.m. Confession: Saturday, 6:40 p.m. to 6:55 p.m.

**The Liturgy of Baptism**

The parents and godparents, with the children, assemble inside the main doors of the church. All others are seated at the front. Since baptism represents entrance into God's Church, it is appropriate that the ceremony begins by the church doors.

*The priest will greet the parents and godparents. He then asks the parents (each couple separately)*

Priest: What name do you give your child?

**Parents: N.**

Priest: What do you ask God's Church for N?

**Parents: Baptism**

**OR**

Priest: Do you ask baptism, faith, eternal life for N?

**Parents: Yes**

*The priest then addresses the parents as a group:*

Priest: You have asked to have your children baptized. In so doing you are accepting the responsibility of training them in the practice of the faith. It will be your duty to bring them up to keep God's commandments as Christ taught us, by loving God and our neighbor. Do you clearly understand what you are undertaking?

**Parents: We do.**

*The priest then addresses the godparents as a group.*

Priest: Are you ready to help these parents in their duty as Christian mothers and fathers?

**Godparents: We are.**

*The priest will then invite the parents and godparents to trace the sign of the cross on the child's forehead. Then all proceed to the front of the Church, where they are seated for the Liturgy of the Word.*

Just prior to the baptism itself, the parents and godparents will be asked to reaffirm or profess their own faith. A parent unable to make the profession of faith - Apostles Creed - (not being Roman Catholic, Presbyterian, Anglican, United Church, Lutheran or Orthodox) may keep silent.

Priest: Do you reject sin, so as to live in the freedom of God's children?

**Parents and Godparents: I do.**

Priest: Do you reject the glamour of evil, and refuse to be mastered by sin?

**Parents and Godparents: I do.**

Priest: Do you reject Satan, father of sin and prince of darkness?

**Parents and Godparents: I do.**

Priest: Do you believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth?

**Parents and Godparents: I do.**

Priest: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary, was crucified and was buried, rose from the dead, and is seated at the right hand of the Father?

**Parents and Godparents: I do.**

Priest: Do you believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting?

**Parents and Godparents: I do.**

At the baptismal font, the priest will question the parents and godparents once again.

Priest: Is it your will that N. should be baptized in the faith of the Church, which we have all professed with you?

**Parents and Godparents: I do.**

The baptism then takes place, followed by the post-baptismal rites and the conclusion of the liturgy.

### **After Baptism**

After the celebration of baptism, it is the responsibility of the parents to assist their child to know God, to prepare him/her to celebrate confirmation and participate in the Eucharist. Godparents are to assist the parents by prayer and their own faithfulness to Christian living. Parents and godparents should inspire and encourage baptized children to model their lives on Christ, whose life they share.

Weekly Mass, regular confession, prayers said and encouraged in the home, promotion of moral values and the promotion of gospel values are all part of our faith practice as Catholics. These values always begin in the home.

It would also be a wonderful thing if one of the godparents were to act as the child's sponsor for confirmation when the child reaches that age. For the child, this will emphasize the connection between the two sacraments. For the sponsor, it will emphasize the importance of giving ongoing example in the life of faith.

## Where to go from here

By obtaining and reading these guidelines you have taken the first step. To make further arrangements for the baptism of your child, we ask you to take note of the following:

1. Please call the office. We will take down all the pertinent information (name of child, parents, godparents etc.) for our records. (Maybe this is already done.)
2. You should always seek baptism within your own parish community. If for a valid reason you desire that the baptism take place outside your parish community, a letter of permission from your parish priest will be required.
3. We do not do “generic” baptisms. Only those who seek to raise their children in the Roman Catholic church are baptized in a Roman Catholic church..
4. Parents who are in an irregular marriage situation or who are living together, as well as those who are lax in the practice of the faith will be required to meet with Father to discuss, and work with him, towards correcting the situation (see “*Questions and Answers*” earlier in this booklet). Since you desire to raise the child in the Catholic faith, it only makes sense that you would also want to practice your faith.
5. Baptisms generally take place on the first and third Sunday of each month (with the exceptions of the summer months, December and the month of Easter), depending on the parish. Kincardine is the first Sunday at 1:00 p.m. and Sacred Heart/St. Ann is the third Sunday at 2:00 p.m. This is to let you know what the various options are, but again, the date for your child's baptism cannot be finalized until it is confirmed with Father. Baptisms are public celebrations and so everyone is welcome to attend. Baptisms never “count” for Sunday, and you are expected to attend Mass sometime during the solemnity of Sunday.
6. There may be a home visit before the baptism date. This depends on many factors including available time and need.
7. A white outfit is necessary for the child at baptism. Unless you plan to have many children, or pass the garment from generation to generation, a simple white garment will do just fine.

Let us know if we can help you in any way. We want to help as much as we can. Always know that you are in our prayers.

### *Parent's Prayer*

*Lord, help us with this task of parenting.  
Help us be full of casehardened strength  
And yet, quite tender to the touch.  
Help us be detached and balanced in our wisdom  
And yet, never far from feeling.  
Help us be free and full of heady joy  
And yet, not unaware of real life.  
And most of all, Lord, let us be together-  
Together strong,  
Together wise,  
Together free and full of joy.  
Let this love we feel for each other. Amen.*