

Your Child's Baptism



Getting Started...

-St. Vincent de Paul Parish, Niagara Falls, NY

First of all, congratulations!!!

As parents, you have already done a very noble and holy task of bringing into the world the new life that God has entrusted to your care. Be sure to treasure and celebrate the beauty of the new life in your family, and it is our wish that great joy abides in your home as all of the members of your family grow in love of each other and God. Remember that God will always be your help and guide in all of your responsibilities as parents. Remember to rely on him always. We now commend you for your inquiring about the sacrament of Baptism for your child. This is a sign of great potential in the faith of you, your child, your family and all of the Church!!!

Why Baptism?

The sacrament of Baptism has two major fruits: the removal of original sin, and the initiation into the Church. When you present a child for baptism, you open the door for him or her to the beautiful exchange that exists between Christ and the members of His Body, and promise to raise the child to live as a member of that great family, and with the hope that one day your child will make the faith his or her own through the sacrament of Confirmation. As the parents of a baptized child, you are given a profound privilege, and also a great responsibility. Therefore, it must be your full intention to have your child baptized, and you must be willing to raise your child according to the teachings of the Church, and to inspire faith in the child by prayer, word, and example. Baptism should not be done to simply please the child's grandparents, for the sake of keeping a family tradition, or out of fear that an unbaptized person is subject to spiritual harm. All in all, parents must approach their child's baptism with a sense of privilege and responsibility. As they accept this responsibility, parents trust in God's tremendous help and guidance through daily prayer as you live it out.

The Logistics

The following sections will help us to organize the specifics of your family and to tailor our approach to your needs. Please read all of the information and answer all questions carefully.

The Child

Full Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____

City and State of Birth: _____

Was the child baptized in another church setting, or privately? If so, explain the situation.

Does the child have any special needs? If so, explain. _____

Is this the first child that you are presenting for Baptism? _____

Does the child have siblings? If so, indicate names and ages.

_____	_____
_____	_____

The Parents

Is the child being raised by:

___ both parents
___ one parent (name) _____
___ grandparents (name) _____
___ legal guardian (name) _____
___ foster parent (name) _____

Father's Name _____

Father's Religion _____

If Catholic, is father confirmed? _____

Is Father a registered member of St. Vincent de Paul Parish? _____

Father's Occupation _____

Father's Address, Phone Number, email address

Mother's Name (first and maiden) _____

Mother's Religion _____

If Catholic, is mother confirmed? _____

Is mother a registered member of St. Vincent de Paul Parish? _____

Mother's Occupation _____

Mother's Address, Phone Number, email address

The parents are: _____ Married in the Catholic Church
-If so, Church and Date _____

_____ Not yet married and are sharing a home.

_____ Not yet married and living separately.

_____ Divorced

_____ Divorced and remarried

_____ Married Civilly

_____ Presently unable to marry due to former marriage or similar matter

Notes:

Since it is important that parents are able to set the proper example for their children with regard to the sanctity of marriage and the sacramental life of the church, Catholic parents must be willing to make the Sacraments of Initiation: Baptism, Eucharist, and Confirmation should they not have. Also, if the parents are not yet married in a union that is deemed valid by the Catholic Church, an effort to raise the union to a valid status should be evident upon presenting your child for Baptism. If such is applicable, further information will be provided.

Promise of Parents

I understand that upon presenting my child for Baptism, I am taking the privileged responsibility of raising my child according to the teachings of the Catholic Church, and will give the care and motivation that he/she will need in order to live as a member of the Body of Christ. I will remain faithful to the Church community, the Sunday celebration of the Eucharist, and continue to draw strength from the Church's sacraments so that my child will also be inspired to do so. Through daily prayer, I will seek strength and direction from my loving God as I live out my duty as a Christian parent.

Father signature

Date _____

Mother signature

Date _____

The Godparents

Like the parents, the Godparents also play a crucial role in the example setting and faith fostering of the baptized child. It is the task of the Godparents to assist the parents in their responsibilities, to show the baptized person how to live out the Gospel in both personal and public matters. This is indeed a lifelong responsibility. Because of the profound

responsibility that Godparents bear, they must be selected very carefully, and prove to be appropriate examples through prayer, integrity, and faithfulness to the sacramental life of the Catholic Church. At least one Godparent is called for, one who was baptized, receive First Eucharist and confirmed in the Catholic faith; a practicing the Catholic faith and a registered member of a parish. If there are to be two there must be one man and one woman, in keeping with the parent model of leadership. However, they cannot be the parents of the child. In some cases there may be a non-Catholic witness in addition to one Catholic Godparent, but this must be someone who is baptized in a non-Catholic Christian community and not someone who has left the Catholic Church.

Before approaching people who might be potential Godparents, it is advisable to look first at the criteria below. Please check all to be applicable.

Godfather's Name Church of Registry, City & State	Godmother's Name Church of Registry, City & State

-at least 16 yrs. old	_____
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-a confirmed, practicing Catholic (see above description)	_____
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-single, or married in a union that is valid by the definition of the Catholic Church (not married civilly, not cohabitating without intention to marry, not divorced and remarried without annulment or dissolution of previous marriage)	_____
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-Is a registered member of St. Vincent de Paul Parish or can provide a Letter of Recommendation (permission) from another parish as a registered participating member	_____
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-does not outwardly contradict the teaching of the Catholic Church by career, lifestyle, or public statement	_____
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-has the capacity to understand that being a Godparent is a lifelong commitment, and fully

intends to accept this responsibility _____

*A member of an Eastern Orthodox community may fill the role as a Godparent in addition to a Catholic Godparent, provided that all other criteria is met. Please indicate if this is the case.



If letters of recommendation are needed for Godparents, please bring to baptism session or mail to the Rectory Office **two weeks prior to the baptism.**

Promise of the Godparents

I promise to remain committed to the Catholic Church and her teaching, and to conduct myself with honor, faith, and integrity as I will be looked to as a role model of faith for my Godchild. I will remain mindful that my words, choices, attitudes and approach to prayer will be of profound significance to my Godchild's growth in faith and morality. I will best assist my Godchild's parents in their work of raising my Godchild in the Catholic faith. I will actively reach out to my Godchild to extent my care, and I understand that in my accepting the role of Godparent I am undertaking a lifelong responsibility, and will rely always upon God's help and guidance as I carry out this privilege.

Godfather Signature
Date _____

Godmother Signature
Date _____

Are the intended Godparents able to be present for the planned Baptism?
___ Yes ___ No

If no, who will stand in as a proxy? _____

Please note that a proxy is NOT the Godparent.

Christian Witness (if applicable)

Name _____

Christian Community (name of church) _____

Date of Christian Baptism _____

City, State _____

_____ Please check if person was never baptized in nor received into the Catholic Church

The Next Step...



After answering all of the above questions please mail or bring the completed paperwork to the Baptismal Coordinator, St. Vincent de Paul Parish, 1040 Cayuga Dr., Niagara Falls, New York 14304. **If this is your first child** you will need to attend a preparation session that will cover more details of the Sacrament of Baptism. You may bring completed paperwork to this session. Call to register at 283-2715 ext. 200. Please feel free to call regarding any questions that you may have.

May God be with you!