

Helpful Information for Infant Baptism

Introduction:

God is love! His Church, with its sacraments, his Word in Scripture, and the incarnate life, death and resurrection of his Son Jesus, reveal His unlimited, sacrificial love for all. This wonderful gift is clear in the Gospel of John.

“For God so loved the world that he gave his Only Son, so that whoever believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him.” (John 3:16-17)

All of us at St. Bruno wish you well, and pray for God’s continued blessings on you and your family. Welcome to this journey of Love!

General:

1. Ordinarily Baptisms are for St. Bruno parishioners; if you are not a parishioner, we will need written permission from the pastor of your parish. Just contact your parish office and request a permission letter.
2. Marital Status of Parents – Parents should practice their Catholic Faith. If your current marital situation prevents you from participating fully in the life of the Church, please ask about avenues of returning to full communion. *(Your situation, however, will not prevent your child from being baptized, as long as you promise that you will do all in your power to form your child in the Catholic Faith).*
3. We will also need to see your child’s birth certificate.

First Teachers:

As parents, you are the most important people in the life of your child, and so you will be the first and most important teachers of our Catholic faith. Your child’s faith will grow and mature seeing your Catholic faith at home, in church, and most especially in all of your home life. There is no more powerful teaching than the actual practice of your faith in front of your child.

Through sharing the “good news” of God’s love, going to Mass, and living as prayerful followers of Jesus, you are the models of Christian faith, hope and love.

Asking to have your child baptized calls for an affirmation of your commitment to raise your child in the practice of the faith. You will actually make this promise at the start of the Baptism ceremony. Grateful to God and faithful to what you have chosen, you are accepting your role to guide your child to a knowledge of God.

Certainly, there are many competing demands in life which must be met. Often, these challenge a fulfillment of Catholic parenting, but there is help for you within the Catholic Church and through your specially chosen helpers; a Sponsor or godparents.

Godparents:

To assist you with an authentic life of a Catholic Christian example for your child, you will choose either a Godparent (male or female) or Godparents, one male and one female. Their primary purpose is to assist and advise you from their role of being a "practicing Catholic". Their example, their prayers, and frequent contact with you are to help you in raising your child in the Catholic faith as you have promised to do.

- Therefore, each Godparent must be Catholic, have received First Communion, have been Confirmed. They must be 16 years of age or older, and practicing their faith by regularly attending weekly Sunday Mass and receiving Holy Communion. If single, they must not be living with another person as a married couple. If married, Godparents must have been married in the Catholic Church, but do not have to be married to each other.
- If you have questions before selecting Godparents, the Baptismal Coordinator will assist you.

More information regarding parents and Godparents is included in the following Reflection.

A Brief Reflection on Baptism for Parents and Godparents

1. The First Sacrament:

Baptism is the door to life and to the Kingdom of God. Baptism is the first Sacrament in our journey of faith; which Christ offers to all that they might have eternal life. He entrusted this to his Church, when he commanded his Apostles: "Go, teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." (**Matthew 28:19**)

Therefore, Baptism is first and foremost the Sacrament of that faith by which human persons, enlightened by the grace of the Holy Spirit, respond to the teachings of Christ.

2. Washing away of Sin:

The Bible begins with the story of Adam and Eve in a wonderful garden where they lived in pure love for one another. However, sin entered their hearts and introduced selfishness, greed, and injustice that has now spread throughout the world. That is the Original Sin. Jesus came from God to show you the true human person that loves as God designed you to love and to remove you from that sinful world and that Original Sin of selfishness. Baptism joins you with Him and His Church that He founded to foster and continue that divine love.

3. The Bond of Unity:

Baptism joins you with Jesus and the community of the Church that Christ Himself founded for the purpose of strengthening your faith, Hope, and Love, and a place where your fellow Christians can offer mutual support in living your faith in the world today. Because of that unchangeable support from Jesus and His Church the Rite of Baptism is held in highest honor by all Christians.

Ministries and Duties in the Celebration of Baptism

1. Christian Community:

The People of God, that is the Church represented by the local community, plays an important part in the Baptism of children. For a child, both before and after the celebration of the Sacrament, is to receive the help and love of the community. As the community, together with the celebrant, expresses its consent after the profession of faith by the parents and godparents, it is apparent that the faith in which the child is being baptized is a treasure not belonging to the family alone, but to the whole Church of Christ.

2. Ministry of Parents:

The role of parents in the Baptism of their children carries great importance. These are some of the statements and actions they will do during the ceremony.

- a) Ask publicly that the child be baptized;
- b) Sign the child on the forehead after the celebrant;
- c) Renounce Satan and make the profession of faith;
- d) Carry the infant to the font;
- e) Hold the lighted candle;
- f) Are blessed with the formulas especially intended for mothers and fathers.

(If one of them is not able to make the profession of faith, for example, because one of the parents is not a Catholic, that parent may remain silent. Given that the Baptism of the child has been requested, the only requirement is that he or she provide for or at least permit the instruction of the child in the baptismal faith.)

3. Duty of Parents:

After the conferral of Baptism, the parents, grateful to God and faithful to the duty they have undertaken, are bound to guide their child to a knowledge of God. They also promise to prepare the child to receive Confirmation and to participate in the Most Holy Eucharist. The Godparents and Church community are also bound to help the parents in this role as well.

4. Godparents:

Through their prayers, example and presence, these faithful practicing Catholic helpers assist parents in sharing the love of God and His plan of salvation with your child. So that parents clearly understand the requirements for Godparents prior to making a selection, here is a reminder for your guidance and prayerful consideration. If one Godparent is chosen, that individual may be male or female. If Godparents are selected, one must be male and the other female.

Please keep in mind that Godparents:

- **Must** be someone other than a parent of the child being baptized.
- **Must** be at least 16 years of age.
- **Must** have received Baptism and Confirmation.
- **Must** be practicing Catholics, attending weekly Sunday Mass and receiving Holy Communion regularly.
- ***If single, they must not be living with another person as a married couple.***

- If married, Godparents must **have been** married in the Catholic Church, but do not have to be married to each other.

Preparing for Baptism and Registration

Before the celebration of the Sacrament, it is very helpful for the parents and Godparents to renew their faith and prepare themselves for an informed participation in the celebration of Baptism and their role as the first teachers of the newly baptized in the ways of faith and God's love.

1. Prior to registration for Baptism, parents are asked to:

- ✓ Carefully decide from those fulfilling the criteria, who, in your opinion, would be good candidates for Godparents.
- ✓ Ask if your candidate(s) is/are willing to serve in this role.
- ✓ Refresh your understanding of Baptism by logging on to [Formed.org](https://www.formed.org) to view the first three sessions of "REBORN: You, Your Child and the Heart of Baptism."
 - Using your computer, log on to [Formed.org](https://www.formed.org),
 - Click on SIGN UP
 - Click on "I belong to a Parish or Organization"
 - Enter St. Bruno 15740 Citrustree Rd, Whittier CA
 - Enter your name and email and Sign-up
 - Browse for REBORN and view Sessions 1, 2, and 3.
- ✓ Invite the prospective Godparents to also refresh their understanding of Baptism by logging on to [Formed.org](https://www.formed.org) to view the first three sessions of "REBORN: You, Your Child, and the Heart of Baptism."

2. By viewing three REBORN video sessions, parents and Godparents will experience the rich meaning and background of Baptism and be prepared for the questions posed within the Sacrament. Informed and inspired, you will have gained practical and spiritual readiness for your important role in the life of the newly baptized.

3. When the parents and prospective Godparents have completed the "REBORN" sessions, a parent of the child to be baptized should complete the Infant Baptism Registration online at the website below. Soon after completing registration, you will be contacted for any additional information needed and the selection of possible dates for Baptism of your child.

To register for Baptism, go to www.stbrunochurch.org/baptismreg