



SAINT GERTRUDE PARISH

A Pennsylvania Charitable Trust

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Dear Parents,

Congratulations on the upcoming Baptism of your child. The St. Gertrude Community warmly welcomes you and your family during this special time of preparation for the Sacrament of Baptism—the sacrament of belonging and initiation into the Catholic way of life.

We are honored to share with you the responsibility of forming your child in the faith. Through study, reflection, and shared experience, we hope to deepen your understanding and appreciation of this beautiful sacrament. Today's understanding of Baptism highlights a living faith, a meaningful celebration, and our ongoing mission as Catholic Christians. This journey, while requiring commitment, brings great joy to both your family and our parish community.

We hope this packet will guide and support you as you prepare to embrace your role as Christian parents. To begin the preparation process, please:

1. Carefully read all materials included in this packet.
2. Complete and return the Pre-Baptismal Information Form.
3. Attach the completed "Role of the Godparents" form(s).
4. Include Godparent Eligibility Form(s) from the godparents' parish(es).

We encourage you to take time—both individually and as a couple—to reflect on what it means to raise your child in the Catholic faith. We emphasize the importance of the *domestic church*, or the church within the home. It is in your home that your child will first encounter a loving God present in each person. Within this foundation, your child will grow in faith and prepare to celebrate the sacraments of Reconciliation, Eucharist, and Confirmation.

You may return your completed forms by mailing them to the parish office, dropping them off in person, or placing them in the collection basket at Mass. Once your Pre-Baptismal Information Form is received, someone from the parish will contact you to confirm receipt, schedule your Baptismal workshop, discuss available Baptism dates, and answer any questions you may have.

We look forward to accompanying you on this meaningful journey.

Many blessings,

St. Gertrude Parish
Faith Formation Team

Considerations When Requesting the Sacrament of Baptism

When and Where is Baptism Celebrated?

The child should receive Baptism as soon as it is practical after birth, taking into consideration the health of both mother and child, as well as the readiness of the parents and godparents to accept the responsibilities that Baptism entails.

1. The primary consideration in scheduling Baptism is the welfare of the child, ensuring that the child is not deprived of the grace of the sacrament.
 2. In danger of death, the child should be baptized immediately.
 3. When health is not a concern, the readiness of the parents to accept the responsibility of raising their child in the faith is an important factor.
 4. In some cases, Baptism may be delayed if there is not a well-founded hope that the child will be raised in the Catholic faith. This allows time for proper preparation and catechesis.
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In the Case of Adoption

A certificate issued by a United States court must be presented to verify that the adoption is formal, final, and irrevocable. Parents and godparents should reflect on their readiness to accept the responsibility of passing on the Catholic faith, as this responsibility rests primarily with them.

Parish Membership

Baptism should normally be celebrated in the parish of the infant's parents by the parish priest.

Because Baptism incorporates a child into the universal Church through a local parish community, at least one parent must be a registered and active member of Christ the King Parish for at least two months prior to scheduling the Baptism.

Active membership includes:

- Regular participation in Sunday Mass and holy days of obligation
- Regular reception of the Sacrament of Reconciliation
- Supporting the Church according to one's means
- Active participation in the life and mission of the Church

If you are a member of another parish, permission from your pastor is required to have your child baptized at Christ the King Parish, along with the agreement of the priest who will celebrate the Baptism. If a priest other than the parish priest is requested, permission from the pastor is also required.

Parish Baptism Schedule

At Christ the King Parish, Baptisms are generally celebrated during the 9:30 a.m. Sunday Mass. Scheduling may vary depending on parish needs and priest availability, and other arrangements may be made at the discretion of the pastor. Baptisms are not celebrated outside of a church setting and are not scheduled during Lent (from Ash Wednesday until the Easter Vigil).

Preparation Requirements

Before a Baptism can be scheduled, parents must:

- Contact the parish office
- Complete the Pre-Baptismal Information Form
- Attend a Baptismal Preparation Class

Godparents must:

Meet all diocesan and canonical requirements

Provide a Certificate of Eligibility from their parish

Parent Timeline Sheet



1. Begin Preparation Early

If possible, begin the Baptism preparation process as soon as you know you are expecting. Many families find this makes the process easier and more meaningful.

2. Be Registered at a Parish and Stay Active

Baptism is a sacrament of initiation into the Family of God, the Catholic faith community. It is a sacrament of belonging. Therefore, the first step is ensuring that your family is part of the parish community by being registered and *active members* for at least three months.

3. Contact the Parish Office

Contact the parish office to schedule a date for the Baptismal preparation session and to reserve a tentative Baptism date. Please note that more than one family may celebrate a Baptism on a given Sunday.

4. Complete the Pre-Baptismal Information Form and Submit Godparent Forms

Bring all completed forms to your instructional session.

All godparents—whether from Christ the King Parish or another parish—must:

- Complete the **Role of the Godparent Form**
- Obtain a **Certificate of Eligibility** from their pastor

Godparents represent the Catholic community at the Baptism. Their role is to support the growth of the Catholic faith in your child.

5. Attend a Baptism Preparation Workshop

Both parents are required by the Diocese to attend a Baptism Preparation Workshop. Sessions are scheduled based on the availability of both the parents and parish staff.

6. Confirm the Baptism Date

Please do not make family arrangements until the Baptism date has been officially confirmed and all preparation requirements have been completed.

What Does “Active Membership” in the Parish Mean?

- **Participation in parish ministries**
Christ the King Parish offers many opportunities for involvement. We encourage you to find a ministry that fits your gifts and helps you feel connected to the parish community.
- **Regular participation in Sunday Mass**
Weekly participation in the Eucharist strengthens both personal faith and the life of the parish community. Our shared participation helps create a vibrant and meaningful celebration.

Godparent Requirements and Responsibilities

To be chosen as a godparent is a special honor. You represent the Catholic faith community and are entrusted with helping to guide this child in their Catholic Christian life and education.

This role offers a unique opportunity to develop a lifelong spiritual relationship—one that is meaningful, supportive, and rooted in faith.

There are many ways you can nurture this relationship and become a special presence in your godchild's life, including:

- Celebrating the anniversary of your godchild's Baptism each year with a visit, prayer, or card
- Listening and sharing in the joys and challenges of living a Christian life as your godchild grows
- Encouraging a life of faith through cards, letters, or gifts that recognize important spiritual milestones such as Christmas, Easter, First Communion, Confirmation, graduation, and other life events
- Offering prayers and support as your godchild receives the sacraments, especially Reconciliation, Eucharist, and Confirmation
- Supporting the parents in their role as the primary religious educators of their child
- **Most importantly, serving as a model of Catholic living** through daily prayer, virtuous living, and active participation in parish life—especially weekly Sunday Mass

By living a life of faith alongside your godchild, both of you will share in the joy and blessings of that relationship.

Godparent Requirements

Godparents must meet the requirements of Canon Law and Diocesan guidelines. A godparent must:

1. Be at least sixteen years of age
2. Be a fully initiated Catholic (having received Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist)
3. Live a life of faith consistent with the role of a godparent
4. Be in a marriage recognized by the Catholic Church (if married)
5. Be an active member of a Catholic parish and regularly receive the sacraments
6. Not be the mother or father of the child being baptized (*Canon 874*)

Godparent Commitment

I affirm that I meet the qualifications listed above and understand my commitment to my godchild. I accept the responsibility of serving as a godparent for:

Print Name of Child:

Print Name of Godparent:

Signature of Godparent:

Date of Commitment:

Pre-Baptismal Information Form

Date: _____

Child's Information

Full Name of Child: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Place of Birth: _____

Preliminaries & History

Church:

Christ the King Parish St. Gertrude Church

Verify census information on file (Office Use):

Yes No

Are you receiving correspondence/envelopes from the Church?

Yes No

Are you requesting Baptism for your child of your own free will?

Yes No

Was the child adopted?

Yes No

Was the child previously baptized?

Yes No

If yes, please explain:

Family Information

Father's Full Name: _____

Father's Religion/Membership: _____

Mother's Full Name (including maiden name): _____

Mother's Religion/Membership: _____

Street Address: _____

City / State / Zip: _____

Primary Phone: _____

Alternate Phone: _____

Email Address: _____

Children in the Home:

1. Name & Age: _____

2. Name & Age: _____

3. Name & Age: _____

Have any missed receiving sacraments? Yes No

If yes, please explain:

Godparent Information

Godfather / Witness

Full Name(s): _____

Religion & Church Attending: _____

Forms Attached (Office Use):

Role of the Godparent Certificate of Eligibility

Godmother / Witness

Full Name(s): _____

Religion & Church Attending: _____

Forms Attached (Office Use):

Role of the Godparent Certificate of Eligibility

Instruction (Office Use Only)

Date & Place of Instruction: _____

Attendance: _____

Baptismal Date Requested: _____

Baptizing Priest: _____

Remarks
