

Day 144 – Sunday, August 9 – Baptism - Frequently Asked Questions

I always have many questions about Baptism in the Church. Most have to do with Protocol not theology. To this end I offer FAQ's from The Archdiocese of Toronto. (Other FAQ will be addressed on following days)

Baptism - Frequently Asked Questions – From the Archdiocese of Toronto

1. Who may baptize?

The ordinary minister of Baptism is a Bishop, priest, or deacon. In the case of an emergency, any person may baptize, even if not baptized him/herself. This person must intend what the Church intends, and baptize the child with water, using the Trinitarian formula: "I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

2. May a child be baptized if only one parent requests it?

The consent of at least one of the parents, or the person who lawfully takes their place, is required for the baptism of a child.

3. How long after the birth of a child should the Baptism take place?

As soon as possible after the birth: Parents are obliged to see to it that infants are baptized within the first weeks after birth. As soon as possible after the birth or even before it, parents are to go to the parish to request the sacrament for their child and to be prepared for it properly (Code of Canon Law 867.1). An infant in danger of death is to be baptized without any delay (Code of Canon Law 867.2).

4. Can our child be baptized in a parish if we do not live within the parish boundaries?

Baptism, like all of the sacraments, is a celebration of a living relationship with God and with the local believing community, the parish. The sacraments are celebrations of our Church and, as such, are normally celebrated in the parish where the family resides or is registered and usually worships.

5. How do we arrange to have our child baptized in a parish other than the one where we normally worship?

If, for a good reason (for example, so extended family may attend), parents wish to have their child baptized in another parish, they need to approach the Pastor of that parish to ask if he is willing to baptize their child. A letter of permission to have the baby baptized elsewhere must be obtained from the Pastor of the parish where the family usually worships. Normally, Baptism preparation may take place in either of the parishes.

In the light of eternity, we're here for a very short time, really. We're here for one thing, ultimately: to learn how to love, because God is love. - James Finley

Sincerely,
Fr. Jim Kaptein