

Dear New Parents:

The birth of a child is a major event in the life of any family. On behalf of St. Francis Church in Bakersfield, we extend to you and your child our warmest welcome. Baptism is a welcoming of your child into Christ and into the Church. You are the primary teachers of your child. Your child will learn about life, love, God, and religion from you. By your example and life, your child will learn about your values and beliefs.

A decision to have a child baptized is serious. This decision means that you are choosing to accept responsibility for your child's early faith development. Baptism is a beginning of one's life in the Family of God and is surely a most important step. To assist you we have established the following program.

There are three steps to setting up the day of Baptism:

1. **Pick up Registration form** - Fill it out and return it to the Church office along with the child's birth certificate and the \$25.00 fee. This registers you and the godparents to attend the mandatory Baptism Class. You **must** register before you attend the class.
2. **Select Godparents** - Godparents must be Catholics who have received Baptism, First Communion and Confirmation. If they are married to each other, they **must** be married in the Catholic Church. Godparents **must** attend the pre-baptismal class; if they are out of town, they **must** take a class in their parish and bring a certificate or letter from their Pastor. Non-Catholics may **not** be godparents but may be an **official witness** as long as there is one Catholic godparent who fulfills the above requirements.
3. **Setting the Baptism Date** - In order to set a date you **must** have turned in the registration form, birth certificate, \$25.00 fee and the class must have been attended by both the parents and the godparents. You will not be allowed to schedule a date until all is complete.

If you have any questions, please call the Church Office at 661-327-4734. We look forward to being of service to you. We pray for God's blessing for you and your new baby.

Sincerely,
Rev. Craig F. Harrison, V.F.
Pastor

Things to Remember on the Day of Baptism

- 1. Be early – Baptisms begin on time. If you are not present at least 30 minutes early, your Baptism will be canceled.
- 2. Wear your Sunday best. Remember that we will be celebrating a Sacrament in God's House.
- 3. Cameras and video cameras are welcome. I will give you directions prior to the Baptism. Don't forget film and batteries.
- 4. Children are welcome to come and participate.
- 5. Any religious items or gifts will be blessed after the ceremony.
- 6. The child should be dressed in a white garment.
- 7. NO FOOD, DRINKS, GUM CANDY, ETC. IN THE CHURCH.
- 8. If you would like Holy Water from the Baptism, please bring your own container with lid.
- 9. The priest will be available after the Baptism for private pictures.
- 10. A Candle is provided for the child that is being baptized.
- 11. The donation to the Church, in the name of the child, should be placed on the altar at the end of the ceremony.

