



WHAT IS A SACRAMENT?

A sacrament is “an outward sign instituted by Christ to give grace.”

They are Christ’s own gift that provide us with his grace.

Sacraments are the divine helps which God gives to enable us to:

- Believe the truths of the faith
- Become a saint
- Grow in his gift of divine life

THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

Holy Baptism is the basis of the whole Christian life, the gateway to life in the Spirit (*vitae spiritualis*), and the door which gives access to the other sacraments.

Baptism is the first of the three Sacraments of Initiation celebrated in the process of becoming a full member of the Church community.

Since the earliest times, baptism has been administered to children for it is a grace and gift of God that does not presuppose any human merit

Baptism makes us members of the Body of Christ. “Therefore...we are members of one another.” From the baptismal font is born the one People of God of the New

Covenant, which transcends all the natural human limits of nations, cultures, races and sexes: “For by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body.”

In case of necessity, any person can be baptized provided that the person has the intention of doing that which the Church does and provided that the person pours water on the candidate’s head while saying the Trinitarian Formula: ***“I baptize you in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit”***

THE SYMBOLS OF BAPTISM

Water

Water is the universal symbol of baptism. John the Baptist used water (Mt 3:11; Mk 1:8a; Jn 1:33; 3:23), as did Jesus (Jn 3:22). Jesus is living water (Jn. 4:10), and when Jesus dies, the water that flowed from his pierced side serves as a wellspring of his life and grace (Jn 19:34). Water is a symbol of divine life, grace, new birth, growth, power, deliverance, cleansing and of the covenant

The Cross



The cross represents Jesus and whose name disciples are baptized. Making the sign of the cross over a child during the baptism invokes God's protection and asks for entry into the body of the Catholic Church.

Oil of Chrism



During a baptism, the baby is anointed with oil to strengthen the faith of the anointed. The oil also symbolizes the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Baptismal Light

The passing of a lighted candle from the celebrant to the godparent(s) is a symbol of the genesis and vitality of life. Light, like water, is essential to the survival of life because without the light of the sun, nothing would exist on earth. The candle is also a symbol of Christ as "the light of the world" and the Christian faith.



Baptismal Garment

Wearing a white garment during baptism symbolizes that the person being baptized has been clothed with Christ.

I. PREFIGURATION OF BAPTISM IN THE OLD COVENANT

Since the beginning of the world, water, so humble and wonderful a creature has been the source of life and fruitfulness.

1. The church has seen in Noah's ark (Genesis 7:6-23 and 8:1-13) a prefiguring of salvation by Baptism, for by it "a few that is eight persons, were saved through water". 1Pet 3:20

2. Above all, the crossing of the Red Sea, literally the liberation of Israel from the slavery of Egypt, announces the liberation wrought by Baptism. Exodus 14:1-22

3. Finally, Baptism is prefigured in the crossing of the Jordan River by the People of God received the gift of the land promised by Abraham's descendants, an image of Eternal life. Joshua 3:13-17

II. THE GRACE OF BAPTISM

A New Creature

- Baptism not only purifies from all sins, but also makes the neophyte "a new creature," an adopted son or daughter of God.

Incorporated into the Church, the Body of Christ

- Baptism makes us members of the Body of Christ: "Therefore. . . we are members one of another."

An Indelible Spiritual Mark

- Incorporated into Christ by Baptism, the person baptized is configured to Christ. Baptism seals the Christian with the indelible spiritual mark.

In, brief, Baptism imprints on the soul an **indelible spiritual sign, the character, which consecrates the baptized person for Christian worship.**

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF A GODPARENT?

Godparents are a very special part of the sacrament, as they support and bolster the mission of the parents to bring up their child in the faith and to know God.

Godparents have two primary responsibilities:

1. To accept the responsibility to help the parents to raise the child in faith.
2. To represent the entire Church.

Expectations of a Godparent:

- To be part of the child's lifelong journey of faith.
- To be a model of faith through the lived example of life in harmony with the Catholic Church.
- To be a good example to the child.
- To practice the Catholic faith regularly.

Requirements to be a Catholic Godparent:

- Each child may have a godfather and a godmother, the word "godparents" is used in the Rite of Baptism to describe both.
- **Only one godparent is necessary. The godparent must be a fully initiated Catholic (Baptized, Confirmed and received Eucharist), at least 16 years old and must be leading a sacramental life in harmony with the church. The godparent should be willing to accept responsibility of developing the faith life of the child.**
- The godparent may not be the mother or the father of the one to be baptized.

- A baptized and believing Christian may act as a Christian witness, but there must be a Catholic godparent.
- Godparent(s) must obtain a "Letter of Good Standing" from their parish. This letter must be sent no later than 1 week prior to the Baptism date.

CHOOSING A GODPARENT

The day of Baptism is a very special day. Baptism is the first of the seven sacraments of the Catholic Church and the gateway into Christian life. The sacrament is celebrated only once in a person's life, making it a day to be remembered.

Guidelines to choose:

1. Prayerfully consider a few things:
 - a. Does the person truly exemplify the faith, by living according to the teachings of the Catholic Church?
 - b. Does the person live a life in harmony with the Church?
 - c. Does the person regularly practice their faith by participation in the sacramental life of the Church?
2. Godparents should not be chosen because of family expectations or pressure. The role of the godparent(s) is to be presence, specifically a spiritual presence, in a child's life.

THE RITE OF BAPTISM

Reception of the Child

- What do you ask of the church
- Sign of the Cross

Celebration of God's Word

- Scriptural Readings and Homily
- Intercessions (Prayers of the Faithful)
- Pre baptismal anointing (optional)

Celebration of the Sacrament

- Renunciation of Sin and Profession of Faith
- Baptism

Conclusion of the Rite

- Lord's Prayer
- Blessing

QUESTIONS FOR FAITH SHARING

- **What made you choose the Godparent(s) that you have chosen for your child?**
- **How would you describe God?**
- **The very first time you held your child, how did you feel?**
- **What is your favorite passage in the bible?**
- **What is your favorite part of Mass?**
- **How do you hope to give your child the Spiritual strength he/she will need to face life's challenges?**
- **Do you have a crucifix displayed in your home?**

THE BAPTISMAL PREPARATION CLASS

Our Baptismal Preparation Class is open to all registered parishioners and associate members of St. Dominic's Catholic Church. If you are not a registered parishioner or associate member, please visit our website: www.stdominics.org/registration Again, this class is only offered to registered parishioners and associate members of St. Dominic's Catholic Church.

The class is held on the 3rd Monday of the month in the Aquinas Room. **During the pandemic, the class is being offered online via Zoom.**

Start Time: 7:00 pm and this class usually takes about 90 minutes or 1.5 hours.

To register for this class, call or email our Sacramental Preparation Liaison Mrs. Lolita Clemenson at (415) 567-7824 Ext. 103; lolitaclemenson@stdominics.org.

This class is taught by Deacon Chuck McNeil. To contact Deacon Chuck, email: deaconchuck@stdominics.org

TWO LOCATIONS AT ST. DOMINIC'S CHURCH FOR THE SACRAMENT

- **Baptistry** for gatherings of 6 or less people including the priest or deacon. The Baptistry is located to the right after entering Steiner Street doors to the church.
- **Lady Chapel** for gatherings of 6 or more. The Lady Chapel is located to the right of the main altar. There is a separate entrance from the parking lot.
- **During the pandemic, all Baptisms are being held in the Lady Chapel.**

SUGGESTED DONATIONS & STIPENDS

\$150.00 to the Church

\$100.00 to the priest or deacon

Please make the church donation payable to St. Dominic's and the stipend payable directly to the presider (priest or deacon). Payments may also be made online at: <https://stdominics-sf.sf.square.site/> (enter each payment separately or on Venmo or PayPal).