Baptism Preparation Information for Parents and Guardians

CHURCH OF ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE

October 26

The heart of Baptism is the initiation of the child into Christ and the Christian Community. The Baptism Team would like to take this opportunity to welcome parents and guardians to our preparation session and offer our congratulations on the celebration of your child's baptism.

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CHECKLIST:

At this stage parents/guardians should have already booked their date for baptism. This can be done by contacting the Parish Office between 9.30am and 1.30pm Mon-Fri. Baptisms take place on the first Sunday of every month at 12.30pm and on the third Saturday of every month at 3.30pm.

1. **A copy of your baby's Birth Certificate**
2. **Our Parish Registration Form Signed by both parents**
3. **€40 administration fee**
4. **A letter of permission from the Parish Priest in your Parish of residence is also required should you live outside this parish**

(Please ensure the above have been given into the parish office a minimum of three weeks before the date of Baptism)

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What to bring on the day of the Baptism:

- **Godparents (minimum 16 years of age, must have also made their Confirmation)**
- **Baptism Candle (given by baptism team at the preparation meeting)**
- **White shawl/blanket to wrap around the baby after they have been baptised**

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Symbols of Baptism:

- Water - **This is a symbol of new life and a sign of cleansing. A gift of your child's baptism water will be given to you after the service.**
- Font – **The Font is the place of Baptism. It is like the 'womb' of the Church where the holy water is poured three times "in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."**
- Oils – **The Oils used at Baptism are blessed and consecrated in the Pro-Cathedral by our Archbishop on Holy Thursday and distributed to local churches for use throughout the year.**
- The Oil of Catechumens - **This is olive oil based and rubbed on the baby's chest as a sign of strengthening, purification in preparation for Baptism. (Baby's Clothing should be opened for this part of the service in order for the Priest to make sign of cross.)**
- Holy Oil of Chrism – **This is also olive oil mixed with fragrances and makes holy what is anointed, bringing with it the consecration of the Holy Spirit. The Priest anoints the crown of the baby's head with this Oil of Chrism.**
- The Candle - **The Candle is lit from the Pascal Candle, the sign in our Church of Christ our light and love stronger than death. It is given to the baby as a symbol of passing on the light of faith.**
- White Shawl/Blanket - **This is wrapped around the baby as a sign of their dignity as a child of God and of belonging to the Community of Faith.**

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The Ceremony of Baptism

- The Ceremony of Baptism begins at the door of the Church with a **Welcome blessing** for family and friends and the baby.
- The Priest will ask you the following:
- ***What name do you give to this Child?***
  …….name
- ***What do you ask of God's Church? ……..Baptism***

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You will be asked to confirm your intention and commitment to nurturing this new life of faith, hope and love within your child. Baptism is the beginning of your child's journey in life with Christ. Parents and godparents will be invited to make the sign of the cross on baby's forehead in welcome.

The Ceremony continues with readings, Responsorial Psalm and Prayers of the Faithful. Family members are very welcome to participate. The Baptism Team will facilitate this.

We ask the famous members of the family of God, the saints, to pray for these little ones as they are about to be made members of this holy family.
The Blessing with the oil of Catechumens on the baby's chest is given by the Priest.

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The Priest will then Bless the Water in which the baby will be baptised. The Family and friends will be invited to make a Renunciation of Sin and Profession of Faith on the child's behalf.

The Baby is then brought to the font with the Godparents and Parents and the blessed water is poured over the baby's head three times in the name of the Trinity, the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit. This is a sacred moment of initiation. You as parents are making a commitment to full Christian Membership on behalf of your child. The baby is then anointed with the Oil of Chrism on the forehead. Following this the baby is wrapped in the White Shawl/Blanket.

(Family Photos can be taken at the font but we ask parents to ensure privacy of other families in the church.)

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The Baptism candle is then lit from the Paschal Candle as a symbol of passing on the light of knowing Christ Jesus.

A special blessing, called the Ephphatha, is given by the priest. This is a blessing of your child's ears to hear the word of Christ and his/her mouth to proclaim His faith.

The Ceremony concludes with a special blessing for Mothers, Fathers and Godparents and all in attendance on the celebration of your child's Baptism.

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