St. Dominic Baptism Guidelines

Read these Guidelines carefully! They are born of the experience of many Baptisms held at St. Dominic over the years. They are meant to eliminate any confusion and stress as you plan your child’s ceremony. It is your responsibility to make sure that you understand them and follow them. If you have questions after attending the Baptism Class, please contact the office at 719-392-7653, ext. 1006 as soon as possible.

Requirements:

1. The Faith Formation Office schedules all Baptisms. Baptisms will be scheduled no earlier than two weeks after all paperwork is received, reviewed, approved and all conditions have been met.

2. All scheduling of Baptisms here at St. Dominic are contingent upon the following conditions:

   1. A valid certificate of completion of Baptism classes is presented to the office. If you have completed a Baptism class in the last two years, we will need either a certificate of completion from the parish where you last took the class or a letter from the pastor of your last parish certifying that you have successfully completed a baptism class within the past two years.

   2. All requirements for parents and godparents have been met and all paperwork submitted and received by no later than two weeks prior to the tentatively scheduled baptism.

   3. Availability of Deacons/Priests and Masses.

3. If you are in a relationship or civil marriage, we require that you and your partner begin marriage preparation classes with our Marriage Preparation Coordinator with the intention that you will have your marriage blessed in the Roman Catholic Church. Once we receive verification from our Marriage Preparation Coordinator that you have started Marriage Preparation classes and all other requirements have been satisfied, your child’s baptism can be scheduled. This does NOT mean you have to buy a wedding gown, rings, book a hall, send out invitations or spend money! A Catholic wedding is a simple, no cost affair.

4. Preferably both, but at least one godparent, must be a confirmed, practicing Catholic. You should have one male and one female godparent. You may have one Christian witness if you only have one Catholic godparent. A Christian witness is a baptized Christian who regularly attends a Christian church and practices his or her faith (Please see Godparent requirements).
5. Parents and godparents must attend a Baptism class either here or at their home parish. A letter from the parish where the class was taken must be sent to St. Dominic and be on file no later than **two weeks before** the anticipated Baptism.

6. Godparents must fill out our Godparent Eligibility Form found in your baptism packet, and on our website, www.stdominiconline.org and have it signed by their pastor. This form must be on file **no later than two weeks** before the anticipated Baptism.

7. Children **five years** of age and older who are to be baptized must be enrolled in a Religious Education class. The Faith Formation office will help you determine which class is best for your child. If your child is **7yrs and older**, please contact the Director of Faith Formation to register for our RCIC family classes.

8. All baptismal record forms, including any exit permission forms and/or letters from other parishes, must be completed and returned **no later than 2 weeks before the scheduled baptism**.

9. Baptismal paperwork is kept for 6 months. After six months, if you have not had your child baptized, you must begin the process over again. Please alert the office if special circumstances arise.
**Baptism Class:**

1. Baptism Class require pre-registration through the Faith Formation Office. Please contact the Faith Formation Office, 719-392-7653, ext. 1006 for pre-registration instructions.
2. The cost is $15.00 per book. One book is required for each person.
3. Diocesan rules regarding Baptism state that if it has been more than two years since either parents or Godparents have taken a Baptism Preparation class, another class must be attended, regardless of how many older children have been baptized.
4. Classes are being done online for the foreseeable future.

**Baptism Ceremony:**

1. Baptisms are scheduled through the Faith Formation Office only.
2. Baptisms currently are not being done within Mass or after Mass due to Covid 19. Baptisms during Mass are celebrated by the priest. Baptisms after Mass are normally officiated by one of the parish deacons. Baptisms are currently being scheduled Monday thru Thursday evenings during the week due to cleaning need because of Covid 19. No Baptisms are scheduled prior to 5:30 pm.
3. One pew is reserved for family and friends near the baptismal font for baptisms during Mass. If you plan on having a large group of people attend your baptism, please let us know no later than two weeks prior to the scheduled Baptism date so that we might reserve the appropriate number of pews.
4. The family is encouraged to bring the gifts to the altar during the presentation if the child is being baptized during Mass.
5. Photographs and video cameras are welcome for all after Mass baptisms
6. Baptism certificates will be ready two weeks after the Baptism has occurred.
7. If your child is being baptized after Mass, you, your family and the godparents are expected to attend the Mass prior to the baptism.
8. You and the entire Baptism party (parents, child and Godparents (if applicable)) must check in with the sacristan no later than 15 minutes before the start of Mass. If your entire Baptism party is not present and checked in 15 minutes prior to the Mass, the Baptism may have to be rescheduled for a later date.

**SPECIAL NOTE:** If you want a deacon or priest, not from our parish, who is a friend of the family to perform the baptism ceremony at St. Dominic, special arrangements must be made through the parish offices with the consent of the pastor. The visiting deacon or priest who is not from this diocese must send a letter of good standing through the proper diocesan channels. All other requirements as outlined in these Guidelines must still be met.
Godparent Responsibilities and Requirements

Responsibilities:

The role of a godparent, sacramental in nature, is twofold: (a) the godparent is obliged to assist the parents to initiate the child into the faith (by marking the child’s forehead with the sign of the cross and participating in the other sacramentals that take place within the Rite of Baptism) and to raise the newly baptized in the faith; (b) the godparent is to bear witness to the fact of the baptism’s conferral (i.e. able to attest to the use of real water and the Trinitarian formula).

Therefore, a godparent must:

1. Accompany the parent/guardian during the time of baptismal catechesis
2. Present the infant child for baptism.
3. Be stewards regarding the continuing faith journey of the child.
4. Assist parents in guiding their child in the Faith.

Requirements:

To be admitted to the role of godparent, a person must:

1. Be designated by the parent/guardian, or in their absence, by the pastor or minister and is to have the qualifications and intention of performing this role.
2. Be sixteen years old unless the pastor or minister has granted an exception for just cause.
3. Be a fully initiated Catholic (has been baptized, confirmed and has received the sacrament of Holy Communion) and who leads a life of faith in keeping with the function to be taken on.
4. If married, Godparents must be in a Catholic Marriage.
5. Not be bound by any canonical penalty legitimately imposed or declared.
6. Not be the father or mother of the one to be baptized.
7. Present a letter from their pastor attesting that they are a confirmed, practicing Catholic, if not from St. Dominic.
8. Be present for the Baptism.
Baptism F.A.Q.

1. The godparents I picked cannot be here for the baptism, can they still be godparents, or can I have someone stand in for them?

The short answer is no, to both questions. According to diocesan policies, if a person designated to be a godparent cannot be physically present for the baptism, his/her role cannot be fulfilled using a proxy. When a person cannot be present at the actual baptism, he/she cannot serve as a godparent. According to the Code of Canon Law promulgated in 1983, the former practice of proxy godparents has been abrogated due to the grave abuses that arose from its introduction.

2. Do I have to have godparents?

No. However, A godparent is not essential as they are to be had “in so far as possible”. When no godparent is present, one witness need be designated (cf. Can. 875).

3. I don’t like the godparents I chose for my child and my child has already been baptized. Can I change my godparents after my child has been baptized?

No.

4. Do I have to pay to baptize my child?

No, we do not charge for any sacraments.

In order to defray the costs of the Baptism classes, we charge the following fees:

**For a couple:**
- $15 for the first person
- $7 for the second person

**For individuals:**
- $15 per person

If you have any financial concerns, please contact the Director of Religious Education and make the appropriate arrangements.

If you do not attend your scheduled class, the deposit will NOT be refunded. Any cancellations by registered Parents or Godparents MUST be made no later than 72 hours prior to classes by either email to bvalcik@stdominiconline.org or by phone to the Parish Office at 719-392-7653, ext. 1006. Please leave a voicemail if calling after the office is closed.

5. Why do I have to be married in the Catholic Church before I baptize my child?

God made you a steward of all the blessings he sends to you to include your child/children. God places a great trust in you, as parents, to raise your children in the Faith so that they, too, might know Him and develop a deep, lasting and intimate relationship with Him. When you ask the Church for the sacrament of baptism for your child, you swear before God that you will raise your child as a Roman Catholic. When your child receives the Sacrament of Baptism, you accept certain responsibilities. One of those responsibilities is to model the daily life of a faithful, practicing Roman Catholic in right relationship with God. Part of modeling a daily Roman Catholic life involves living in a healthy, sacred, blessed,
relationship with other adults as well as God. It is your example and life that set the tone for their Faith, their relationships, and their Roman Catholic identities.

St Dominic Church follows the norms for the Diocese of Colorado Springs for its Marriage Preparation Process. This process takes a minimum of 12 months starts with an “Initial Interview” where the Marriage Prep Coordinator meets the couple and starts the process by filling out the Diocesan Form MA, “MA-Marriage Pre-Nuptial Form”. Based on the answers provided on form MA and the couple’s history, the deacon provides an overview of the different classes, forms and certificates that are required during the Marriage Preparation Process. We also review the local St Dominic guidelines for marriage. If there is an impediment to deal with such as obtaining a declaration of nullity for a previous marriage, that process is explained to the couple and all marriage preparation classes must wait until a declaration of nullity is obtained. Once the couple has completed the enrollment into the Marriage Prep Process and the Initial Interview is complete, then the couple meets the pastor’s requirement for Baptism regarding the sacrament of matrimony. To contact the Marriage Preparation Coordinator about the Marriage Preparation Process and schedule an Initial Interview, please email Deacon Doug Marsh at dmarsh@stdominiconline.org."

6. **A WEDDING? I must pay for a wedding?!**

NO, you don’t have to pay for a Catholic wedding ceremony and yes, you need to be married in the Catholic Church. A Catholic wedding ceremony does NOT require that you buy a white dress, send out invitations, buy flowers, or spend any money at all. This is does not have to be a lavish affair. A quiet, simple, ceremony with two witnesses can be done at no cost in our day chapel. Any money you spent for a Catholic wedding is money you choose to spend.

7. **I have taken baptism classes a while ago or I have had multiple children baptized, why do I have to take them again?**

Parent/guardian and Godparent who has been catechized within the last two years in preparation for the Baptism of a previous child will not be required to take another Baptism class. However, if it has been more than two years since a parent or Godparent’s last Baptism class, we require that you attend another class. If you have attended another class, we ask that you bring us a Certificate of Completion from that program or a letter signed by the pastor where the class was taken.

8. **I want to bring a friend along to the class, is that a problem? They are just here for support and are not participating in the baptism class.**

Unfortunately, we have a limited amount of seating available, so only those who are enrolled in the class can attend.

9. **I have other children; do you provide babysitting services?**

No, sorry, but we are unable to provide babysitting services at this time.