

Baptism Frequently Asked Questions

How do we schedule a baptism?

It is recommended that baptisms be scheduled at least three months in advance of the date you have in mind. You must speak with a priest to prepare for and schedule a baptism. Call the parish office for referral to a priest.

When are baptism ceremonies held?

Baptisms at St. Eugene's are held on Sundays, directly after the 12:00 noon mass, from 1:15 until 2:00 p.m. Plan to attend Mass and stay for the ceremony afterwards.

Are there age restrictions on baptisms?

Infant baptisms are given to newborns through age seven. Contact a priest to discuss infant baptisms.

Anyone over age seven who has not yet been baptized can attend classes and receive the sacrament of baptism. Call the Religious Education Office at 707-542-1525 for more information.

Is baptismal preparation required?

Yes, parents are required to attend a preparatory meeting with a priest prior to scheduling an infant baptism. The exact nature of this meeting depends on the individual circumstances of the family of the child to be baptized (for example, whether this is the first or subsequent child.) This meeting is scheduled by contacting a priest at 707-542-6984.

How many infants and children can be baptized at the same time?

Only two children are scheduled at one ceremony. Occasionally exceptions are made for more than two siblings from the same family who want to receive the baptism sacrament together.

Can we schedule a "private" baptism?

Because the baptism of a child is a celebration of the entire parish community which welcomes the newly-baptized into its faith family, so-called "private baptisms" are discouraged. Parents who, for a good reason, wish to schedule a baptism for another time must make this arrangement with a specific priest. The preparation requirements are the same as for regularly-scheduled baptisms. Call the parish office for referral to a priest.

Can we have a priest or deacon from outside St. Eugene's perform our child's baptism?

Yes, in most cases. However, a St. Eugene's priest must give prior approval for visiting priests or deacons and the parents must attend the preparatory meeting with a St. Eugene's priest. Priests and deacons from outside the Diocese of Santa Rosa must get approval from the Bishop of Santa Rosa.

What about Godparents?

The Church requires that all children to be baptized have at least one Godparent of either sex. One Godparent of each sex may also be chosen. To fulfill the role of Godparent a person must be at least sixteen years of age and must be a baptized and confirmed Catholic. The person chosen must be living a life in harmony with the role to be undertaken (that is, they should be regularly practicing Catholics and if married, they should have been married in the Church.) The child's parents may not serve as Godparents. A baptized non-Catholic may serve as a witness to baptism along with a qualified Godparent.

How should our child be dressed for baptism?

Infants and small children are traditionally dressed in white. Some local children's clothing stores sell baptismal attire and supplies. The traditional white stole and baptismal candle are provided by the parish but families may bring their own to the ceremony if they so choose.

Is there a fee for baptisms?

The Church does not charge a fee for baptisms. It is traditional, however, to make a donation to both the parish and the priest or deacon who performs the baptism. Usual donations range from \$50 to \$200 for each.

Will I receive a baptism certificate afterwards?

Baptism certificates are available upon request at anytime during the life of the child. Certificates may be needed for proof of baptism when the child receives First Communion, is confirmed as a teenager and at the time of marriage.

Please contact the parish office at 707-542-6984 between 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday if you have any further questions.