

Blessed Teresa of Calcutta

Baldivis Catholic Parish



Sacrament of Baptism

Information Guide

The Church Celebrates New Life in Baptism

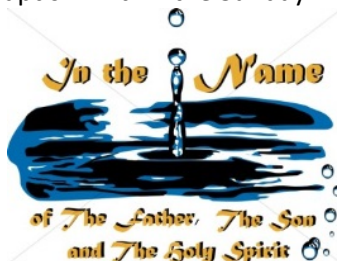
Parenthood is a privilege. The mother and father feel the joy and wonder of sharing in the creative love of God. As Christians welcome the gift of new life, they believe that their Father in heaven wishes to share His **life** with the child they have brought into the world.

When **Jesus** lived on earth, parents brought little children to him. He put his arms around them, laid his hands on them and gave them his blessing. In the Sacrament of Baptism Christ still shows his love for little children, takes them to himself, blesses them and gives them a new life which he won for us by his death and resurrection

Baptism is a **Sacrament** of the Church. Through the sign of ordinary water – a symbol of cleansing, a symbol of life – we are taken up into the very events by which Jesus Christ saved us, the mystery of His **Death and Resurrection**. With Christ we go down, as it were, into the tomb – we die with Him to the power of sin – so that when we come up out of the water we rise with Him to a new life. For this reason total immersion (rather than just pouring water over the head) brings out the full significance of Baptism.

But, however it is done, the important thing is that it is Christ who is working and present through the Sacrament, giving His life and love to the child who is washed with water in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Through Baptism therefore, we share in the life of **Jesus**, we become sons and daughters of God the **Father**, and the **Holy Spirit** lives within us.

In this way we are taken up into **God's family**, and called to live out this relationship in the family of the Church. Baptism is called the first Sacrament of initiation into the **Church**. In welcoming a new member, the whole Christian community rejoices and celebrates God's gift of new life. Later on this life will be strengthened through the Holy Spirit in the Sacrament of Confirmation. It will be expressed most fully through the Eucharist, which is the reason why it is appropriate to celebrate Baptism within the Sunday Mass.



The Responsibility of Parenthood

While parenthood is a joy and privilege, it is also a great responsibility. Think of the tremendous **trust** that God has placed in you, as parents. You are entrusted with the gift of life – not a new toy or gadget, but a new person, made in the image of God. You have also been entrusted with the gift of **faith**, which you wish to share with your child. This faith is like a seed that is planted in our hearts through Baptism, but has to be tenderly nurtured if it is to grow and bloom and bring forth fruit in adult life.

The **Christian family** provides the seed-bed for this life of faith to grow. It provides the love and sense of belonging that everyone needs. The family, in this sense, is the “little church” – the place where your child first experiences what it means to be God’s family. This is where the child learns to love and pray and live the way of the Gospel.

You can promote this growth in many little ways, such as:-

- Encouraging a spirit of thankfulness for the goodness of life
- Being alert to the opportunities for appropriate ‘God talk’
- Through simple family prayer rituals (perhaps using the Baptism candle at certain times)
- Through participating in Sunday Mass

Our **Parish encourages** children of every age – we love to have them at Mass. There is easy access to take them outside if you need to. From the age of 4 or 5 they are welcome to join the ‘Children’s Liturgy’ for the first part of Mass – we try to involve the children in different ways. We also have a little program called ‘Godstart’, whereby we try to keep in touch at the time of their early birthdays. So the Parish family wants to support you in every way we can. The Parish community is blessed and grows with the new life that is engendered through Baptism. It’s also a great time for you, as parents, to move along on your own faith journey.



Baptism Information for Baldivis Parish

1. Baptisms are ideally celebrated during **Parish Mass** (Sunday 9:30am or Saturday 6:00pm).
If this is not feasible they can be celebrated after Sunday morning Mass at 10:45am or perhaps before the Saturday vigil Mass. In this case we invite you to present the child for a simple Introductory Rite at the beginning of a Sunday Mass.
2. In choosing **Godparents** try to ensure that at least one is a practising Catholic. Those who are not should at least undertake to support you in your responsibilities of Christian parenthood.
3. **Photography** is permitted, but please ensure that it is not 'overdone' to the detriment of others in the congregation.
4. Unless you would like to prepare your own, we are happy to provide a **candle** and **white garment** for the ceremony. These items are an integral part of the Baptism ceremony and are lovely keepsakes for your child.
5. It is customary on the occasion of Baptism to make an **offering** to the Church and cover the cost of candle, white garment, certificate, etc...
6. The celebration is recorded in the Parish **Baptismal Register**, and a copy is available in the future when your child comes to the Sacraments of Confirmation, Marriage or Priesthood.



*"Children are the most beautiful Gift
that God can give us."*

(Quote from Parish Patron)
Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta