

IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY PARISH

BASIC INFANT BAPTISM GUIDELINES

August 29, 1999

Deacon Donald Lucero; 662-6331

1. Sacrament of Baptism - Holy Baptism is the basis of the whole Christian life, the gateway to life in the Holy Spirit, and the door which gives access to the other Sacraments.... *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.
2. Baptism is God's most beautiful, magnificent and precious Gift — through Baptism we are freed from sin (original or actual) and reborn as Sons and daughters of God.
3. Infants, as well as adults, are tainted by original sin, and must be freed from the power of darkness and brought into the realm of God — to which all of us are called.
4. Infants should be baptized as soon as practical after birth, thus sharing in this Greatest Gift from God.
5. Baptism should be celebrated in the Church where the Christian family gathers for Sunday worship. At Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, baptisms are celebrated during the Sunday Liturgy.
6. Generally, the child must be baptized in the parish of the parents. Permission from the pastor, to have the child baptized elsewhere, is required.
7. Parents must be registered in the Parish at least three months prior to the baptism. This permits the pastor to better ascertain that the parent(s) will take their obligations seriously.
8. Parent(s) are responsible for the upbringing the child in the Catholic faith — this is a serious obligation which parents must not take lightly!! If there is doubt about the parent's sincerity to meet this obligation, the baptism should be deferred.
9. Parents and godparents (sponsors) residing within IHM Parish must attend a Baptism Preparation Class before the baptism.
10. Baptism can be conferred by immersion or by pouring of water—both signify the cleansing entrance into the Paschal Mystery.
11. One godparent (sponsor) of either sex is required; if two are used, then one must be male and the other female. No exceptions allowed by Canon Law.

12. Godparents must be not less than 16 years of age, be Catholic, and have received the Sacraments of Initiation (Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist).
13. A non-Catholic, Christian may serve as a Witness only, i.e., not as a Godparent.
14. Exercise care in selecting Godparents and/or witnesses since these persons are responsible in assisting the parents in the Christian upbringing of the child(ren).
15. Care is necessary in the selection of the child's name, i.e., the name must not be offensive, scandalous, or contrary to Christian sentiment.
16. At a minimum, one parent, or legal guardian, must consent to baptism of the infant. Remember the responsibilities undertaken by parents!!
17. A record of the child's baptism is maintained where the baptism was conferred — Parish of Baptism. The reception of subsequent Sacraments must be recorded on this document by the Parish of Baptism. (Parents: make sure this has been done by obtaining a current copy of your child's baptismal certificate and insure all conferred Sacraments are duly noted on this document).
18. Baptism Preparation Classes are held bimonthly (odd-numbered months) on the second Tuesday at St. Joseph's Hall in White Rock at 7:30 PM.
19. Parents, and godparents from this Parish, must attend this Class. Parents may attend the Class before the child(ren) is/are born.
20. For additional information on Baptism, or if you have questions, please call me (Deacon Donald Lucero) at 662-6331 (IHM Parish) or at 672-9826 (home). Please inquire about your child's baptism well in advance of the time you want the child baptized. By doing this, you will be spared possible disappointments and avoid any misunderstandings.

IN BAPTISM, WE ENTER INTO A COVENANT WITH GOD IN WHICH WE ACCEPT THE TEACHING OF CHRIST AND ACCEPT OUR HEAVENLY FATHER AS OUR FATHER AND GOD. GOD, IN RETURN, PROMISES TO CARE FOR US AND PROVIDE FOR OUR EVERY NEED. IN INFANT BAPTISM, WE AS PARENTS SPEAK FOR THEM AND SAY "YES" TO GOD AND "NO" TO SIN.