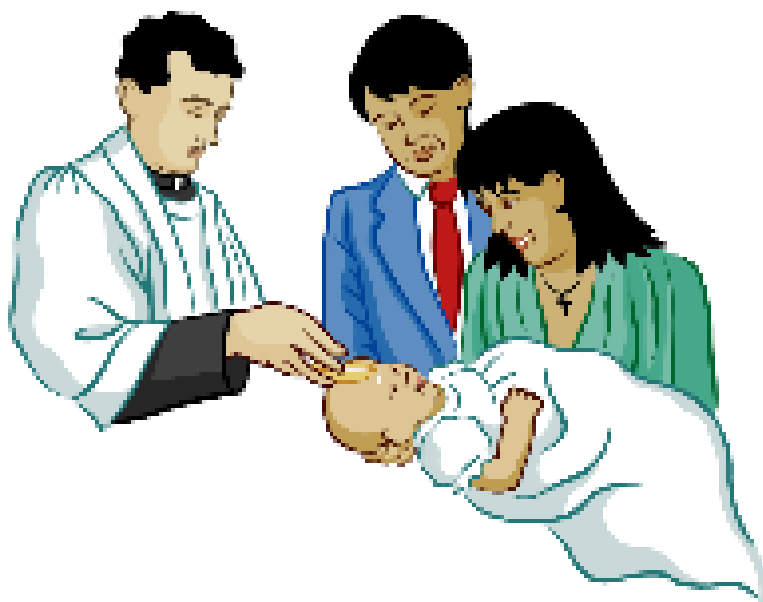


BAPTISM INFORMATION BOOKLET



Parish Priest: Rev Fr Geoffrey McIlroy



**ST MACARTAN'S CATHOLIC CHURCH
MORNINGTON**

6 Drake Street Mornington 3931
Ph: (03) 5975 2200
Email Address: mornington@cam.org.au
Website: www.melbcatholic.org/s/mornington

CONGRATULATIONS AND WELCOME

The parish of St. Macartan's takes this opportunity to congratulate you on your decision to have yourself or your child Baptised, as we welcome you into our faith community. Or, if it is an older child, congratulations on them wanting to share your faith and join our faith filled community. We look forward to sharing this part of your faith journey with you.

Remember that Baptism is an initiation into our faith community where you become part of a family. This means wanting to share with your child an active faith part of which is celebrating your faith in worship community at Mass each week. This will give you and your children a real chance to grow up and experience their Catholic Faith. Don't stay away just because your children are young or noisy, as Fr Geoff our Parish Priest says – that is their job being noisy, that is their way of participating.

Remember; you are becoming part of a new family, an eternal family.

We appreciate that, if your child is an infant and thus has only just joined your family, this is an extremely busy time for you. When you have a moment, it is important you take time to read this information booklet as we hope it will prove useful to you during the baptismal process and answer many questions.

Things you need to know:

1. **We will need a copy of each of the parents Baptism certificates, and those of any Godparents.** Any issues in supplying these please contact the office ASAP (03 59752200).
2. Baptisms are scheduled every Saturday of the month at 11am.
3. We limit it to no more than three Baptism families at a time - Three families can be easily separated in the church and the service runs smoothly with this number, each family getting individual and group attention. Approximate numbers per family are 80max (if more expected let us know).
4. Or, in some cases we hold Baptisms for a single family (where scheduling allows) or possibly during a Mass?
5. Baptism Information Nights are the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of each Month at 5:30pm – 6pm. Please make booking via Parish Office.

Any queries please do not hesitate in contacting us on 59752200 or via email:
mornington@cam.org.au.

FIRST STEPS - IMPORTANT

Who can be Baptised? – *“Every person, any age, not yet Baptised and only such a person is able to be Baptised”* (CCC 1246).

If your child has already been baptised into a Christian faith, they cannot be baptised again. If they are of another Christian faith and you now want them to change religion and become Catholic, then Fr Geoff will need to speak with you and discuss your reasoning, expecting non-Catholic parents to also want to become Catholic, if they desire so strongly in their child becoming Catholic.

Catholic Baptism must not be part of a process just to get your child into a Catholic School – Our Catholic schools take any Christian denomination, non-Christian, and no religion children, but yes! Our Catholic schools are first and foremost for the catholic parishioners' children. The schools were built by and are supported by Parishioners, who first and foremost support the Church.

1. Baptism of children under the age of reason (under the age of seven):

Baptism is for anyone who has not yet received baptism from a Christian faith. It is the first of the initiation sacraments, initiated by Christ himself, and the beginning of a process of growing into one's faith that is lifelong. A journey that begins with the Parents active faith and guidance.

To have a child under the age of seven baptised, at least one Parent who permanently lives with the child **must be Catholic!** If not, please seek our information on RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults), where adults can become Catholic.

By Baptising your child, you decide that he/she will be a Christian, a member of Christ's body, the Church. This baptism recognises that your child is to become a child of God, with a lifelong mission prepared for him/her.

As parents, you are your child's first teachers of the faith. Your responsibility is to bring your child regularly to church; from you, your son or daughter will learn day to day to hear the word of God, to pray and to love God and neighbour. Can anyone better than you teach your child how to love as you love the world God created.

Faith alone sees into the great mysteries, so as you come to the baptismal font, you the parents and Godparents make a profession of your own Catholic faith and renew the vows of your own Baptism, that is why Parent and Godparent need to be Catholic. You are to reject sin; profess your faith in Jesus Christ and vow to make it your constant care to bring your child up in the practice of the faith within the Catholic church. The creedal statements you respond to are in a form of the Apostles Creed* the ancient Christian summary of faith, with all the great mysteries contained within.

- The creation of the world by God
- The mission of Jesus, His Son
- The mysteries of redemption and life that He works through the Spirit.

This is the substance of your faith, the faith you are to communicate to your child and the faith that enables you to understand the mystery of Baptism you are to celebrate.

[* see Apostles Creed and The Lord's Prayer, at the end]

2. Baptism for a child who is over the age of reason (over the age of seven)

If your child is over the age of seven, then they are treated as adults, as they are over the age of reason. Obviously, pre-teen, or even teenager children are not adults. But they are considered to have a reasoning ability, an ability to understand what Baptism means and an option to say Yes or No to Baptism, Yes or No to the faith! As they are not Baptised through the parents' faith but their own!

So these children fall into three main categories:

1. Those who have been raised in Catholic primary schools and or by active Catholic parents.
2. Those that haven't been in Catholic primary schools or have had no instruction of their faith.
3. Those from either 1 or 2 above who have non-Catholic parents.

In point 1: The child will already have a knowledge and some understanding of their faith and belief as taught in the school and experienced with the parents in the Holy Mass. It will then be a matter of coming and meeting up with the Parish Priest for some extra instruction (Parent and child) on the Baptism Rite and other Initiation sacraments, answering any questions the child may have.

But reassuring the child it's not about understanding their faith but about trust about belief in God and how they can best experience their faith, and develop their relationship with Our Lord, Jesus Christ.

In point 2: If the child has not attended any Catholic Primary school, and or the child has not been instructed about their faith by their parents, then pre-Baptismal catechetical classes will need to be arranged. Something like RCIC – Rites of Christian Initiation of Children? Again, this will need to be discussed with the Parish Priest. As without this, the child wouldn't have learnt the basic concepts about their faith, so will not be able to adequately profess their faith, or understand what Baptism is. Also the child will be at a disadvantage later when at school preparing for the other sacraments.

In point 3: If the child, who is of the age of reason and wants to become Catholic has no Catholic parent; they must have an adult sponsor, preferably family friend, approved by the parents, who is Catholic and who is willing to be their Godparent and help instruct and support the child in the Catholic faith. The parents in turn, must be willing for their child to be active in their Catholic faith. This will need to be discussed with the Parish Priest.

But regardless of these scenarios about a child over the age of reason, baptism cannot occur straight away as Fr Geoff will need to speak with the parents and child. Remembering; the reason for the Baptism (becoming Catholic), is to be independent of any desire to enter a Catholic school.

Adult Baptism (over the age of 18)

Seek RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults) information and call and speak to the Parish Priest.

INFORMATION SESSIONS

You may have already contacted the parish office or Fr Geoff, asking for your child to be baptised. If not, we suggest you contact us as soon as possible on 5975 2200, email: mornington@cam.org.au and let us know you are interested. Baptisms are held at St Macartan's Parish at 11am every Saturday of the month. Please contact the Parish Office to arrange a date for Baptism preparation and your child's Baptism.

The Baptismal program in St. Macartan's Parish is a three-step process:

Firstly, all parents of children to be baptised are asked to attend a Baptismal preparation meeting with our Baptismal preparation instructor. You are only required to attend a Baptismal meeting for your first child. Such meetings are usually held on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month, at 5:30pm in the Parish Hall (10 Drake St).

At this meeting, you will be able to find out information on baptism – the process and the reasons why we baptise our children. There will be an opportunity for you to discuss on that night, any issues you may have concerning the Baptism of your child. Godparents are also welcome to attend, but this is not compulsory.

PLEASE NOTE THAT BOOKINGS WILL NOT BE CONFIRMED UNTIL COMPLETION OF THE INFORMATION SESSION (IF APPLICABLE)

GODPARENTS

The role of godparent is very special, and it is an enormous honour for the people that you ask. It is the role of the godparent to help the parents and share the parenting of the Baptised child in matters of faith and God.

So there must be at least one godparent and they must be at least 16 years old and be Catholic, being received fully into the Catholic Church (**having received Confirmation**). Only two Godparents can be included on the certificate and be registered. Please see the end of this booklet for further information on Godparents.

ON THE DAY

Secondly, we look forward to you and all your family participating in your child's baptism. As the idea of Baptism is that your child is becoming a member of God's family, the Catholic Church and of the Saint Macartan's Catholic faith community, it would be wonderful if you and all your family could join us for Saturday 9.15am Mass, immediately before the Baptism. Let our Celebrant know you are there as other parishioners would love to meet you if you are not already a member of the parish.

At the end of Mass, the Celebrant will be ready to commence the Baptism at approximately 11am. Please ask your family and friends to be in the church and ready before this time.

The Celebrant will lead you through the Baptism and will let you know when you are to respond and when the readings will take place.

FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION

It is customary for a cash offering to be made to the priest by way of thanks on the day after the Baptism.

Also, an amount of \$50 per family is payable to the parish as a deposit before the Baptism to cover costs of baptismal preparation, certificates, and the running of the Parish. This amount is payable one week before the baptism.

PRESENTATION OF CERTIFICATES

Thirdly, the Certificate is presented to the parents (family) straight after the Baptism. Baptismal certificates are important when enrolling children in Catholic schools so please keep it in a safe place!

St. Macartan's Piety Stall Baptismal Requirements & Gifts

We ask you to prepare a white Baptism garment – a tunic, sash or ribbon suitably decorated which is put on during the ceremony as part of the Baptismal Rite. The child may wear anything to the ceremony.

You need a candle – preferably a thick one and, if you can, decorate it with gold paint – a cross, perhaps the date and child's name. (Sometimes Godparents like to help with the Garment and the Candle.)

The Piety Store (Gift shop) at the church is open after every weekend mass and stocks a wide range of gifts, cards, crosses etc. Or call Trish Thomas on 0425 749 379, to arrange a time to view.

It also stocks white garments (which can be embroidered with your child's name and date of baptism) and candles (which can have your child's name and date of baptism in gold lettering).

NOTES FOR GODPARENTS

Congratulations, you have been asked to be a Godparent. These notes should help you to decide whether you want to accept this privilege.

What is a Godparent?

A Godparent can also be referred to as a sponsor **must be a Catholic** and is a person who is willing to be actively involved in developing the faith life of the baptised, a person who can share the parenting of the baptised child in matters of faith and God. Parents and Godparents, therefore, need to be united in their faith beliefs, so they can work together to help the child grow in faith and love of God.

Godparenting is a serious and continuing commitment. In fact, Godparenting is for life. This highlights the desirability of a developing relationship among parents, Godparents and the child – a relationship that includes a deepening practical faith.

SPONSORS (GODPARENTS) - Who can be a Godparent?

- A person to be baptized is to be given a sponsor (**Godparent**), who assists an adult in Christian initiation or together with the parents presents an infant for baptism. A Godparent also helps the baptized person to lead a Christian life in keeping with baptism and to fulfill faithfully the obligations inherent in it.
- **There is to be only one male Godparent or one female Godparent or one of each.** [There must be at least one Godparent and no more than two].
- To be permitted to take on the function of Godparent a person must:
 1. Be selected by the one to be baptized, by the parents or the person who takes their place, or in their absence by the pastor or minister and have the aptitude and intention of fulfilling this function;
 2. Have completed the sixteenth year of age.
 3. Be a Catholic **who has been confirmed** and has already received the most holy sacrament of the Eucharist and who leads a life of faith in keeping with the function to be taken on;
 4. Not be bound by any canonical penalty legitimately imposed or declared;
 5. **NOT BE** the father or mother of the one to be baptized.
- A baptized person who is not a Catholic, cannot be a Catholic Godparent but participate with a Catholic Godparent but only as a witness of the baptism.

During the baptismal ceremony, the Godparent(s) join with the parent(s) in a profession of the Catholic church's faith. For this, the Godparent(s) need to be able to profess the **Catholic faith** and recite the Lord's prayer. [see below].

The role of Godparent however is not restricted to the obviously pious! It requires simply a commitment to Christ, a genuine friendship with the family, and a good dose of reality! (Godparents are asked to provide a copy of their baptism certificate).

Is the commitment of being this child's Godparent right for you?

Being a Godparent is not for everyone. Primarily, you need to have an active faith. Also some may be able to commit to be a Godparent for one child and family but not for another. It is very important that anyone asked to become a Godparent feels able to say, "thank you, but no". Ask yourself:

- Is my faith and its practice reasonably compatible with the family's beliefs?
- Am I happy to be a part of their birthday and other family celebrations?
- How will I plan to keep in real touch with my Godchild?
- Does it seem likely we will still be friends in ten or twenty years?

It needs to be noted that a Godparent does not become a replacement parent if a parent is absent, is ill, or dies – responsibility for the child in those cases is a legal matter.

Godparenting is a privilege, a commitment, a challenge. It is a wonderful opportunity to become an integral part of a faith family. It is to be enjoyed.

APOSTLES CREED (BAPTISMAL CREED)

I believe in God,
 the Father Almighty,
 Creator of heaven and earth,
 and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
 who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
 born of the Virgin Mary,
 suffered under Pontius Pilate,
 was crucified, died, and was buried;
 He descended into hell;
 on the third day He rose again from the dead;
 He ascended into heaven,
 and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty;
 from there He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
 the Holy Catholic Church,
 the communion of Saints,
 the forgiveness of sins,
 the resurrection of the body,
 and life everlasting.

Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name. Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.

Amen.

DONATIONS TO THE CELEBRANT AND THE CHURCH

Donation to the Celebrant is paid directly to the Priest on the day of the Baptism.

AND

The \$50 administration fee is to be paid 1 week prior to the Baptism and can be paid by direct, details below, or at the Parish Office by Cash only. Please email the office when payment transfer is made to confirm your Baptism Date.

Thank you.

Direct Deposit Details

Account Name: St Macartan's Church

BSB: 083-347

Account No. : 547 373 281

PLEASE NOTE: Please be at St Macartan's Church 15 minutes prior to your Baptism time.

PARKING: Church Carpark: **Off Cook St (driveway behind the church)**

Our Catholic Faith #1



Godparents for a Catholic Baptism

In order that a child be baptized, it is necessary that the parents' consent, or at least one of them, or someone legally standing in their place, and that there is reasonable hope that the child will be brought up in the Catholic Faith.

What are the requirements to be a godparent?

A godparent is to be a confirmed, Catholic Christian who is at least 16 years of age, and who faithfully practices and believes in the Catholic faith as a participating member of a parish community.

How many godparents should there be?

Church law only requires you to have one godparent; however, it has been tradition to have two.

Can the same godparents have responsibility for more than one child in the same family?

Yes, as long as they take seriously their responsibility and intention to help the children grow in faith.

What gender should the godparent be?

If you choose only one godparent, you are free to choose a male or a female. However, if you wish to have two godparents, there must be one male and one female.

Can a non-Catholic serve as a godparent?

A baptized person who belongs to another Christian community may be admitted only as a "Christian witness" (not a godparent) provided that, there is at least one Roman Catholic godparent who fulfills the above criteria. A **non-baptized person cannot** be a witness (Code of Canon Law, cc. 872-874; Catechism of the Catholic Church 1255). During the baptism, a non-Catholic witness may perform all the parts of the ceremony that a godparent does. His or her name will be entered into the Sacrament Record Book and on the certificate as an "official witness", together with the name of the godparent.

What is the difference between a godparent and a witness?

Canon Law describes a witness as "A baptized person who belongs to a non-Catholic ecclesial (church) community." A godparent is a confirmed, practicing Catholic in good standing with the Church.

Can someone serve as godparent by proxy (stand-in) if the godparent is unable to participate in the baptism ceremony?

If a godparent cannot attend the baptism ceremony, a Catholic proxy can stand in the place of the missing godparent. The name of that person will be entered as "proxy" in the Sacramental Record Book, along with the name of the missing godparent.