



CELEBRATING THE  
SACRAMENT OF  
BAPTISM

Pastoral Area of  
Greystones &  
Kilquade

# CELEBRATING THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

**Congratulations** on the arrival of your new baby!

Our parish community joins you in thanking God for the gift of new life. The birth of your child is a very special joy for you and the Church is glad to share this joy with you.

Every parent wants the best for their child. The birth of your baby causes you to pause and reflect on what you hope for this new life entrusted to you. For Catholics this hope is expressed in baptism and the invitation it offers your child to share in the life and Spirit of God.

As parents, you are the first and most important teachers of your child's faith and spirituality. You nourish God's gift of faith in your child and make it come alive for them by living and sharing your faith with them. Your child will be carried to the baptismal font by your faith.



The following are some guidelines to help you to prepare to make this step in faith.

## **WHAT IS CELEBRATED IN BAPTISM?**

It is through this sacrament of baptism that we receive the Holy Spirit and become members of the People of God, of the Body of Christ, which is the Church. Baptism becomes our commitment to strive to grow to spiritual maturity during our life. Baptism is the first step of Christian initiation; full communion is celebrated with the sacraments of the Eucharist and Confirmation.

## **WHAT DOES BAPTISM ASK OF YOU AS PARENTS?**

There are specific requirements in Canon Law for parents and godparents who are preparing for the celebration of their child's Baptism. Canon 868 pp1.2. states:

- *"there must be a founded hope that the infant will be brought up in the Catholic religion...."*

The commentary goes on to state:

- *"The parents' desire for their child's baptism is evidenced by their own practice of the faith and by the fact that they do not view baptism as a mere social or cultural event."*

Simply put, it means that parents are expected to live their faith by the witness they give on a daily basis and by gathering with the worshipping community for Sunday Mass which helps to nourish and sustain faith.

The priests of the Parish of Greystones and Kilquade want the baptism of your child to be a truly memorable and sacred celebration.

*This booklet offers information and guidelines regarding the celebration of baptism in the Parishes of Greystones and Kilquade.*

# BAPTISMAL PLANNING

The Baptism programme we invite you to take part in spans a four month period and a life time beyond that. Our hope is that this programme will enhance both the preparation and celebration of your child's baptism and their welcome into the Christian community.

Your preparation has already begun, as evidenced by the fact that you are considering bringing your child forward for Baptism.

## The First Step... Meet & Greet

Our preparation with you begins here. All families in the Pastoral Area of Greystones and Kilquade, presenting their child for Baptism are invited to come to Mass on the 2nd Sunday of the month in The Holy Rosary Church, Greystones at 11.30am following by a Meet & Greet.

Towards the end of Mass you will be invited to come to Kilian House Family Centre (beside the church) to meet some members of the Baptism Team and other families. The Baptism process in the Pastoral Area will be explained and you will have the opportunity to ask questions. The process spans over a 4 month period.

## Committing to Dates

At the initial gathering, you will be given a link and code for you to use to register you and your child online for the baptism programme. During the registration you will choose dates for a:

- Preparation Meeting
- Welcome Ceremony/Mass
- Baptism Ceremony

Please note that the Preparation Meeting and the Welcome Ceremony must be attended by at least one of the parents/guardians so that your child can be baptised. If any stage is missed you must rearrange it and subsequent dates by emailing The Baptism Team.

To complete the registration, you need a copy of your child's birth certificate. A scanned copy or photograph can be uploaded. This is required to ensure that the details entered in the baptismal register correspond with the details on your child's birth certificate.

## The Preparation Meeting

The preparation meeting takes place on the 3rd Thursday of each month in the Pastoral Area Centre, Kilian House Family Centre, Greystones at 7.30 pm. The centre is located beside The Holy Rosary Church. Car parking is available at the rear, the entrance is off Kimberly Road.

This meeting is for all parents who have registered for The Preparation Meeting on that date. You will meet with other parents there. Please note that the Godparents of your child are very welcome to attend this meeting.



We encourage you to discuss and consider the following questions before the meeting:

- What does Baptism celebrate for you?
- How do you plan to share your faith with your child as the child grows up?

The meeting will include a discussion based on these questions, information on the Welcome Ceremony, the Baptism Ceremony, and an opportunity for Q & A.

## The Welcoming Ceremony

The first stage of baptism will be celebrated at this Mass. The "Welcoming Ceremony" is part of the celebration of baptism in our community. It is a lovely way of introducing your child to the Christian community which they will belong to and become a part of, as they grow in their faith.

Initial point of contact - at Mass

Meet & Greet

Committing to dates - online

Booking Dates

Evening Meeting - in person

Preparation

Ceremony - at Mass

Welcome

Baptism Ceremony

Baptism

The Welcome Ceremony takes place on first Sunday of month at the 10am Sunday morning Mass in St. Anthony's Church, Kilcoole and the fourth Sunday of the month at the 11.30am Mass in The Holy Rosary Church, Greystones.

As well as presenting your child to the community to be welcomed, your child will also be anointed on the heart at this time. Godparents of your child and other family members are very welcome to come to this ceremony.

## The Baptism Ceremony

Baptism ceremonies take place on Sundays. You are welcome to choose any church:

- St Joseph's Church 1st Sunday at 12.30pm
- St. Anthony's Church: 1st & 3rd Sundays at 1.30pm
- The Holy Rosary Church: 2nd & 4th Sunday at 1pm

On the day, please arrive 15 mins before the ceremony begins. This gives time to meet people, the baptismal team and the priest. It gives time to get organised so the ceremony will begin on time.

# BAPTISM - A SACRED CEREMONY

Through Baptism we are freed from sin and reborn as sons and daughters of God: we become members of Christ, are incorporated into the Church and made shares in her mission:

*"Baptism is the sacrament of regeneration through water in the word."*

An insight into the significance of the symbols used in baptism is below.

## Baptismal Promises

During the ceremony you will be asked to renew your own Baptismal promises and are invited to take these promises on behalf of your child.

In doing so you take on the responsibility of being your child's first teacher of the Christian faith. It is only after these promises have been made that your child is baptised in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

## Water

Brings new life and is also a sign of cleansing. The water in which your child is baptised will be blessed with the following words:

*"God of love and mercy, bless this water in which your children are to be reborn. May it cleanse your people and refresh the faith of your Church."*

## Baptismal Font

Baptism is seen as the doorway or entrance into the Christian community. It is why the baptismal font was often located in the porch or just inside the door of the church. Traditionally, the baptismal font also had eight sides to it as a symbol that baptism is preparing us for the 8th day, the last and eternal day with God.

## Baptismal Shawl

After baptism your child will be wrapped in a white shawl provided by you. It symbolises a new life in Christ and being embraced by God's Love.

## The Baptism Candle

The Paschal Candle is lit for the Baptism ceremony. This light symbolises Christ, the Risen Lord, who overcame the cross and rose to new life. It is a symbol of hope! A smaller Baptism Candle is lit from the Easter Candle. This light, love and hope of Jesus is being passed on to the new Christian through you the parents.

## The Role of Godparents

Godparents play an especially important role in the faith development of your child. The Godparents are there to fulfil two duties:

1. To accept responsibility to help the parents to raise the child in faith.
2. As representatives of the universal Church, Godparents become "faith ambassadors" for your child.

Godparents should not be chosen just out of family expectations or pressures. Since the role of the Godparents is to be a presence, specifically a spiritual presence, in a child's life the Church itself has guidelines for Godparents. These are not a judgement on other people, but rather a way to ensure that a child baptised into the Catholic Church has a Godparent who is committed to their role and a good Christian witness to your child who will help to pass on the Christian faith to them.

Only one Godparent is required. If there are two Godparents, they must be one male and one female and must both be practising Catholics. The person must be over 16 years of age at the time of the Baptism and have been Baptised and Confirmed in the Catholic Faith. As long as there is one Catholic Godparent, there can also be a person who is baptised in another Christian denomination. This person is known as a "Christian Witness".

## Anointing with Chrism Oil

After your child is baptised, they will be anointed with Chrism oil on the crown of the head signifying the new dignity they have received in baptism. It symbolically acts as setting a seal on their promise to follow the Lord.

## Baptismal Certificate

This will be issued at the Baptism or shortly afterwards. Please keep this safely, as proof may be required later on.

### PARENTS OFTEN ASK ABOUT A DONATION....

Our parish is totally funded by the generosity of the members of its community. It's through your donations that we are able to run your parish. It is usual to offer a donation to the parish on the day of your child's baptism. It helps towards the running costs of the church and the wages of the priests of the parish and diocese.

Many families contribute to the Parish Offering Scheme on a monthly basis. Please consider joining this as we need your help to support the financial running of the parish. Thank you for the support and commitment to your parish.

Further enquiries on monthly contributions may be directed to [office@gkpastoralarea.ie](mailto:office@gkpastoralarea.ie) or phone 01 287 4025. Thank-you